

## Heather Cooke

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**From:** richard kelly <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** 23 January 2019 15:51  
**To:** RSES  
**Cc:** Fiona McLoughlin Healy; Cllr. Fiona McLoughlin Healy  
**Subject:** RE: Submission to Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES  
**Attachments:** EMRA Draft Submission - Fiona McLoughlin Healy and Richard Kelly.docx

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Please find attached a submission to the draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy from Cllr Fiona McLoughlin Healy and myself Richard Kelly.

I have attached our submission.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact us.

My (Richard Kelly) contact number - [REDACTED]  
Cllr Fiona McLoughlin Healy - [REDACTED]

Kind Regards  
Richard Kelly

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

## Introduction:

We, Cllr Fiona McLoughlin Healy and Richard Kelly are making this joint submission in respect of the Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy that is being prepared by the Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly. We are disappointed that Newbridge has not been identified as a key growth town in the draft plan. Please find hereunder our submission and observations in respect of the why we consider that Newbridge should be identified as a Key Growth Town in the in the new strategy.

The primary objective of this submission is to put the forward the case that the town of Newbridge should be designated as a key growth town either on its own merit or jointly with Naas. We will set out reasons a little later in this document as to why we believe Newbridge has a justifiable case for such a designation. In the current draft strategy, there are examples of different townlands been jointly designated as key towns (Graiguecullen, Carlow, and Wicklow/Rathnew) so should it be decided that Naas remains as a key growth town, then we request that Newbridge be jointly designated considering the close proximity of both towns. We acknowledge that the general guidelines from a high level (national) perspective for the regional spatial and economic strategy are set by the National Planning Framework, Ireland 2040 The NPF Plan predicts that up to one million extra people may be living in Ireland by 2040. The plan identifies that up to 45% to 50% of this growth in population will occur in the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly administrative area.

In the NPF, Large Towns which are defined by the CSO as containing 10,000 or more people are identified to accommodate 20-25% of the total growth in population to 2040. One of the key themes emanating from the draft NPF document is the need to develop our urban areas in a sustainable and compact manner so that we do not continue along the path of unsustainable urban sprawl.

## The Case for Newbridge:

Contained in this section is the case for Newbridge to be designated a key growth town in the new plan.

- 📌 Despite current county and regional policy, Newbridge is currently the largest town in Co. Kildare by population. The 2011 and 2016 census showed Newbridge to have the highest population of any town in County Kildare. The CSO census of 2016 indicated that Newbridge had a population of 22,742 persons, almost 1350 people more than Naas which is currently the Tier 1 Growth town and the anticipated key growth town. In some respects, this is a failure of regional and county policy from the last regional plan
- 📌 In respect of the current urban form of Newbridge, it is well placed to accommodate significant growth in housing, retail and commercial activity. The Town Centre for example has a large amount of current and possible future brownfield sites that could accommodate significant mixed use development within the urban core or very close to the urban core of the town.
- 📌 Newbridge has a direct rail link to the town and its train station is located approximately 600 – 700 metres from the town's main street. In addition to this, the area close to the train station has seen and will continue to see significant residential development. The proximity of the train station to the town centre offers opportunities for the future development of the aforementioned town centre sites with adequate cycling and pedestrian infrastructure to improve linkages between the rail transport node and Town Centre.
- 📌 Newbridge has a very strong retail presence in the town with White Water Shopping Centre, Courtyard Shopping Centre, Dunnes Stores and the Retail Park all located within the town centre and urban core unlike many other towns and cities in Ireland where retail development has been located on lands on the periphery of towns/ cities. There is expected

to be further significant development of the retail offering in the years ahead in Newbridge. The town is seen as a significant regional player on the retail and shopping centre scene. In order to provide critical mass and future sustainability of the sector, Newbridge needs population targets that will assist and improve on its regional role.

🗺️ The NTA are currently preparing a traffic management plan and a possible public realm improvement plan for the town. One of the key themes from the Newbridge Local Area Plan 2013-2019 was the identification of three key areas in the Town Centre for designated for expansion. These three key areas which are located along the northern side of Military Road, the eastern side of Cutlery Road and northeast of Lidl's store close to the Courtyard and White Water Shopping Centres. All three areas have design briefs in the current Newbridge Local Area Plan 2013-2019. It is the council's policy to secure the consolidation and regeneration of brown field areas in the Town Centre.

🗺️ The town has recently received funding to begin the design and consultation process of developing a Civic and Cultural Quarter in the town centre which is near the Kildare GAA Grounds which is expected to be redeveloped in 2019/2020.

The three Town Centre areas identified for regeneration and under design brief guidelines are:

1. Design Brief 1 - Cutlery Road and Bord na Mona – There is approximately 5 hectares of land in this area with 3 to 4 storey buildings envisaged along Cutlery Road and the creation of some urban squares.
2. Design Brief 2 – Edward Street to Military Road – Development of New Street(s) – There is approximately 5.8 hectares of land in this area with regeneration potential. It is envisaged that significant mixed use development may occur here with typical buildings in this area being 3 to 4 storeys high<sup>1</sup>. This area is close to the White Water Shopping Centre and Courtyard Shopping Centre
3. Design Brief 3 – Military Road and Athgarvan Road – Perimeter Blocks – Total land area is not disclosed in Newbridge Local Area Plan 2013-2019. However, it is envisaged that development along Military Road shall include 3 to 4 storey buildings to create a new built edge.

In addition to the Town Centre sites noted above, there may be potential over the longer term (5+ years) to relocate the current Newbridge Industrial Estate and the units along Athgarvan and Military Road to the outskirts of the town. If this were to occur, this would free up 19.5 hectares of land that could allow high density housing right next to the Town Centre (see below, area outlined in blue)

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<sup>1</sup> Planning permission recently granted (Jan 2018) for significant development in this area for an extension of the Courtyard Shopping Centre



For information purposes, the area noted above is surrounded by residential and Town Centre uses.

### Conclusion:

We expect that Newbridge will be designated as a key growth town in the RSES Plan. What we have done in this submission is highlight the high level issues or reasons as to why we believe Newbridge should be designated as a key growth town in the new Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy. In the 2011 and 2016 census, people have voted with their feet and are residing in Newbridge.

As has been noted in this submission, there could potentially be as much as 30 hectares of land within or very close to the Town Centre that could be redeveloped in the long term. Newbridge is therefore in a unique position to achieve one of the main goals of the new National Planning Framework 2040 plan with that goal being one of sustainable development of our towns and cities. Newbridge has the potential to accommodate significant and sustainable growth of its population and its local economy within the Town Centre and its town boundary. With Newbridge containing the highest population of any town in County Kildare, it is clear that the town has many things to offer. In addition, the EMRA have described the particulars of a key town in their draft plan where they state, key towns are:

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*Large economically active service and/or county towns that provide employment for their surrounding areas and with high-quality transport links and the capacity to act as growth drivers to complement the Regional Growth Centres*

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Newbridge ticks all the boxes in respect of the above definition. It has a robust economic environment with a large employment and manufacturing base and excellent transport links with mainline and commuter rail services provided to and from Newbridge Train Station. The new Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy should recognise its current strength and attractiveness as place to live and work and designate the town as a Key Growth Town. Failure to do so would go against some of the main ideals which have emanated from the National Planning Framework 2040 plan.

