



# Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin Wicklow County Council

Forbairt Pleanála agus Comhshaol  
Planning Development and Environment



EASTERN & MIDLAND  
16 APR 2019  
REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

RSES submissions,  
Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly,  
3rd Floor North, Ballymun Civic Centre,  
Main Street,  
Ballymun,  
Dublin 9,  
D09 C8P5

11 April 2019

Dear Sir / Madam,

I refer to the **Proposed Material Amendments** to the draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern & Midland Region published on 15 March 2019.

Wicklow County Council commends and appreciates the work of the regional assembly members and executive in bringing the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy to this stage and looks forward to the final adoption of the Strategy in due course.

With respect to the Proposed Material Amendments we have identified a small number of important issues to Wicklow County Council which we hope can be addressed in the final strategy and these are set out to follow.

## 1.0 Proposed material amendments

### **Proposed Amendments No.'s 7, 8 and 9:**

*Amend Growth Enablers for Dublin City & Metropolitan Area*

*Amend Growth Enablers for the Core Region*

*Amend Growth Enablers for the Gateway Region*

While we welcome the enhancement of these sections, we would respectfully suggest that these proposed revised sections are not completely consistent with other material and non-material amendments, with particular reference to the Director's recommendation that the strategy addresses and makes reference to the importance of the entire Eastern Economic Corridor: Dublin - Belfast - Rosslare Europort. We would respectfully request a non-material modification is made to proposed amendments 7, 8 and 9 to ensure reference to the 'Eastern Economic Corridor: Dublin - Belfast -

*Tá an doiciméad seo ar fáil i bhformáidí eile ar iarratas.  
This document is available in alternative formats on request.*

Ba chóir gach comhfhreagras a sheoladh chuig an Stiúrthóir Seirbhísi, Forbairt Pleanála agus Comhshaol.  
All correspondence should be addressed to the Director of Services, Planning Development & Environment.



*Rosslare Europort*, *'Strategic connections to the Northern and Western Region'* and *'Strategic connections to the Southern Region'* are clearly referenced in the 'growth enablers' text.

#### **Proposed Amendments No. 69 + 113: 'Amend Rail projects'**

We are concerned that the description of the 'DART Expansion Programme' does not make any reference to 'enhanced' or 'improved' services on the south-eastern line as far south as Greystones. It is essential for the development of this town and for the development of settlements and areas south of Greystones, that there is a major enhancement of this service south of Bray. We would therefore respectfully request a non-material modification to proposed amendment No.'s 69 and 113 as follows:

*DART Expansion Programme - new infrastructure and electrification of existing lines, including provision of electrified services to Drogheda and further north on the Northern Line, Celbridge-Hazelhatch or further south on the Kildare Line, Maynooth and M3 Parkway on the Maynooth/Sligo Line, while continuing to provide **and the improvement of** DART services on the South-Eastern Line as far south as Greystones*

#### **Proposed Amendment No. 73: Amend Core Strategy**

**Additional text as follows:** *"The determination of population targets for local authorities within the MASP including the population targets for the city and the Metropolitan Key towns is a matter for the agreement in consultation with the MASP Implementation Group after the adoption of the RSES to inform the preparation of core strategies of the relevant city and county development plans."*

With respect to the proposed new objective, given that we must commence the review of the Wicklow County Development Plan very soon after the adoption of the RSES, we are concerned with the timing of any agreement on population that would need to be made on foot of the proposed new objective.

In addition, it is not clear who would make this agreement (i.e. the makeup of the 'MASP Implementation Group') and indeed what processes would be invoked in a situation where agreement could not be speedily reached.

Having regard to the required County Development Plan review and the consequent impact of the revised core strategy on local area plans, it is imperative that the determination of population targets within the MASP is time bound and therefore we would request the following non-material modification to the proposed amendment:

**"The determination of population targets for local authorities within the MASP including the population targets for the city and the Metropolitan Key towns is a matter for the agreement in consultation with **shall be agreed by** the MASP Implementation Group **after within 8 weeks of** the adoption of the RSES to inform the preparation of core strategies of the relevant city and county development plans."**

We would suggest that a decision of this importance should be made by a group comprising all of the Chief Executives of the counties concerned.

We would also request that by the time the RSES is adopted, the regional executive shall have all the relevant data and information collected and evaluated that would input into this decision making process.

## 2.0 Non-material Amendments

With respect to 'non-material' amendments, on foot of the submissions made to the draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, the Director recommended a significant number of amendments that are of interest to County Wicklow. However, many of these have not been published for consultation, presumably on the basis that they were not deemed 'material'.

In respect of these 'non-material' amendments, we would request confirmation that those set out in the Director's report, that are not affected or modified by a proposed 'material' alteration, are to be included in the adopted strategy exactly as set out in the Director's report. Similarly, with respect to the recommendations of the Director that were not set out in full in his report, such as his recommendation to include additional narrative in some sections, we would request that the regional executive would consult Wicklow County Council regarding same prior to their publication in the final Strategy.

In particular:

- We request confirmation that proposed additional subsection in Chapter 11 entitled 'Strategic Connections' as set out as follows in the Director's Report is to be included in full:

***Eastern Economic Corridor; Dublin - Belfast - Rosslare Europort***

*Cross boundary coordination is a significant element of the strategy and will be even more so with the onset of Brexit, playing a critical role in supporting economic growth and competitiveness. The Dublin to Belfast Corridor is the largest economic agglomeration on the island of Ireland with the cities and towns along the corridor home to a population of around 2 million. The Corridor also connects the large towns of Drogheda, Dundalk and Newry by high-capacity national road and rail links, major airports of Dublin Airport, Belfast International Airport and Belfast City Airport and Belfast and Dublin Ports, with complimentary ports along the corridor, extending south to Rosslare Europort, which is an important economic and transport link, particularly in the post Brexit scenario. The RSES supports a feasibility study for high speed rail between Dublin and Belfast and enhanced rail services on the south-eastern line to include the extension of DART services to Drogheda.*

- We request confirmation that the Growth strategy Map will be updated to show the 'Eastern Economic Corridor' extended to Rosslare.
- We request sight of and input to the revised narrative with respect to Bray and Wicklow – Rathnew.

I hope all of these matters can be taken into account in the final adoption of the strategy.

Is mise le meas,



Frank Curran  
Chief Executive