

Heather Cooke

From: Declan Breathnach <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 23 January 2019 18:13
To: RSES
Subject: Submission to The Draft Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy
Attachments: Submission to the Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Hi,

I wish to make submissions on the Draft Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy (Eastern & Midland Region) which are contained in the attached document.

Kind regards,

Declan Breathnach



Declan Breathnach TD
LOUTH/ EAST MEATH



Spokesperson on North-South Bodies & Cross-Border Co-Operation
Vice Chairman of the Oireachtas Joint Committee on the
Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement



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**SUBMISSION TO
THE DRAFT REGIONAL SPATIAL AND ECONOMIC STRATEGY
NORTH EAST REGION**

I welcome the Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and would comment by way of submission as follows:-

REGIONAL HOSPITAL

It was always envisaged and planned that a Regional Hospital would be located in the North East. Various sites from Charleville Dunleer (adjacent to the railway network) together with North Eastern HSE land in Ardee and Navan, Co. Meath were looked at as proposed sites.

Navan was subsequently earmarked as the most suitable site.

It is my firm belief that a site easily accessible from the M1 and close to the rail network would be preferable.

TOURISM

For many years the marketing of tourism was not promoted on a joint North South basis until the inception of the Tourism Ireland. Tourism Ireland is an all-island body established under the Good Friday Agreement. We need joined-up thinking and while lauding the promotion of Ireland's Ancient East there is also a clear need to market Down and Armagh together with the existing counties included in Ireland Ancient East of Louth and Meath as a single entity and a seamless border.

Greenways:

Great work has been done in developing various greenways and proposed extensions for same.

The Carlingford / Omeath / Newry – this could be extended to Dundalk and Blackrock and eventually linked up to Clogherhead / Drogheda which could link to the Boyne Trail. We should also be capable of creating a similar project to the Wild Atlantic Way right down from Antrim to Waterford.

All of Ireland and Northern Ireland's Greenways should be capable of being linked.

It is imperative that where possible portions of the Greenways along coastal areas could be constructed in conjunction with coastal erosion / flood works.

DUBLIN – BELFAST CORRIDOR

From an economic point of view Louth is in a pivotal position as a linear corridor between Dublin and Belfast with opportunities to develop and attract industrial hubs to the region. The joint operation of third level colleges North and South in planning and adjusting the required work-force is essential.

Roads:

In more recent years the Department had proposed the down-grading of the N52 from the Ballymascanlon junction through to Ardee to a Secondary Route Status. It is important that this road retain its status and that this portion be upgraded.

Train Network:

The proposed linkage of a high speed train network between the two capital cities of North and South must be completed together with the necessary infrastructural development to improve the existing train line capacity between Belfast and Dublin.

Priority must be given to extending the DART rail system to Drogheda in the shortest time-frame possible. Project Ireland 2040 had set a deadline for this to be completed by 2027. In view of the fact that 1,200 people travel by rail from Drogheda and 400 from Laytown daily, I would submit that the DART extension to Drogheda be given priority to be completed far sooner than 2027.

Housing, Broadband and Mobile Phone Connectivity:

It is clear that the Dublin-Belfast corridor is a huge growth area. There are positive spin-offs from Brexit with some companies choosing to relocate to the region from the UK to maintain an EU presence. It is absolutely imperative,

along the Eastern Corridor that the proper infrastructure, with increased housing to accommodate sustainable population growth with a good quality of life is provided. This would include providing connectivity with high speed broadband as being a basic requirement.

Mobile phone networks need to share infrastructure North and South of the border so that calls do not drop off once the border has been crossed as currently is the case.

CONCLUSION:

I hope that all the views submitted from the Eastern and Midland Regions will be taken into account. It is important that those submissions from the hinterland of the Louth / Dundalk / Belfast corridor region be looked at and that ideas looking at the island as a whole even if they refer to areas north of the border and outside of our jurisdiction will be recorded.

I wish to place on the record my support for the submission of the Dundalk Chamber of Commerce and I concur with those views.

DECLAN BREATHNACH, TD

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1. The first part of the document is a title page, which includes the title of the document, the author's name, and the date of publication.