



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

12th April 2019
[By email]

Re: REPRESENTATIONS TO THE EASTERN & MIDLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY PROPOSED MATERIAL AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAFT REGIONAL SPATIAL AND ECONOMIC STRATEGY 2019-2031, UNDER SECTION 24 (8) OF THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACTS 2000-2018.

On behalf of our client, the Industrial Development Authority (IDA), we wish to submit the following representations to the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly's Proposed Material Amendments to the Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031 (RSES).

The submission is prepared specifically relating to lands owned by IDA [REDACTED] [REDACTED] as shown in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1: IDA Business and Technology Park, Donore Road, Drogheda

This submission specifically relates to the removal of text proposed under Section 23 of the Material Amendments to the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031, March 2018, as shown in red strikethrough below:

“v. Support the sustainable development of existing zoned lands in the Southern Environs of the town with a particular emphasis on the promotion

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of the IDA Business and Technology Park ~~as an employment hub~~ as a location for economic investment and the creation of compact, residential communities in key locations in proximity to established residential areas and transport hubs vi. Support the implementation of the Urban Design Framework Plan for the Heritage Quarter” (annotated by TPA)

As shown above, IDA Ireland are seeking to replace the text “as an employment hub” with “as a location for economic investment” in the above paragraph of the emerging plan, as the inclusion of this text is considered overly prescriptive, implying the use of these lands should be restricted to office type development only.

However, given the site’s highly accessible location along the M1 corridor it is considered that the site is an excellent location for the inclusion of a number of alternative employment uses that would not be considered a use associated with an employment hub, but would capitalise on the site’s strategic road connections, e.g. a storage and distribution center.

1.0 Background

IDA Ireland was established in 1949 as part of the Department of Industry and Commerce as a way to stimulate, support and develop export-led business and enterprise in Ireland. The IDA has developed into Ireland’s Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Promotion Agency providing a range of support and services for foreign companies to quickly establish and develop their operations in Ireland. IDA seeks to attract investors from a dynamic range of industry sectors who are looking for a location that will provide many opportunities for their Advanced Manufacturing, Global Business Services and R&D Operations.

The IDA has proved to be very successful in its endeavours and has proved that FDI is a key factor in Ireland’s economic growth. Although Ireland only accounts for 1.8% of the EU GDP, Ireland wins 4.5% of FDI projects in Europe and 7.5% in the sectors IDA targets. Approximately 200,000 people are today employed in foreign companies and this figure continues to grow. These foreign companies also pay €2.8 billion in corporation tax, spend €1.4 billion on research and development annually, spend €11.3 billion on Irish services, €2.6 billion on Irish materials, and €8.5 billion on payroll.

IDA’s published strategy ‘Winning: Foreign Direct Investment 2015-2019’, seeks to grow FDI investment further and is looking to provide over 80,000 new jobs, 900 new investments, an increase of 30-40% in the number of investments into regional locations, and a €3 billion expenditure in R&D.

2.0 IDA Business & Technology Park, Donore Road, Drogheda

As shown in Figure 1, the site is located on the Southern Environs of Drogheda, adjacent to the M1 motorway on the Dublin to Belfast Economic Corridor.

The Dublin to Belfast Corridor is noted in the National Planning Framework’s Project Ireland 2040 as one of the most significant in the country that links two of the largest towns on the island by high-capacity road and national rail links, playing a critical role in supporting economic growth and competitiveness. Project Ireland 2040 also notes the corridor as:

“the national entry point to the island through its airports and ports. Three major airports, Dublin Airport, Belfast International Airport and Belfast City



Airport, collectively manage over 35 million passengers each year and this is set to continue to rise.”

As such, the site is considered to be extremely well connected in the context of its peripheral Drogheda location. Furthermore, given the site’s highly strategic location at the newly created motorway interchange to the M1, the site is also considered to be an appropriate location for transport dependent, industrial use, e.g. a storage and distribution center or re-packaging facility.

It should also be noted that it is a specific Planning Policy Objective (DRA 2) of the current development plan, The Southern Environs of Drogheda Local Area Plan (March 2015) to undertake a feasibility study for these lands:

The lands directly adjacent to the west of the Donore Road Motorway Interchange should be subject to a detailed feasibility study to determine the future potential of the area due to its strategic location adjacent the motorway interchange in line with Policy TRAN POL 39 of the Meath County Development Plan 2013-2019 and subject to compliance with the Spatial Planning and National Roads – Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

Meath County Council anticipate this review will be undertaken in accordance with the Meath County Development Plan review, scheduled to take place later this year. It is therefore considered the inclusion of the text “*as an employment hub*” (identified above) in the emerging RSES to be overly prescriptive.

3.0 Conclusion

For the reasons set out above, we respectfully request the removal of the text “*as an employment hub*” from Section 23 of the Material Amendments to the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031, detailed above.

We trust the above comments are taken into consideration. Should you have any further questions or require clarification on or submission, or any other aspect of the site, please contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Gavin Lawlor
Director
Tom Phillips and Associates