

Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport comments

Proposed material amendments to draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region

The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport has the following comments on a number of the proposed material amendments to the draft RSES to ensure consistency with both the National Transport Authority's (NTA) Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035 and Project Ireland.

As stated in the draft RSES, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region is **statutorily required** to be consistent with the NTA's Transport Strategy for the GDA.

The Department is concerned that a number of the proposed amendments to the draft RSES relate to new projects which are not consistent with the Transport Strategy for the GDA and Project Ireland 2040.

Proposed amendment numbers 69 and 113 on Rail projects

Proposed material amendment

- Implement the extension of the Dunboyne/M3 Parkway line to Navan during the Mid Term Review of the GDA Transport Strategy

DTTAS comment

The Department considers that the above proposed text is not consistent with the commitment in the National Development Plan that the review of the GDA Transport strategy "*will include a reappraisal of the project taking into account the scale of new and planned development along the route and will allow for its consideration during the Mid Term Review*". The NDP does not include a commitment to implement the extension of the Dunboyne/M3 Parkway line.

The Department considers that the text in the previous draft RSES is more consistent with the NDP and should be retained as follows:

- **Reappraisal of the extension of the Dunboyne/M3 Parkway line to Navan during the Mid Term Review of the GDA Transport Strategy.**
-

Proposed material amendment

- Complete construction of Metrolink from Swords to Sandyford, including underground extensions to UCD and Knocklyon from Charlemont.
- Luas Green Line Capacity Enhancement in advance of Metrolink.

DTTAS comment

The RSES for the Eastern and Midland Region is statutorily required to be consistent with the NTA Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035. The GDA strategy provides the statutory

framework for the planning and delivery of transport infrastructure for the region. The approved strategy, which was subject to public consultation, sets out an ambitious range of improvements across the area of Metro and Light Rail. These improvements include:

- the development of a Metro from the city centre to North County Dublin;
- the development of a Metro from the city centre to South County Dublin along the Luas Green Line
- the need to improve the capacity of the Green Line in advance of its upgrade to Metro standard
- a number of Luas extensions, to Lucan, Finglas, Bray and Poolbeg.

Project Ireland 2040 included the funding to progress these projects.

The NTA published the MetroLink "Preferred Route" for public consultation on 26th March. This reflects the NTA's and Transport Infrastructure Ireland's (TII) consideration of issues raised in the consultation period held last year on what was known as the 'Emerging Preferred Route'.

The new Preferred Route proposes a number of changes to the route as published last year. The NTA/TII proposal is now to immediately move forward on two fronts: developing MetroLink from Charlemont to Swords and also completing the Green Line Capacity Enhancement Project already underway. They now propose to defer the third element of the previous proposal, which is to tie-in the Metro with the existing Luas Green Line and extend Metro services southward along that line.

The proposed amendment to the draft RSES is proposing new projects which are not included in the NTA Transport Strategy for the GDA or Project Ireland 2040. To ensure consistency with the NTA Strategy, Project Ireland 2040 and the MetroLink preferred route, the Department considers that the text in the RSES should read as follows:

- **Complete construction of MetroLink;**
- **Luas Green Line Capacity Enhancement.**

DTTAS comment on proposed amendments numbers 70 and 114 on Road Projects

The Department would note that the National Development Plan (NDP) provides the investment framework for the national and regional roads programme from 2018 to 2027 and the Department and its agencies work within the framework of Government transport, land use and climate action policies as reflected in national investment priorities. NDP projects are currently in two main categories; those which are due to be constructed within the period of the NDP (in some cases subject to business case and development consent) and those which will be appraised and early planning work undertaken with a view to developing a pipeline of projects for future development in successor capital plans, where feasible and appropriate. Where a national road project is not identified in the NDP for development or appraisal, it falls outside the current scope of the NDP.