



Tionól Reigiúnach Oirthir agus Lár-Tíre Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly

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Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028

The Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly notes the publication of the Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028 and sets out hereunder observations on behalf of the Assembly. The submission has been prepared by the executive and approved by the members of the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly at the meeting of 9th July 2021.

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES)

As indicated in the Assembly's previous submission to the County Development Plan review process, The Council will be aware of the finalisation of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland Region which was made on 28th June 2019. The RSES, prepared in accordance with the National Planning Framework, sets the context for each local authority within our Region to develop their county and city development plans in a manner that will ensure national, regional and local plans align. The RSES identifies regional assets, opportunities and pressures and provides appropriate policy responses in the form of Regional Policy Objectives. At this strategic level it provides a framework for investment to better manage spatial planning and economic development throughout the Region.

In this regard, The Assembly welcomes the publication of the Draft Cavan Plan which enables the coordinated and timely incorporation of Project Ireland 2040 - the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), thus ensuring full alignment between local, regional and national planning policy.

Legislative Context

As required by Section 11(2) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, the Regional Assembly received notice from the Council on May 27th 2021, of the preparation of the Draft Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028.

Whilst the various themes that are addressed within the draft county development plan are fully noted, the scope of this submission mainly focuses on issues directly linked to the Eastern and Midland Region.

Submission

1.0 Consistency and Alignment with Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies

The Regional Assembly note the inclusion of 'The Strategic Framework' Section of the introductory chapter, which details the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Region, and welcomes the statement that the Plan should be read in the hierarchical context of legislation and plans that exist at International, National and Regional level. This is further supported in greater detail at Section 2.3 of the Plan. Maintaining consistency with the RSES is further referenced

as part of the Core Strategy Chapter, including Core Strategy Development Objective CSD 01, which outlines that the plan must ensure that the future spatial development of Cavan is in accordance with the National Planning Framework 2040 (NPF) including the population targets set out under the Implementation Roadmap, and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Northern and Western Region 2020-2032.

Given that County Cavan borders the Eastern and Midland Region, including the counties of Meath, Westmeath and Longford, it is considered that the inclusion of a statement that the Plan be cognizant of the long-term strategic planning and economic framework of the adjoining Eastern and Midland Region as it is expressed in the EMRA RSES, would be a positive addition to Plan.

2.0 Inter-Regional Matters

2.1 The North- Eastern Functional Area

The Assembly welcome and support the inclusion of reference within the Draft Plan to the North-Eastern Functional Area, which includes Counties Cavan, Monaghan and Louth. The Assembly note the insertion of NPF content emphasizing that the key driver for this regional area is the Dublin-Belfast cross-border network, the influence of which, as well as that of the Dublin Metropolitan area, extends into Cavan and Monaghan.

The recognition within the Draft Plan that strategic priorities for this area include addressing economic resilience and connectivity, and that the maintenance of seamless cross-border movement for people, goods and services, together with improvements in digital and physical infrastructure will create new opportunities to leverage employment and for sustainable population growth, focused on the county towns.

The RSES of the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly emphasizes this at Chapter 11, which details All Island Cohesion and stresses the importance of the Dublin- Belfast Economic Corridor as the largest economic agglomeration on the Island.

2.2 Other Related Matters

The Assembly welcomes the inclusion of development objective KT 05 to work with Meath County Council on the delivery of the Navan-Kingscourt Greenway and the development of Dun a Ri as a trailhead point. The RSES readily outlines, for instance RPOs 7.24 and 7.25, the importance and economic contribution of tourism and how the development of greenways, blueways and peatways can enable this and provide an alternative visitor experience. Indeed, in documenting the potential of natural and cultural tourism assets in the Region, the RSES specifically references the Boyne Valley Greenway and the old Kingscourt line.

With regard to infrastructure development, the Assembly note the inclusion of Development Objectives VB 01, to work in conjunction with Transport Infrastructure Ireland, Department of Transport and Meath County Council in the planning and construction of the N3 Virginia Bypass Scheme, and, GE 07, to support the reinforcement and strengthening of the electricity transmission network with particular reference to the North South Interconnector. It is noted that the north-south interconnector proposes linking the existing station at Woodland, Batterstown, Co Meath and traversing through Meath, Cavan and Monaghan linking to a converter station at Turleenan in County Tyrone. This development objective is supported in the RSES at RPO 10.22 and as part of Chapter 11 aimed at All Island cohesion and cooperation.

Conclusion

The Regional Assembly welcomes the Draft County Development Plan 2022-2028, which marks the beginning of the alignment of planning policy at county and local levels with Regional and National Policy. It should be noted that the officials of the Regional Assembly are available to discuss the matters raised above and the Assembly welcome further opportunities to engage in the statutory process of the making of the Cavan County Development Plan.

Regards,



Jim Conway

Director

Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly

12th July 2021