

From: Cllr Jarlath Munnelly <cllrjmunnelly@MayoCoCo.ie>
Sent: Monday 11 February 2019 10:57
To: rses
Subject: Submission

To whom it concerns. See attached my submission. I attempted to submit this online on Friday, but I think it didn't work, therefore I am emailing. I hope this is in order.

Regards
Jarlath

Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) - Northern and Western Region

Submission - Cllr. Jarlath Munnelly

To whom it concerns:

I wish to make a number of brief observations on the generation of the RSES.

The strategy should provide a blueprint for the sustainable economic and social development of the region, by focusing on the development and growth of the larger urban centres (including Ballina) and laterally, by providing a framework that counties (such as Mayo) can follow to ensure the growth of these centres, and the smaller towns (such as Killala) as support to the large urban centres. Creating vibrant large urban centres, supported by smaller, vibrant towns should be the vision.

The county plans (like Mayo) that follow should be empowered to direct the growth of the smaller towns, within a context that fits with this regional plan and along similar themes (social and economic development, interconnectivity, etc). It should give a framework for the development of Mayo, with a special focus on the importance of avoiding a two-speed county developing into the future (with Castlebar-Westport and the south driven by Galway, with North Mayo falling behind). This two-speed Mayo can be avoided by focusing on a specific regeneration strategy for Ballina, enabling Ballina to 'drive' North Mayo/West Sligo. Further details on the development of the smaller towns (such as Killala, as a residential, smaller employment and leisure town) can be detailed in the county plans. But should be referenced in this strategy.

Firstly, within the region, the interconnectivity of the larger urban centres should be a priority. In the case of Ballina, this includes interconnectivity between it and other urban centres in the region (Castlebar, Sligo, Galway, Athlone). This includes by road (improvements to national routes, such as the N59, N58, N26

required), rail (including connections with the Western Rail Corridor), telecommunications networks and electricity networks.

Secondly, this strategy should prioritise a number of specific objectives for the region. These include the opening of the Western Rail Corridor, as a strategic rail link for the region, providing connectivity further afield and interconnectivity within the region, including onwards linkages to Foynes Port. The ports of Killybegs and Foynes should be prioritised as ports on either end of the region, that can service the needs of this region. Ireland West Airport Knock should be prioritised as an airport for the region. The recent proposal by Mayo County Council to request that former Asahi site at Killala, Co, Mayo be designated as an SDZ should be included, because of the unique characteristics of this site and its potential to support economic development for North Mayo/West Sligo.

Thirdly, the sustainable development of agriculture/aquaculture should be a feature of the strategy. The current sheep/beef/dairy industry in Mayo and the region should be supported as the bedrock of agriculture, with an emphasis on growing the artisan and value added food production sector, boosting opportunities for agricultural producers in the region. Aquaculture should be developed further.

Fourthly, the importance of this region in supporting the offshore marine industry should be highlighted. The area of North Mayo, for example, could become an important area in servicing future marine industries, such as renewable energy. Killala Town, with its harbour, could be identified as a location that could serve this industry, and the research/exploration industry that supports this industry.

Thanks you for considering my submission.

Cllr. Jarlath Munnelly

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