



Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy – Submission - Jan 2019

To whom it may Concern

Sligo Greenway Co-op as a broad base of support in the South Sligo community. Apart from its membership of about 800 fully paid up shareholders its proposal to establish a greenway on the disused rail corridor has had the explicit endorsement of every active sporting, cultural educational, commercial and community development organisation in the county. Based on this and the economic and technical feasibility studies commissioned by the Co-op and the Tubbercurry REDZ project, Sligo County Council last year adopted a new development plan which includes the provision of a greenway on or alongside the disused rail corridor from Bellaghy to Collooney. It has also responded to the call by the Minister inviting greenway projects to submit funding proposals to the Dept of Transport Tourism and Sport last November and has in addition commissioned consultants to prepare a planning application to An Bord Pleanala for such a greenway to be submitted shortly.

We have reviewed the NWRA's recent draft RSES and wish to have this amended to take account of this work in progress and the fact that until such time as funds are available for a railway it is counterproductive to advocate for a railway service without in the meanwhile ensuring that corridors in disuse for generations are not kept in continuous public use. To this end Irish Rail have agreed to grant SCC a license for use of the rail corridor as a greenway subject of course to their right to terminate that license if and when the corridor is required for a rail service.

We therefore suggest following to be considered as part of objective 115 (a) and 115 (b) Page 233, and that appropriate amendments be made accordingly:

- The horizon of this RSES is 2030
- The Government Public Capital Programme (GPCP) extends to 2040
- The GPCP includes the provision for greenways
- The GPCP does not provide for the reintroduction of a western rail service
- The Claremorris to Collooney corridor is beyond the remit of the rail review now underway
- RSES's objective in respect of disused corridors is to protect them for future use

Therefore, until such time as Government policy supports restoration of the rail service, RSES should ensure that this corridor is available for such use, by facilitating greenway development under license.

Pat McCarrick – Chairperson – on behalf of Sligo Greenway Co-op

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