

From: [REDACTED]
To: [rses](#)
Subject: New Message (sent by contact form at Northern and Western Regional Assembly)
Date: Wednesday 23 January 2019 11:21:43

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Submission: Submission to Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA)

I am pleased to have the opportunity to make this submission and indeed its heading is most encouraging: “what if we lived in the most connected region in Europe”.

Becoming a connected region means addressing the region’s missing links many of which are on its North South Axis. The linkage affect of building infrastructure on this axis has a tremendous effect on connectivity within the region, as it joins together the existing radial routes out of Dublin, thereby providing a true network for regional and inter regional travel, thereby developing the region in its own right, rather than forcing all travel eastwards.

The reality of course is different for this peripheral region in North West Europe. This authority (despite the best endeavors of its officials and directors) will have little say in the development of this region.

This authority was not even consulted for Europe’s largest infrastructure initiative, the TEN-T. The Consultation was undertaken by the European Commission (organised in Ireland by the Department of Transport). Despite regional authorities being a main target group of the TEN-T consultation and the EU commitment to Cohesion Policy, the North West Regional Authority (BMW Assembly) was not even consulted.

The submissions made to this current consultation will only be taken seriously if they happen to align with the policy predetermined by senior officials based in Dublin. Their experience of the needs of this region is not based on living here, but rather limited to the occasional visit or holiday break. Coupled with the overwhelming (almost total) concentration of East based directors on to the state’s transport bodies and you get a toxic mix of over investment in one region and underinvestment in the other region leading to widening disparity. This exacerbates a rent and housing crisis and young people migrating / emigrating for opportunity leading to rural decline.

Nevertheless it is welcome to see Objectives 115 (a) and 115 (b) of the draft RSES Report which refer to the re-opening of the Western Rail Corridor from Athenry to Sligo and it is welcome to see some upgrades planned on the N17 route (an EU Core TEN route pre 2014), both of which will help Ireland West Airport.

Yours Sincerely

Martin Cunniffe

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