

To whom it may concern.

I would strongly urge you to reconsider your decision to not include Drogheda yet again in this important and vital planning document. Drogheda is a city in all but name. But for the unfortunate fact that we sit on a county boundary we would have city status a long time ago. Is Ireland still such a parochial country that we cannot see beyond county flags. Drogheda caters not just for the people within the Louth boundary but also the many housing estates outside of the county boundary, Grabge Rath and Deepforde being cases in point. Just because they sit in Meath does not mean that they don't use our services, shops, schools, hospitals, transport, and infrastructure. It truly boggles the mind that these estates and towns for that matter aren't included in some joined up thinking as to how the area may develop in the future.

We need some planning more than just along the lines of county boundaries, we need the bigger picture looked at here. Are we to be a progressive nation who looks forward in our thinking or are we going to remain caught up in the past and resort to basing our planning on flag waving and parochialism. Many people within these estates on the Meath side and towns such as Laytown, Mornington and Bettystown use Drogheda every day to access services or facilities and even work. We are a community no matter what side of the county line you live on so why should we not expect to be treated as one. Having lived in Drogheda all my life and I am currently living not far from the county line on the Dublin road I see people every day walking and driving into Drogheda, I know many of them. They see themselves as being part of Drogheda even though they pay their rates to a different council.

Please don't yet again fall into the old mind set and be short sighted. This is not about a land grab and flag waving, this is about helping our community thrive and flourish, and giving our children a better place to grow up in and live. I think if Drogheda was granted city status then this would solve a lot of the problems our community faces. If we had a municipal council this would transcend all this county patriotism and give us a chance to better meet the needs of people not just in the Louth side of Drogheda but also in the Meath side. We can be from both Louth and Meath and still be from Drogheda, it wouldn't change the colour flag you'd wave at a GAA match but it would mean we might start thinking like a community and take control of our own futures for our children and our children's children.

We are also fast becoming a commuter satellite for Dublin, not just Drogheda but the towns and estates previously mentioned. According to the report by Dr Brian Hughes the population of the greater Drogheda area is 83000, are we to still pretend that Drogheda doesn't meet the requirements for a city. This area meets all the criteria of the EU commission and the OECD for city status due to population density per kilometre and exceeds numbers in excess of 50000. Please don't let this be another missed opportunity where yet another group are not brave enough or far sighted enough to challenge the status quo and subject our community to yet more years of

stagnation and also creating a bottle neck that may reach crisis point in the future. Don't wait for the crisis to happen, be proactive and give us a chance

Kind Regards

Mark Curran

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