

# National Planning Framework Submission

Michael Mannix



## RE: Submission to the National Planning Framework “Ireland 2040”

As a member of the public who uses the road network a lot be it for work or pleasure, it pains me when I travel on some of the national road network and long for the day when all of the major cities are linked with motorways. However being a realist, I also know that it is very unlikely in my lifetime. However, there is one area which I feel I must at least voice my opinion as it puzzles me why sometimes we tend not to think outside the box and end up corralled into blindly following traditional routes.

I am referring to the ongoing issue of the Limerick to Cork national route which I travel regularly. I understand since 2008 or thereabouts, there has been a process for route selection largely following the existing N20. The project was mothballed due to cost and recently there have been moves to at least progress on planning. However, there is still a significant cost issue which will probably lead to it being kicked down the road again and again. In the meantime, motorists have to endure endless roadworks and stop-go systems on the existing route. I have come to accept that while I may see Limerick to Cork linked by motorway eventually, I hold out little hope for Limerick or Cork to Waterford and Kilkenny. However, instead of slavishly following the existing route of the N20 which would result in new motorway route of at least 80 km, the second half of which would be almost parallel to the M8, why not consider linking Limerick directly to the M8 from the M20 at Patrickswell cross country to meet the R513 near Herbertstown and then roughly following the route of the R513 through the mountains towards Mitchelstown. I estimate a route length of approximately 50 km from Limerick would meet the M8 north of Mitchelstown. The additional traffic on the M8 would probably mean the roundabout at the Jack Lynch tunnel would have to be re-designed to be free flowing but the resulting overall route length from Limerick to Cork would only end up about 15 km longer than the planned N20 route. The saving made on the shorter construction cost could go towards a new motorway link between the M8 near Caher to the M9 north of Waterford (approx. 47 km) resulting in

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Galway, Limerick, Cork, Waterford and Kilkenny all linked with Motorway. It would also provide much easier access to Rosslare, particularly from the west.

Certainly, the resulting route lengths between the cities would be marginally longer than the more direct existing routes and the whole route selection process would have to be repeated but the overall cost of having all cities linked would be significantly less and having them delivered within the horizon of the national planning framework would more than make up for it. It would also generate more revenue on existing tolled routes such as the Limerick tunnel and Fermoy and therefore increase payback so maybe these operators could get involved in providing the new infrastructure without necessarily creating additional tolled routes as the increased revenue through the existing tolls would supplement it.

I don't think there would be any adverse effects on the towns on the existing Limerick – Cork route as the traffic removed from these routes would be the end to end type traffic which would be less likely to stop in any case. The quieter traffic on the existing infrastructure would make these towns more attractive to the holiday type traffic which would be more likely to stop.

See the map below for the suggested routes.

Maybe this has already been considered and ruled out as an option but it has been bugging me for some time and I couldn't let it go any further without at least raising it.

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