

**From:** Barry Aughey [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 31 March 2017 12:14  
**To:** National Planning Framework  
**Subject:** Ireland 2040 National Framework

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
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To whom it may concern,

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find to follow my submission in relation to the Ireland 2040 National Framework.

It is submitted that the planning and the ring fencing or allocating or zoning of an appropriate corridor be set aside in a new national development plan for a new high speed passenger train, connecting Dublin to Monaghan and eventually Letterkenny/Derry. It is important that plans are made in the very near future to accommodate such a large infrastructure development particularly in light of BREXIT and the upcoming negotiations that will form part of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union.

A high speed passenger train such as the CRH 380A in China or the AGV in Italy would result in a commuter time of approximately 16 minutes between Dublin and Monaghan and vice versa. Monaghan is a border county in the midlands and is under populated. With a low cost base it can facilitate cost effective competitive residential developments for a growing population. Despite the town being an attractive town with many of the amenities of a principal county town Monaghan is one of the least visited towns in Ireland.

The state is by far the largest property owner in Monaghan town particularly with the St Davnets complex owned by the HSE which is a vast campus stretching right into the town centre. In addition the local authority acquired a farm (O'Neills farm) on the edge of town many years ago which is un-developed and there is an old IDA park on the Northern side of town which is at a fraction of its development capacity. Monaghan is unique to all other counties in Ireland as it is a peninsula jutting into Northern Ireland and is surrounded on three sides by the UK. This makes Monaghan an ideal location for the headquarters of North South Government bodies such as (but not limited to) customs & exiles and policing.

Monaghan town is geographically pitched in the centre of Northern Ireland and is well positioned to accommodate people from Enniskillen, Omagh, Dungannon, Armagh, Portadown and Newry all within less than an hour travel time.

Monaghan is one of the few counties that benefits from the "Kelvin Line" this is a fibre line which is the highest and most securest form of communication, this is required by large institutes such as Banks, Fund Managers, Insurance, Pension Companies etc.

A high speed commuter line with the safe frequent ease of travel for passage from Dublin to Monaghan would result in the rapid growth of Monaghan town. An infrastructure project such as this could help alleviate the housing shortage problems and congestion problems in the city. It is conceivable that people from the city could commute to Monaghan which in turn would help facilitate an old strategy of the governments "decentralisation". Government can play a role by opening additional office departments as they may be required in the future.

Currently there is no rail connection to Monaghan or beyond to North Donegal. Therefore such a new infrastructural entity would not compete with any existing entity.

Much of the land required for a high speed rail connection is already in existence between Dublin and

Monaghan County as far as Carrickmacross (from the old railway line which was closed in the 1950's). Therefore the feasibility of such a project is greatly enhanced. Such a project like this could be carried out in a way similar to that of the Toll bridges or under licence whereby the investment would be carried out by the private sector under licence and after a fixed period of say 30 years or more the infrastructure would be handed back to the state. I believe the potential to have foreign private invest in such a project exists and should government policy be put in place in the short term I believe this could be delivered upon in a shorter time frame and at a lower budget that a metro in Dublin for example.

Furthermore, it is strongly recommended that this corridor should be extended to Letterkenny in Donegal and that two commuter stops, one in Letterkenny and one in Monaghan would greatly facilitate the growth and development of the North West Midlands and Costal regions.

Monaghan is one of the few towns that did not benefit from the Celtic Tiger years and as such has not expanded like other towns despite substantial investments in such other infrastructural projects such as sewerage, schools and water.

Monaghan is one of the few places that has been greatly affected by the troubles which has stifled inward investment especially from multi nationals. It elected the first Sinn Fein MEP – Kieran Doherty in 1981 and then the first Sinn Fein TD – Caoimhghin O'Caolain later in the 80's. There is also the Dublin, Monaghan bombings. And finally Monaghan has the highest percentage of protestants per capita. This would most certainly help accommodate any future cross border bodies that may come as a result of BREXIT.

In addition to Monaghan being ideally positioned geographically as a gateway to Northern Ireland it is also within a reasonable time frame from both international airports and the west coast. An hour and a half from Dublin airport and an hour and fifteen minutes from Belfast International. An hour and a half from the west coast.

Finally with regards to the peace initiative and the good Friday agreement it was proposed that the ulster canal would be reopened and a marina constructed in Monaghan town centre. In view of the recent BREXIT activity it is imperative that this is brought to a head as it would be important to both sides of the community to see some tangible deliverables from what is still a fragile peace process. Monaghan town centre is mostly below the water table therefore a directive from central government advising the local authority to treble or quadruple its town centre zoning in the short term would help accommodate any future such developments.

The sustainable development of rural Ireland requires bold ambitious infrastructural development such as what is being proposed here. For too long the focus by the state has been on the East coast. Introducing new opportunities to rural Ireland will help increase competitiveness as there exists a lower cost base of talented employees and more over a lower cost of living as housing would not be as expensive for example.

Finally, the Belfast Galway road connection known as the N54 should be upgraded to a National primary route this I consistent with the overall connect ability of the island as a whole in its future growth and development.

My mobile number is [REDACTED] should you wish to contact me.

Thank you for your time.

Regards,

Barry



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