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To: National Planning Framework
Subject: NPF

Submission:

- We know from C.S.O. 2016 that Drogheda's population is 40,956 with a further 11,872 people living within 10km of Drogheda in Meath's Laytown-Bettystown, Mornington, Donacarney L_B_M_D.) This population is slightly smaller than Waterford's which is 48,369. (CSO 2016) but Drogheda is Ireland's largest town (CSO 2017). **Drogheda is not a rural small town.** Its population has grown over the past 20 years. Drogheda has huge potential and plenty of land which could be developed. The population of L_B_M_D live in suburban houses without a major town centre and travel to Drogheda - the big town.
- This population number does not count those Drogheda people who move to Dublin to take up quality jobs as there is insufficient quality employment in Drogheda or who do not want the difficult commute to their employment. (including 2 of my daughters).
- We know that many people commute to Dublin via bus/rail/car. It would make sense to create more employment opportunities in Drogheda. An argument can be made to consider Drogheda a city and to grow this area. It would relieve pressure on Dublin, in terms of housing, traffic and create more community in the Drogheda area. Failing city status, it still makes sense to grow Drogheda's development where possible, as well as other towns in a radius around Dublin, such as Navan, Mullingar, Naas, instead of Dublin growing even more.
- National Policy Objective 64 (p. 127 NPF) states that provision will be made for larger towns and where a town crosses boundaries. What exactly does this mean for Drogheda? An almost empty IDA park lies on the outskirts which could easily be a venue for more employment. Unfortunately, it is in Co. Meath and it has not attracted enough companies.

(IDA www.idaireland.com/how-we-help/property/Drogheda-Business-Technology-Park). The Louth/Meath county border crosses through several housing estates in Drogheda (including my own). It does not make sense to count some neighbours eg Meath in statistics and not others.

- For those who continue to commute to Dublin, public transport links to Dublin could be improved. Rail and bus only go to the city centre. Driving is necessary to travel elsewhere, eg using the M50 to access areas of Dublin. Why are there not better public transport options?
- It is as easy for Dubliners to drive to Drogheda (or other hub towns) as it is for Drogheda people to go to Dublin. Drogheda as a hub town would take pressure off Dublin.
- Drogheda is twenty-five minutes drive to Dublin airport. It is a gateway to international markets.
- I refer to "Drogheda City Status Group". It gives much information about Drogheda which is not a small rural town. Failing city status, Drogheda has potential to be a large centre of employment and activity which can take some pressure off Dublin.

<http://npf.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/0346-Drogheda-City-Status-Group.compressed.pdf>.

best regards
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