



Oifig an  
Rialaitheora Pleanála  
Office of the  
Planning Regulator

22<sup>nd</sup> May 2026

RSES Review,  
Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly,  
3rd Floor North,  
Ballymun Civic Centre,  
Main Street,  
Ballymun,  
Dublin,  
D09 C8P5

**Re: Strategic Issues Paper for the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy of  
the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly**

A chara,

Thank you for your work in preparing the Strategic Issues Paper (Issues Paper) for the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) of the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly (EMRA). The Office of the Planning Regulator (Office) acknowledges and welcomes the publication of this Issues Paper and your assembly's work, more broadly, in advancing the review of the RSES.

As EMRA is aware, under the Planning and Development Act 2024 (Act) a function of the Office is the evaluation and assessment of RSES to ensure consistency with legislative and policy requirements relating to planning. The Office has evaluated and assessed the Issues Paper pursuant to Part 3 of the Act and its functions under section 546 and this submission has been prepared accordingly.

In accordance with the provisions of section 38 of the Act, the Office is obliged to carry out an assessment of the RSES in the context of certain statutory parameters, including consideration of:

- the National Planning Framework First Revision (2025) (NPF);
- the National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF);

- National Planning Policies and Measures (NPPM);
- National Planning Policy Guidance; and
- any relevant transport strategy published by the National Transport Authority.

This submission sets out some broad areas for EMRA to consider in formulating the draft RSES. These observations are offered without prejudice to any observations and recommendations as may be forthcoming from the Office at future stages of the strategy-making process, and do not affect the obligation on your regional assembly to comply with the relevant legislative requirements, or to be consistent with the fullness of the detailed national policy context.

## **Overview**

The RSES represents the primary mechanism for delivering national planning policy at regional level. The NPF places a renewed emphasis on the role of the RSES in providing clear spatial direction, particularly in relation to accommodating significant population growth, delivering housing in appropriate locations, and meeting renewable energy targets.

In this context, the RSES must respond to the scale of growth planned for the Eastern and Midlands Region by setting out a clear and coherent spatial framework. This will require stronger alignment between housing, employment and infrastructure, ensuring that development is genuinely plan-led and supported by timely infrastructure investment. The identification of strategic locations for growth at scale, particularly within the metropolitan area, will also be critical to delivering on housing targets and achieving compact and sustainable patterns of development.

Effective coordination across planning authorities will also be a central requirement, particularly in relation to cross-boundary development, the delivery of large-scale growth areas, and the implementation of renewable energy targets. A consistent and coordinated approach at regional level will be essential to ensure that policies are applied effectively and that strategic objectives are delivered across administrative boundaries.

The RSES must also provide a clear framework for the prioritisation and delivery of key infrastructure, reflecting national policy on projects of regional and national

importance. This includes ensuring that infrastructure investment is aligned with growth priorities, addresses existing constraints, and supports compact and sustainable urban development.

Finally, the RSES should place a strong emphasis on implementation, governance and monitoring. This will require clearly defined priorities, responsibilities and funding pathways, supported by measurable indicators to track progress and ensure delivery. Strengthened coordination with infrastructure providers, state agencies and planning authorities will be essential to achieve the outcomes set out in the strategy.

Pursuant to section 31(10) of the Act, the Office looks forward to supporting EMRA during the preparation of the RSES, ensuring that the revised RSES clearly demonstrates material consistency with the NPF, the NMPF and relevant NPPM, and provides a clear and deliverable spatial framework.

## **1. Settlement strategy**

The settlement strategy will be a central component of the RSES, establishing a clear and coherent spatial framework for accommodating significant population growth across the Eastern and Midlands Region to 2040.

The Office recognises the significant development pressure on the region particularly in the Dublin and Eastern strategic planning areas<sup>1</sup>. Given the scale of growth planned for the region, the settlement strategy should therefore prioritise the concentration of development in strategically identified locations, supported by existing and planned infrastructure, and in particular high quality public transport.

This includes strengthening the role of the Dublin Metropolitan Area, Regional Growth Centres (Athlone, Drogheda, Dundalk), and Key Towns as drivers of sustainable growth and economic development.

In relation to the role of regional growth centres and strategic towns in the region, the NPF requires Athlone, which is identified as the principal regional centre for the Midlands with influence extending across regional boundaries, and the Drogheda–

---

<sup>1</sup> As referenced in the Issues Paper p.6.

Dundalk–Newry cross-border network, which is recognised as critical to the Dublin–Belfast Economic Corridor, to be prioritised.

Consideration should also be given to how the implications of the proposed change to the definition of Key Towns<sup>2</sup> for the region, which may come into effect during the plan making period.

The current RSES identifies 11 Key Towns in the region which act as economic drivers and provide for strategic employment locations to improve their economic base by increasing the ratio of jobs to workers. With the potential for additional Key Towns to be identified, the Office considers that it is important that the settlement hierarchy should be clearly defined and applied consistently to ensure that investment and development are focused in the most appropriate locations and that the role of each settlement type is clear.

The settlement strategy should also identify strategic locations for growth at scale, including new or expanded communities, particularly within the metropolitan area and other high-capacity locations. These areas should be supported by integrated planning for housing, employment and infrastructure, with a strong emphasis on transport-oriented development (NPO 97 of the NPF).

In addition, the strategy must demonstrate how national compact growth targets will be delivered in practice (NPO 7, 8 and 9 of the NPF). In this respect the Office highlights the reference to the ‘built up footprint’ of existing settlements which the NPF clarifies is defined as the area given over to urban land uses and shall be defined for each settlement on the land use zoning map as part of the statutory plan making process. As such, it is important that the settlement strategy of the RSES provides a planning framework to enable the built-up footprint of settlements in the region to be defined in a coherent manner, ensuring compact and sequential patterns of growth.

The RSES also provides an important opportunity to address cross-boundary growth patterns, and to identify urban growth areas that straddle county boundaries in the

---

<sup>2</sup> General Scheme of Planning and Development (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 2025

metropolitan area where there is a strategic and regionally important need for co-ordination between planning authorities. In these instances, the strategy should provide a clear policy framework to support coordinated planning and the alignment of land use, infrastructure and investment decisions. Co-ordinated area plans will also be required to be identified as a requirement in the RSES, including for Athlone and Drogheda.

Finally, the settlement strategy should support the development of strong and viable rural communities, while reducing unsustainable long-distance commuting. This will require a balanced approach that supports rural development in appropriate locations, while reinforcing the overall strategy of compact growth and the efficient use of infrastructure.

Overall, the settlement strategy must provide clear spatial direction, prioritise sustainable patterns of growth, and ensure that development is aligned with infrastructure capacity and investment, supported by a strong and consistent policy framework across the region.

## **2. Dublin Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan**

The NPF confirms Dublin's role as Ireland's only global city of scale, while also outlining how future growth must be accommodated. Key NPF requirements that must be reflected in the Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP) include:

- a minimum target population of 1.56 million in Dublin City and suburbs by 2040, equating to c. 296,000 additional people;
- a requirement that at least 50% of all new housing in Dublin City and suburbs is delivered within the existing built-up footprint;
- strong prioritisation of large-scale Transport Oriented Development (TOD) along high-capacity public transport corridors (MetroLink, DART+, Luas, BusConnects); and
- improved governance, coordination and infrastructure sequencing.

The Office considers that it is critical to clearly define the role and function of the Dublin MASP as a delivery tool, not solely a policy statement, to address governance, phasing and infrastructure sequencing for TOD locations, and to

manage the interaction between Dublin's growth and surrounding counties, where national policy supports more self-sustaining development than that which would encourage long-distance and mainly car-based commuting.

In addition, given the scale of population growth allocated to the MASP the role of the RSES is critical in identifying a number of strategic housing and employment locations for future development, including appropriate greenfield lands, which provides clear direction for infrastructure providers, state agencies and planning authorities in driving the delivery of future transport oriented development to 2040 and beyond, demonstrating material consistency with NPO 97 of the NPF. EMRA will be aware of previous Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport analysis of TOD opportunities in the MASP area that should be considered along with related work by state agencies including the Land Development Agency.

Section 29(13) of the Act requires the inclusion of measures to secure the effective implementation and monitoring of the MASP including identifying infrastructure priorities, funding sources, cross-sectoral investment and actions, coordination between planning authorities and public bodies, and monitoring arrangements. The Office considers that the identification, implementation and monitoring of these measures are an opportunity for the EMRA to provide strategic leadership in the implementation of the Dublin MASP, and recognises that although there is an implementation group for the Dublin MASP within EMRA, governance arrangements should be considered that are necessary to deliver on the coordination of strategic planning and development between all stakeholders, in accordance with NPO 96 of the NPF.

### **3. Housing**

In accordance with section 29(1)(d) of the Act, the RSES is required to make provision for the location of housing, including provision to meet any national and regional growth targets set out in the NPF as between the functional areas of the planning authorities in the region and the relevant population and housing targets to be included in the housing strategy of each planning authority.

In implementing the NPF, at a regional and local level the Government's housing plan Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025–2030 emphasises the need for a strong pipeline of zoned and serviced land to support the delivery of new homes that are built in the right locations, with the necessary services and community facilities in place, in keeping with climate action goals and the wider spatial growth of the State.

Building on the settlement strategy, the RSES should provide a clear framework for delivering housing in the locations identified for growth in the settlement strategy. This is particularly important in the metropolitan area, given the scale of growth that the next ten-year development plans will need to plan for.

In this context, the Office re-emphasises the key need outlined above for the RSES in working with the planning authorities to identify strategic locations for housing growth at scale.

A central priority for housing is the alignment of housing delivery with infrastructure, directing development to locations with existing or planned capacity, particularly in relation to public transport, water services and social infrastructure. The RSES should therefore align National Development Plan (NDP) funding, stage agency capital programmes and planning authority infrastructure priorities with strategic housing locations to ensure the prioritisation of infrastructure funding for growth areas critical to housing delivery; identify bottlenecks, including funding gaps, to housing delivery at a regional scale; and, ensure investment decisions support compact growth and urban regeneration.

Finally, the RSES should support coordination with national initiatives, including the New Urban Communities Taskforce, under Action 1.9 of the Government's Housing Action Plan to enable the delivery of housing at scale in a plan-led and infrastructure-supported manner.

#### **4. Employment and economic development**

Section 29(1)(b) and (c) of the Act require the RSES to include the strategic location of employment-related development and industrial and commercial development, and a strategy related to retail matters, including consideration of the location of retail development.

NPO 18 and 19 of the NPF also require EMRA to identify and quantify locations for strategic employment development in Dublin and where suitable in urban and rural areas generally.

The RSES therefore plays a central role in supporting the economic growth and development of the region by coordinating the spatial distribution of population, employment and infrastructure.

While the region generates 60% of national Gross Domestic Product (GDP), growth is uneven and it is important therefore that the scale and location of employment development across both urban and rural areas is aligned with infrastructure provision, including sustainable transport. The NPF further highlights that different types of enterprise have distinct location requirements which also need to be reflected in the policy framework.

In addition, the Programme for Government commitment to develop Next Generation Sites over the next 15 years, one of which is anticipated to be located in the east of the country, will require consideration as part of the RSES, ensuring a plan-led approach to the delivery of critical infrastructure in the right location.

At the other end of the scale, urban regeneration initiatives, particularly in the Dublin metropolitan area, may require the relocation of smaller, existing commercial or industrial uses. The economic strategy should therefore also consider how a coordinated regional approach can support this process, particularly where it involves cross-boundary collaboration between multiple planning authorities.

The key priorities for the RSES should therefore be to:

- provide a clear framework for the spatial distribution of employment, ensuring that jobs growth is aligned with housing and supported by appropriate infrastructure;
- support the integration of employment, housing and transport, directing employment development to locations that are accessible by sustainable transport and capable of supporting a critical mass of activity;
- clearly identify strategic locations for employment development, including Regional Growth Centres, Key Towns and other high-capacity locations,

ensuring alignment with infrastructure investment and the overall settlement hierarchy;

- identify strategic employment opportunities, including Next Generation Sites, ensuring a plan-led approach to their location and infrastructure requirements;
- support diverse employment needs, including the provision of suitable locations for industrial, logistics and commercial uses, particularly where these may need to be relocated from urban regeneration areas; and
- support economic clustering, innovation and smart specialisation, working with national enterprise agencies to prioritise investment in key locations and sectors, and maximise the economic potential of the region.

## **5. Transport and infrastructure**

The NPF is explicit that growth must be infrastructure-led, particularly in EMRA where water, wastewater, transport and energy constraints are evident, as such the integration of land use and infrastructure planning is critical.

The Issues Paper identifies infrastructure priorities for the region including public transport expansion (DART+, MetroLink, Luas, BusConnects), roads for regional and north–south connectivity, water and wastewater infrastructure (e.g. Greater Dublin Drainage) and digital connectivity, especially rural broadband.

In addition, the Office notes the Issues Paper highlights the national gateways of Dublin Port and Dublin Airport, public transport and active mobility infrastructure, roads, water services, waste management and the circular economy, communications and energy as key issues for the region.

The Office highlights the commencement of the review of the Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy in 2027 as an opportunity for the RSES to inform and be informed by priorities and investment of strategic transport projects.

A central priority for the RSES should therefore be to align transport investment with settlement patterns, consolidating growth in locations that can achieve a critical mass of population and activity to support the delivery of strategic public transport projects, and to support the delivery of Climate Action Plan requirements.

The RSES should also provide a robust policy framework to support the delivery of strategic infrastructure, including NDP projects and other regionally significant investments, with a particular focus on infrastructure required to unlock development in priority locations.

Similarly, the RSES should also provide a regional policy framework to support the management of waste generation and the circular economy (NPO 76), and to ensure that development plans provide a coordinated policy context that will enable a timely, strategic, rational and consistent approach to the roll out of waste management facilities in line with the regional waste management plan.

As recognised by EMRA, close coordination with infrastructure providers, Government Departments and state agencies will be essential to establishing a regional planning framework that aligns NDP priorities and investment with local plan making and delivery.

Overall, the RSES should ensure that infrastructure planning is fully aligned with the settlement strategy, enabling sustainable growth and supporting the timely delivery of strategic projects across the region.

## **6. Renewable energy**

The Office concurs with the Issues Paper's recognition that the allocation of renewable electricity capacity targets for wind and solar Photovoltaic (PV), securing a sustainable energy supply and competitiveness, energy storage and repowering potential are important issues for the region.

The opportunities associated with renewable energy identified in the Issues Paper, such as employment opportunities, economic growth and co-location with other land uses, while balancing renewable energy development with landscape and biodiversity protection, are also appropriately identified as matters of importance to the RSES.

The Issues Paper also appropriately highlights climate action targets in relation to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing micro and small-scale renewable energy generation, biomethane and district heating installations which will be particularly important in the more developed urban areas across the region.

The preparation of new Regional Renewable Energy Strategy (RRES), as part of the RSES, will be essential to establishing material consistency with NPO 74 of the NPF. This requires the Eastern and Midlands Region to plan for the delivery of 25% of national onshore wind and 45% of national solar PV, and to identify allocations for each of the planning authorities based on the best available scientific evidence.

In this respect, EMRA should collaborate with the Southern and Northern and Western assemblies to adopt a consistent methodological approach, such as that developed under the Accelerating Renewable Electricity Taskforce as Action 102 of the Climate Action Plan 2021, ensuring that capacity allocations are delivered in a coordinated, consistent and sustainable manner, in line with the NPF.

In addition, matters such as cross boundary grid connections and ensuring a secure energy supply will require collaboration with other regions and national agencies to support the prioritisation of strategic projects required to meet national objectives towards achieving a climate neutral economy by 2050, and ensuring material consistency with NPO 70, NPO 71 and NPO 72 of the NPF.

## **7. Climate change adaptation and mitigation**

The Office recognises the RSES will make provision for climate action and mitigation consistent with national policies and measures, and that a key issue for the region is the just transition to a carbon neutral, sustainable, circular economy across all sectors, as identified in the Issues Paper.

The Office considers that climate mitigation and adaptation should be fully integrated in the RSES rather than treated as a standalone policy area, for example the integration of land use and sustainable transport, future flood risk associated with climate change, and coastal zone management are key policy areas within which climate mitigation and adaptation should be integrated. This approach is essential to ensuring that climate mitigation and adaptation are embedded in the overall spatial and economic strategy for the region.

In providing for a RSES that is consistent with national policies and measures including the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, as amended, the Office highlights the importance of meeting the NPF's decarbonisation targets which emphasise the need to achieve more sustainable growth patterns in the

regions and cities. Within each region, the cities in particular play a key role in giving effect to the large-scale transition to net zero required by 2050 and can support a move towards reduced carbon living e.g. through better energy demand management and alternative energy solutions, sustainable mobility and lower carbon buildings.

The regional development goals must also ensure a just transition to carbon neutrality, within the wider statutory framework of climate action, supporting alternative employment in place of traditional industries, and supporting persons and communities that may be negatively impacted by the transition.

In addition to providing a strategy relating to climate action and mitigation consistent with national policies and measures, section 29(1)(f) of the Act highlights the role of the RSES in providing for the coordination of public bodies in the pursuance of the strategy. The RSES should therefore provide clear direction on roles, responsibilities and collaboration mechanisms to support implementation and monitoring.

## **8. Marine and coastal matters**

The region's 270km coastline requires coordinated land and maritime planning with integrated implementation and monitoring which the Office recognises will be provided for in the RSES, as identified in the Issues Paper, in accordance with section 29(1)(g) of the Act and NPO 48 of the NPF.

The RSES has a key role in addressing matters such as sea level rise and coastal flooding, and protection of marine ecosystems, and in supporting ports, fisheries, tourism, offshore renewable energy and associated grid connections. In addition, NPO 50 of the NPF requires that the strategic development requirements of Tier 1 and Tier 2 Ports, ports of regional significance, state fishing harbours and smaller harbours are addressed as part of the RSES to ensure the effective growth and sustainable development of the city regions, and regional and rural areas, in accordance with the National Ports Policy.

The Office welcomes that the RSES will support co-operation and a coordinated approach to land and maritime area planning within the region, on the island and across boundaries with the United Kingdom and European Union, which the Office considers are critical to ensure the delivery and implementation of a coherent

planning framework for the shared maritime area. A coordinated approach will also demonstrate material consistency with NPO 56 of the NPF and Transboundary policy 1 of the NMPF.

## **9. Social infrastructure**

Access to quality childcare, education and health services is a National Strategic Outcome of the NPF, which is a key outcome for the implementation of the RSES. With the identification of facilities relating to third level education, healthcare and sports of such scale as would service the region as part of the RSES in accordance with section 29(1)(j) of the Act, the Office highlights the importance of alignment with the identification of sustainable settlement patterns and transportation strategies.

The Office welcomes that EMRA recognises land use and the integration of transport planning as important considerations for the provision of, and access to such facilities, as identified in the Issues Paper, and emphasises the necessity for engagement with infrastructure providers including the Department of Education and Youth in the preparation of the RSES to ensure population growth is aligned to funding streams and investment for such facilities.

The Office also highlights the Housing Plan - Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025 which supports the economic, social and cultural development of rural areas to facilitate balanced regional growth between urban centres and rural areas, a key focus of which is ensuring rural places contain the social infrastructure needed to attract and support an increasing population, and NPOs 23 – 27 of the NPF related to rural areas which the RSES is required to be materially consistent with.

## **10. Environment, Heritage and Gaeltacht**

The Office welcomes that the RSES will make provision for matters relating to the environment, landscape, biodiversity and flood risk, as identified in the Issues Paper, and highlights the specific statutory requirements of section 29(1) of the Act which requires the RSES to provide for:

- the preservation and protection of the environment and its amenities, including the integration of the National Biodiversity Action Plan, and the archaeological, architectural and natural heritage of the region;
- the protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht, as appropriate;
- a strategy relating to the landscape and landscape character that coordinates the categorisation of landscapes, to ensure a consistent approach to the protection of the landscape; and
- a flooding and flood management plan for the region.

The Office recognises the opportunities for the RSES to provide a regional approach to support the implementation of NPOs 82 – 88 of the NPF, and the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030 (NBAP) which highlights the importance of biodiversity being mainstreamed across government and social and economic sectors, and fully considered at all levels of national, regional and local decision-making.

In addition, the RSES should set out clear regional policy objectives related to biodiversity and ecosystems services, updated to include no net biodiversity loss (NPO 86 of the NPF) and the integration of nature-based solutions to contribute to national and regional climate ambitions (NPO 79 of the NPF), which will demonstrate the RSES is consistent with Objective 3 (Outcome 3C) of the NBAP to target the alignment and integration of the relevant objectives of the NBAP within the RSES by 2030.

The Office welcomes that the Issues Paper highlights the protection of Ráth Cairn and Baile Ghib in County Meath as Gaeltacht areas within the region and recognises NPO 39 of the NPF in supporting the implementation of language plans, Gaeltacht service towns and language networks.

In relation to landscape and landscape character, the Office strongly advises EMRA to coordinate the preparation of the strategy with other regions to ensure a co-ordinated approach to landscape categorisation given the associated cross boundary issues and opportunities. This approach will provide clarity and transparency in

demonstrating how the landscape character of the region has been assessed and to inform local policy.

In preparing a flooding and flood management plan for the region the Office advises EMRA to engage with the Office of Public Works and would welcome robust regional policy objectives relating to the consideration of flood risk and climate change, nature-based solutions including Sustainable urban Drainage Systems, and coastal change.

In addition, the Office considers that there is an opportunity for the RSES to identify strategic infrastructure projects related to flood risk which are required to enable the delivery of sustainable population growth and development across the region.

## **11. Implementation and monitoring**

The NPF requires a step change in delivery, monitoring and accountability resulting in a requirement for the RSES to translate national objectives into measurable regional indicators and strengthen coordination with infrastructure providers and state agencies.

Section 29(13) of the Act also strengthens the role of EMRA to secure the effective implementation and monitoring of the RSES and MASP, with an indication of priorities of infrastructure of scale to be provided, their order of priority, and potential sources of funding. The RSES is also required to provide clarity on roles and responsibilities with the inclusion of measures on cross sectoral investment and actions required to deliver planned growth and development, coordination between planning authorities and public bodies, and monitoring and reporting arrangements required to measure and evaluate progress in implementing the RSES and MASP.

A robust approach to monitoring and reporting should therefore also be established in the RSES, including a set of clear, measurable indicators linked to strategic objectives and regional policy priorities. This will enable effective tracking of progress, support evidence-based review, and ensure accountability.

Early and ongoing engagement with infrastructure providers, Government Departments and relevant agencies will also be critical to ensure that priorities are

aligned from the outset and that delivery is supported throughout the lifecycle of the RSES.

Given the Office's oversight role in considering the monitoring report of each Regional Assembly, the Office also strongly advises EMRA to work with other regions and relevant stakeholders to develop a consistent monitoring framework across all regions, to allow for comparability, transparency and a coordinated national approach to implementation.

The Office is committed to working with the regional assemblies in preparing consistent monitoring reports and utilising agreed key indicators to track and compare progress across the regions.

## **12. Structure, format, and opportunities for streamlining and consistency**

The review of the RSES provides an opportunity to streamline and enhance the structure and format of the strategy, while also promoting greater consistency.

It also offers scope for coordination with the other regional assemblies on common matters, where appropriate taking account of the distinct characteristics of each region, such as:

- objectives involving the alignment of regional policy with national planning policy in areas such as flood risk management, protecting the strategic function of national roads, biodiversity, heritage and the natural environment, integrating land use and sustainable transport, encouraging modal shift in terms of active travel etc.;
- preparation and implementation of the RRES, including the application of common methodologies and supporting policy frameworks; and
- identifying common measurable indicators and monitoring report structures across the regions will support effective tracking of progress, enable comparison across regions, and strengthen transparency and accountability in the delivery of the strategy.

## Summary

In summary, the Office advises that the revised RSES should focus on the following key priorities:

- **provide clear regional leadership and coordination**, identifying where a strategic, cross-boundary approach is required and ensuring alignment across planning authorities and sectors;
- **include a robust settlement strategy** that clearly identifies where growth will occur, prioritises compact development, and in particular identifies and supports the delivery of new communities and strategic growth locations at scale;
- **align infrastructure, housing and employment**, ensuring that development is infrastructure-led, that investment is prioritised in key growth areas, and that constraints to delivery are addressed;
- **provide a robust policy framework for strategic infrastructure delivery**, supporting the prioritisation and implementation of critical, NDP and regionally significant projects, with a focus on infrastructure required to unlock housing delivery at scale in appropriate locations;
- **strengthen the role of the Dublin MASP as a delivery tool**, with clear governance, infrastructure sequencing and investment priorities to support transport-oriented development and manage metropolitan growth;
- **support integrated economic and employment development**, aligning the location of jobs with housing and transport, and providing for strategic Next Generation Sites and the relocation of traditional employment uses where necessary;
- **integrate land use and transport planning**, consolidating growth in appropriate locations to achieve a critical mass of population that supports investment in strategic infrastructure and the delivery of Climate Action Plan objectives;
- **advance the delivery of renewable energy and climate objectives**, including the preparation of the RRES using a consistent, evidence-based approach and in coordination with other regions;

- **embed climate action and environmental considerations across all policy areas**, including biodiversity, flood risk, and nature-based solutions, ensuring a just transition to a low-carbon economy;
- **strengthen implementation, governance and accountability**, with clearly defined priorities, roles and responsibilities, aligned funding, and effective coordination with infrastructure providers and state agencies; and
- **establish a clear and consistent monitoring framework**, with measurable indicators to track progress and ensure delivery of strategic outcomes across the region.

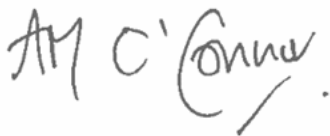
This focused approach will ensure that the RSES provides a clear, coherent and deliverable framework to guide sustainable growth in the Eastern and Midlands Region to 2040 and beyond.

The Office looks forward to reviewing the future draft RSES and is committed to continued positive engagement with your authority in implementation of national and regional policies at county and local level.

Please feel free to contact the staff of the Office in the context of your authority's responses to the above, which we would be happy to facilitate. Contact can be initiated through the undersigned or at [plans@opr.ie](mailto:plans@opr.ie).

Is mise le meas,

---



**Anne Marie O'Connor**

Deputy Regulator and Director of Plans Evaluation

Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015

---