



Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Dáil Éireann
Teach Laighnean
Sráid Chill Dara
Baile Átha Cliath 2

AN BORD PLEANÁLA

21 DEC 2018

LTR DATED _____ FROM _____

LDG- _____

ABP- _____

Constituency Office
4, Commerce House
Flood Street
Galway
T: [REDACTED]

Oifig Toghlaiigh
4, Teach na Tráchtála
Sráid Thobar an Iarla
Gaillimh

[REDACTED]

An Bord Pleanála
6 Marlborough Street
Rotunda
Dublin D01 V902

21st December, 2018

Re: Proposed N6 Galway City Ring Road

Dear Sir or Madam,

Given the scale, cost and implications of the proposed road, I believe that an oral hearing in Galway is an absolute necessity before any decision is reached by the Bord on this project.

At this point, I am outlining my concerns on a general level and will elaborate on them during the course of the oral hearing.

I should also say at the outset that I am a Galwegian who is absolutely committed to the sustainable development of my city and an experienced and committed politician who has spent almost 17 years as a City Councillor and almost 3 years as a Deputy for the Galway West constituency in the Dáil. I am also a daily cyclist when in Galway and the user of both public transport and a private car.

Unfortunately, over the course of my career as a City Councillor and indeed to date, management have consistently adhered to the policy of a further road as the only solution to Galway's traffic congestion. This policy has been pursued to the detriment of other more sustainable public transport solutions and to the detriment of the people of the city who endure serious traffic congestion on a daily basis.

AN BORD PLEANÁLA

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21 DEC 2018

Fee: € 50 Type: *car*

Time: _____ By: _____

When elected in June, 1999 I became a member of the City Council that saw the outer bypass as the one and only solution to the traffic congestion, a solution which ensured that no other options were explored even in the face of the evidence that the outer bypass was simply going to go down a 'cul de sac'.

As Mayor of Galway 2004 – 2005, I had the privilege of overseeing the process and completion of the then City Development Plan and I experienced first-hand the reluctance of management to embrace sustainable transport solutions. For example and against management advice I, with the support of the City Councillors, inserted a specific objective to provide park and ride facilities on both the east and west side of the city. This objective remains unfulfilled to this day notwithstanding the increasing traffic congestion.

In this context, the traffic congestion in Galway requires understanding and analysis. It is at its most acute at peak times primarily due to school and work traffic and yet we have no park and ride facilities and no comprehensive school transport system to lift the traffic off the road.

In addition, there has been an utter failure to look at the provision of increased rail services from Oranmore and Athenry which would allow a significant proportion of the population to travel into the city in a sustainable manner. Also the existing bus service between the city and Connemara is extremely limited, forcing more and more private cars on to the road.

Furthermore, the city is certainly not a cyclist or a pedestrian friendly city although I acknowledge that there have been some limited improvements.

The proposed N6 project is based on outdated and flawed logic and is utterly in conflict with the National Planning Framework: 'Project Ireland 2040' which is committed to sustainable development. More particularly, Galway has been chosen as one of five cities destined to increase its population with the minimum target population for Galway city and suburbs set at 120,000 with the targeting of a greater proportion (40%) of future housing development to be within and close to the existing 'footprint' of built up areas. This proposed increase in population density for the city should go hand-in-hand with the rollout of a public transport system rather than the building of a ring road which will increase the number of cars on our road and lead to further linear development.

Moreover, it is utterly in conflict with our commitments under climate change legislation which at a minimum obliges us to reduce our carbon emissions by 2020, 2030 and 2050.

Even more worryingly however, this project fails to recognise that we cannot continue as is rolling out more roads with the concomitant increase in private car usage.

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Indeed, the faulty logic on which it is based is captured in the following quote from a submission to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Transport, Tourism and Sport on February 14th, 2018 by the Chief Executive (Interim) of Galway County Council:

"In conclusion, there is a compelling need for the proposed road, underpinned by the fact that a modern economy requires world-class road transport infrastructure that is sustainable from an economic, social and environmental perspective. An efficient transport network which works for Galway City and environs will improve access to the Western Region, enhancing its attractiveness for inward investment and new employment opportunities and will contribute to enhanced working and living environment."

In my opinion the proposed 17 kilometres N6 road at a minimum cost of approximately €600 million is not sustainable from an economic, social and environmental perspective.

Finally, earlier this year I stood on the streets of Galway with a small committed team and collected over 22,000 signatures calling on the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport to urgently consider the provision of light rail for Galway city.

The signature campaign took place over 10 weeks and it was abundantly clear from those queuing up to sign the petition that the people of Galway are demanding change and requesting an urgent and sustainable solution to Galway's traffic.

In conclusion, I look forward to elaborating on this submission at the oral hearing.

Yours faithfully,

pp 
Catherine Connolly, TD

Encl. €50 as required to make the submission

