

An Bord Pleanála  
64 Marlborough Street  
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17/12/2018

<b>AN BORD PLEANÁLA</b>	
LDG-	_____
ABP-	_____
<b>18 DEC 2018</b>	
Fee: €	50.- Type: _____
Time: _____	By: _____

**Re: PL07 .302848 – N6 Galway City Ring Road (GCRR) 2018: Planning Application**

Dear Sir/Madam

I hereby wish to express Ibec's support for the N6 Galway City Ring Road planning application.

Ibec is Ireland's largest lobby group, representing Irish business both domestically and internationally. We work with government and policymakers to shape business conditions and drive economic growth. To this end, Ibec launched a major campaign this year, '*Better Lives Better Business*,' whose aim is to make Ireland a better place to live and work. The delivery of critical infrastructure is a key pillar of the campaign.

Ibec is a national organisation with a very strong regional structure. The Ibec West Regional Executive Committee (REC) comprises of senior leaders from businesses in the region. Members are from a broad range of sectors including tourism, food, other indigenous industries and leading FDI companies. The Ibec West Regional Executive Committee (REC) is the representative voice of the wider West business community - small and large, indigenous and multinational.

The importance of upgrading the GCRR to the development of the West region has been previously highlighted in submissions by Ibec and the Ibec West Regional Executive Committee (REC), including to the National Planning Framework (NPF), the National Development Plan (NDP) and most recently in response to the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) Issues Paper for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly area.

The West is a strong performing region for foreign direct investment and is home to a significant life science cluster. Existing companies within the region, offer additional significant cluster opportunities and capacity for growth. However, inadequate road infrastructure risks undermining the region's liveability and hence the ability of the region to attract and retain staff and compete for investment. Commuting and accessibility impact considerably on quality of life.

Increasingly, it is the location of talent that attracts investment. Businesses locate close to talent rather than the other way around. To sustain economic growth and ensure that it can be better shared across the country, the region must offer strong quality of life and employment opportunities.

Substandard transport infrastructure has led to longer commutes and a chronically congested road network. Global traffic scorecards highlight the congestion challenge facing Metropolitan Galway. At peak times, a quarter of time spent driving in Galway is spent in congestion. Drivers in Galway are spending 44 hours per year in traffic congestion, equivalent to an entire working week. Galway performs worse for time spent in congestion than any other metropolitan area in Ireland and far larger European cities such as Rome, Madrid, and Brussels.<sup>1</sup> With a growing population and workforce, the traffic situation in the city will deteriorate without significant investment in transport. The development of the GCRR will allow for the reallocation of road space in the city to more sustainable, more efficient modes of transport such as walking, cycling, and public transport.

Traffic congestion is a significant challenge at strategically important sites in Galway and is proving a huge source of frustration for commuters. The severe traffic issues are having a direct effect on expansion, business productivity, the quality of life of employees and ability of companies to attract and retain talent.

Companies are currently left with no alternative but to look to initiatives to assist employees with the traffic situation, such as changes to hours, causing disruption to normal work planning. Recruiting talent is challenging as the reputation around traffic can often be a negative. Future employees look at companies as more than just jobs and their work/life balance, commitment to the environment and wellness are all factors in the recruitment process. The GCRR scheme will provide direct access to major employment centres at Parkmore and Ballybrit Business Parks.

The N6 GCRR is included in Government's National Development Plan (NDP) 2018-2027. The scheme will give effect to the overall economic and social aims of the National Planning Framework (NPF) - Project Ireland 2040 and support its implementation. It will support more balanced growth across the country in line with national Government policy. It will also facilitate the effective implementation of the Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) which realises Galway City and County

<sup>1</sup> INRIX Global Traffic Scorecard 2017. Available at: [www.inrix.com/scorecard/](http://www.inrix.com/scorecard/)



Council's vision of all elements of transport working together to achieve an integrated sustainable transport solution.

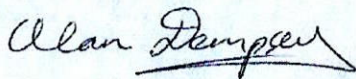
The scheme will lead to many direct and indirect benefits including increased commercial and business links (e.g. supply chains and cluster development), increased talent pool for businesses, effects on productivity, spatial pattern of economic development, more efficient and cost-effective movement of people and goods with safer and shorter journey times.

Improved accessibility to the Western region will enable unrealised potential to be activated and help future-proof the region from potential impacts of Brexit. It will facilitate the sustainable growth of tourism, employment and population in the region. It will improve accessibility of the Gaeltacht areas and improve connectivity to the tourist attractions of the West Region and Connemara.

This is a key national infrastructure project. It will be a key growth enabler for the entire region. It will generate a significant positive economic impact for the West and adjoining regions, in addition to improving quality of life of those living in and commuting to and from the region.

Ibec therefore fully supports the proposed scheme. We sincerely hope the application for planning will be looked upon favourably.

Yours sincerely



Alan Dempsey

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Alan Dempsey

Infrastructure Policy Executive

