

RSES Submissions,
Southern Regional Assembly,
Assembly House,
O'Connell Street,
Waterford X91F8PC

(By email)

6th March 2019

RE: RSES Southern Region

Dear sir/madam,

Galway Chamber is aware of the draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy prepared by the Southern Region.

In the context of Galway's proximity to the Southern Region as well as the importance of Shannon Airport to Galway as a key part of transport infrastructure serving our region, we submit the observations below.

Inter-Regional Bus Connectivity

Shannon is the only airport in the West of Ireland to provide connectivity to strategic transatlantic hubs which will be critical to enabling economic development in the cities of Limerick, Galway and Cork – a priority of Ireland 2040.

Given the focus in Ireland 2040 on enhancing regional accessibility, direct public transport connectivity between Shannon and these cities is vital in supporting the objectives of the National Planning Framework.

While Shannon Airport benefits from Bus Éireann services to and from Galway, currently only five of these services per day are direct Expressway services. The current direct services provided by Bus Éireann do not coincide with flight times, creating a disincentive to use public transport to and from the Airport.

Taking account of this, we would ask that the RSES recognises the need for

Significantly improved direct services from Galway to Shannon and connecting services to Galway's key towns as a key enabler for further growth.

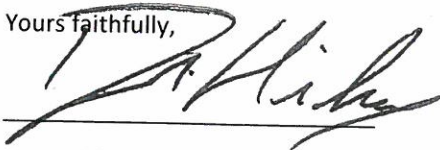
Airports

We welcome the recognition of the importance of Shannon Airport as it is a critical resource for the Northern and Western Region. Capacity at the State Airports outside of Dublin is not an issue as there is enough capacity available. Rather it is securing measures to ensure that this capacity is utilised. For instance, Tourism Ireland marketing supports for route development are critical for attracting new airlines and services. Funding mechanisms to support Strategic Route Development for airports outside of Dublin should be put in place to improve air connectivity. Such a measure would have a greater impact at a local level compared with measures to put in place preclearance for goods.

Furthermore, there is a need to recognise that all airports under 3 million passengers are eligible for CapEx support. We would also ask that the continued exchequer support under the Regional Airports Programme should extend to all airports under 3 million passengers as permissible under EU guidelines to ensure all airports can develop their potential as key tourism and business gateways for their regions.

Should you have any queries on this submission please contact me at president@galwaychamber.com

Yours faithfully,



Dave Hickey
President, Galway Chamber

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