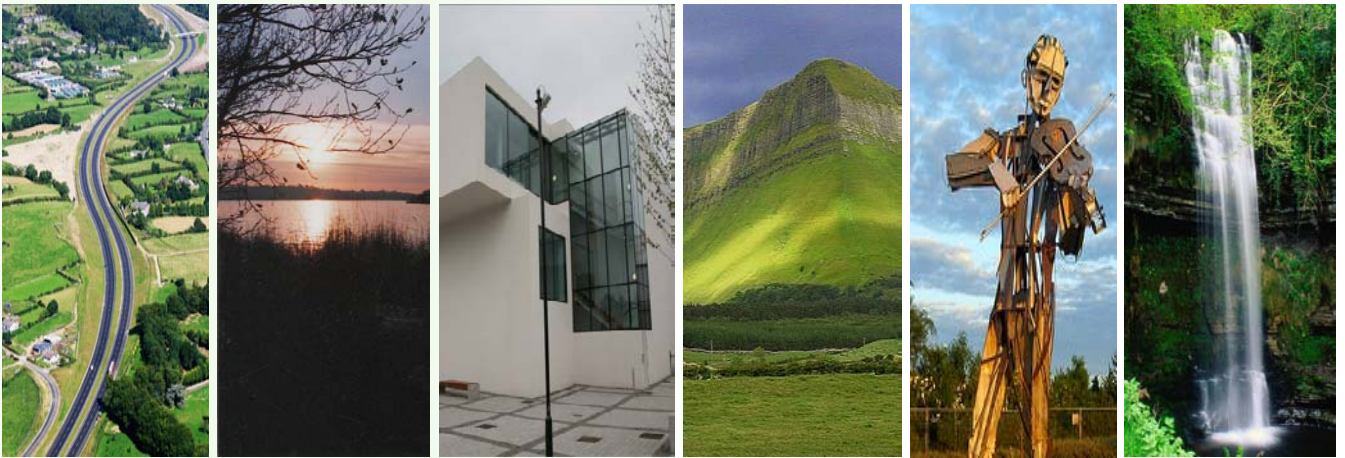


The Border Regional Authority

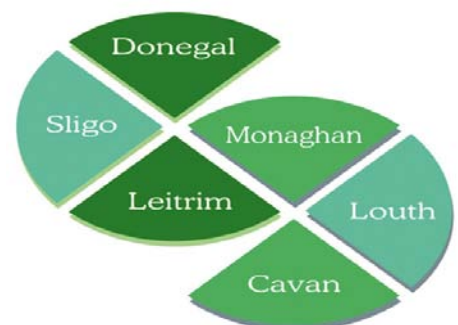
Údarás Réigiúnach na Teorann



Draft Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022

Executive Summary

January 2010



Preamble

Under the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2007 and the 2009 Regulations, the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government issued a direction to each Regional Authority to review existing Regional Planning Guidelines 2004 – 2016, and prepare new Regional Planning Guidelines for their administrative areas.

Following initial public consultation and consideration of submissions or observations received, the Border Regional Authority has prepared Draft Regional Planning Guidelines for the period 2010 – 2022. This document will be on public display for a period of 11 weeks commencing on the 26th February, 2010 up to and including the 14th May 2010.

All interested persons including any member of the public, public authorities, community organisations and public and private agencies, are invited to make submissions or observations regarding the Draft Regional Planning Guidelines 2010 – 2022, and associated Draft Environmental and Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA) Reports.

Following closure of the consultation period, a Directors Report on submissions or observations received will be compiled and presented to the Members of the Border Regional Authority.

The Draft Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region 2010 – 2022 and all other related documents may be viewed at the following web address: <http://www.border.ie>

A hard copy of all documents may also be inspected at the following locations during regular office hours:

Offices of the Border Regional Authority, Corlurgan Business Park, Ballinagh Road, Cavan, Co. Cavan

Planning Departments at the offices of the six constituent County Councils;

Town Councils in the six constituent Counties; and

All Public Libraries in the six constituent Counties

The six constituent Counties in the Border Region are: Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan, Monaghan and Louth

Further details on the RPG review may be obtained from:

The Director,
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Executive Summary

The Border Regional Authority includes the geographical area of Counties Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Sligo. The Planning and Development Act, 2000 requires Regional Authorities to provide a long-term strategic planning framework for the sustainable development of the region for a 12 year period up to 2022. The Planning Act also requires the Regional Planning Guidelines to be reviewed again in 2016.

The Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) is a long term strategic planning document which aims to direct the future growth of the Border Region, and seeks to implement the planning framework set out in the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) published in 2002. It achieves this through appraisal of the critical elements involved in ensuring proper planning and sustainable development, and through the protection of sensitive and environmentally important locations. The RPGs inform and provide direction to County Development Plans of constituent Councils within the Border Region.

The first RPGs for the Border Region were adopted in May 2004 and set out a strategic framework for planning and development for the region up to 2016. This RPG review updates the 2004 document and provides a further outlook up to 2022.

Chapter 1 describes the planning context for the preparation of the RPGs. At a national level, these are identified as the Planning and Development Act 2000, the National Development Plan (NDP), the National Spatial Strategy, Smarter Travel, Transport 21, the National Climate Change Strategy and the National Energy Policy. At a regional level significant documents include the Platform for Change and River Basin Management Plans. The context and purpose of the review and the delivery of the 2004 RPGs are outlined under the topics of population, housing growth, economic activity, public transport, roads investment, ports and airports, water services, waste management, natural heritage and environment, built and cultural heritage, open space and recreation, rural development and social inclusion. The chapter concludes with an outline of the key planning issues and investment priorities for the Region over the period of the Guidelines.

Chapter 2 sets out the vision for the RPGs:

'By 2022, the Border Region will be a competitive area recognised as, and prospering from, its unique interface between two economies, where economic success will benefit all, through the implementation of the balanced development model, which will provide an outstanding natural environment, innovative people, which in themselves, will be our most valuable asset'.

The delivery of this vision shall be achieved through the implementation of strategic goals and relevant policies and objectives of the Guidelines

Chapter 3 outlines the Core Settlement Strategy for the Region. The Chapter sets out the population growth framework, housing targets and Housing Land Requirement (HLR) for each Local Authority, which are to be incorporated into their Development Plans, through a Core Settlement Strategy. The minimum population targets issued by the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government (DEHLG) in January 2009 are outlined below and are incorporated into the Core Settlement Strategy, which will provide for the proper planning and sustainable development of the Region.

Source	2008 (est)	2010	2016	2022
Border Region	492,500	511,000	552,700	595,000
(% of State Pop)	(11.14)	(11.14)	(11.06)	(11.06)
State	4,422,000	4,584,900	4,997,000	5,375,200

Source: DEHLG, January 2009

The settlement strategy outlines a settlement hierarchy that will set the framework for County Development Plans within the Region. It also outlines the following:

- Function of the Settlement Strategy;
- Legislative requirements;
- Settlement Structure of the Border Region;
- Population trends;
- Strategic development options and preferred growth model;
- Core Settlement Strategy;
- Implications for development plans;
- Policy framework for future development of the region

In essence, the settlement strategy will provide direction for future County, Town and Local Development Plans, in that it provides a framework outlining population targets, housing supply and a likely demand required, and the (HLR) to accommodate that growth.

Chapter 4 is the Regional Economic Strategy. This Chapter sets out the key documents which formed core elements in preparing this strategy, namely Building Irelands Smart Economy, A Framework for Sustainable Economic Renewal, Our Cities; Drivers of National Competitiveness and the Regional Competitiveness Agenda Baseline and Realising Potential Reports by Forfás.

In setting the context, the factors of competitiveness are identified as; enterprise dynamic, skills and education, economic infrastructure, leadership and strategic capacity, innovation and quality of life. The challenges facing the Border Region in the current economic environment are outlined, including the growth in unemployment, decline in sectors such as construction and manufacturing and also regional outputs.

Access and connectivity, both in terms of physical and virtual infrastructure, and development of the transmission network are seen as the most critical components to improve the competitiveness of this Region. More specifically, the key areas identified for future growth and development include:

- **Agri-Food Sector** – taking advantage of depth of capabilities, natural resources, and changing consumer demands
- **Internationally Traded Services (incl. Global Business Services)** – Strengthened by enhanced broadband capacity through Project Kelvin
- **Renewable Energy and Environmental products and services (Clean Tech)** – based on the natural resource base and on the existing regional capabilities in engineering and manufacturing and in R & D
- **Life Sciences**– based on existing company activity and strengthening R & D capabilities north and south of the border

- **Tourism** – based on historic strength, existing natural and cultural amenities and infrastructure, and exploiting un-tapped potential through product development

Chapter 5 sets out the key physical infrastructure needs of the Border Region which are required to ensure the successful delivery and implementation of the Settlement and Economic Strategies. The infrastructure identified is required to ensure that the RPGs provide a deliverable framework for the full integration of land use and national investment in infrastructure. The chapter lists key areas of priority investment under the different types of infrastructure –

- Transport - Public, Roads, Rail, Airports, Ports, Cycling and Walking;
- Water Services;
- Waste Water and Surface Water Treatment;
- Energy Infrastructure
- Telecommunications; and
- Waste Management.

Chapter 6 outlines the importance of Environment and Amenities at the regional strategic scale. The Chapter is divided into a number of sub-sections that include

- Climate Change
- Natural Heritage
- Landscape,
- Water,
- Built Heritage,
- Amenities and Recreation,
- Coastal Management.

The Border Region is well known and recognised for its unspoilt and natural environment, which is considered a significant asset for the region. This Chapter highlights the importance of the natural environment and those areas where stricter control will be required due to new Directives from the European Union (EU).

The Chapter also outlines a list of those priority areas for the management of the environment over the coming years:

- the continued protection, management and enhancement of natural heritage, built heritage and environmental resources;
- a revised approach to policy and objective formulation, structured around compliance with existing and emerging European and national legislation. These include flood protection measures, biodiversity management, improving water quality status and the identification and management of coastal management zones;
- continued development and promotion of areas of heritage value which have importance to the Region, county or locality, including the development of management plans, for long term and sustainable investment and monitoring;
- ensuring that Council boundaries do not result in fragmentation of policy implementation;
- re-assessment of the way in which open spaces are managed, linked and developed and the potential for integrating additional functions in that reassessment.

Chapter 7 covers the key issue of social infrastructure and the building of sustainable communities. This Chapter has an important supporting role to the Settlement Strategy, in that

it outlines the softer infrastructure and assets that are required to enhance the quality of life for residents and visitors. Central elements of this are design quality, sustainable densities, integration of housing strategies, schools and crèche provision, leisure and recreational facilities, healthcare, community facilities, and the role of the Arts and Culture, including the Irish language, to the supporting and enriching the many communities and places in the region. Also highlighted, is the importance of planning policy and decisions, taking into account the key issue of social inclusion, and the role that the County Development Boards and other programmes can play in supporting Local Authorities (LA's) in tackling social inclusion issues.

Chapter 8 meets the requirements of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government recently published Flood Risk Management Guidance to Planning Authorities. Through a Regional Flood Risk Appraisal, it outlines a number of recommendations to Local Authorities with regard to assessment of flood risk. It sets the framework for Local Authorities to carry out a more detailed Strategic Flood Risk Assessment within County, Town and Local Area Plans.

Chapter 9 outlines the legal context of the RPGs and how they will be implemented over the six year period up to 2016. It highlights the role and intentions of the Regional Authority in carrying out implementation and monitoring of the Guidelines. The composition of committees and working groups are identified and suggested as a means of assessing the implementation of the Guidelines. It also outlines the intention of the Regional Authority to monitor the delivery of the RPGs throughout their lifetime using a series of potential targets, indicators and update reports.

Separate processes of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA) have been carried out as part of the review and preparation of the Regional Planning Guidelines. These reports are available in parallel and supporting volumes to the RPGs.