



RCN is 20206299

Carraroe

Sligo

## **All Island Strategic Rail Review Submission**

Dear Sir /Madam

### **Sent by Email**

I write on behalf of Carraroe and District Regeneration Association which serves a population of 5000 or 23% of Sligo Pop and is an umbrella organisation for Tidy Towns, Text Alert, CPR /Defibrillators and Area Regeneration of the of Carraroe area to make our views known on the All-Island Rail Review.

We as a group are active members of Co Sligo Public Participation Network and rely on its research on behalf of the people of Sligo on transport services as part of its consultation with 500 registered groups as well as others during the development of its Wellbeing Process.

When it came to rail in particular the vision expressed was for:

- Improved train services between Sligo and Longford every hour to facilitate commuting.
- More frequent Longford to Sligo trains.
- Reliable timetables
- Address train infrastructure problems
- More affordable fares
- Western rail corridor extended to cover Donegal to Galway, including access to Knock airport.

Executive Committee: Bridie Mc Lean Chairperson 0863998925, Honorary Secretary Pat Benson 0872222835 Joint Treasurers: Dympna O'Loughlin Anthony McGoldrick. Mary Dunbar. Mary Murphy Noel Merrick, Joseph Scanlon, Mary Corcoran , Joe Henry, Austin Healy ,Sean O'Kelly, Damien Brennan , David Kivlehan E Mail [cadrasligo1@gmail.com](mailto:cadrasligo1@gmail.com)  
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In respect of transport infrastructure and rail in particular, the Sligo Vision for Community Wellbeing thematic document concludes:

- Public transport networks and services are inadequate. There is negligible public transport outside Sligo town. The experience of public transport in the County is that the service is irregular and unreliable.
- Public transport is seen as essential to combat isolation and allow people, especially in rural areas, to participate and engage in all aspects of life within the County.
- Member groups identified the need to address rail infrastructure problems and establish reliable timetables but particularly stressed the problem of the high cost of rail travel.
- Improved train services from Sligo to Longford would facilitate commuting.
- Extensions to the western rail-corridor into Donegal and Galway, including access to Knock airport, are seen as needed to boost local economies; support enterprise and workers, tourism etc.

#### Earlier Studies:

This research builds on previous studies conducted under programmes such as Age Friendly Sligo (2015/16) where full audits of the rail and station infrastructure were conducted from an inclusion and accessibility perspective. This work established a need for more accessibility as standard for trains and stations, allowing people living with disabilities to avail of public transport in the same way as everybody else. There was a clear need for better connectivity to rail stations and better accessibility and amenities at the stations. This study identified a number of ways that Sligo Train Station could be improved to better meet the accessibility needs of the community.

#### These included:

- Shifting the focus from vehicles to pedestrians
- Establishing a wheelchair and pushchair friendly access to the station
- Providing dropped kerbing at appropriate points
- Providing suitable accessible car parking

- Providing safe crossings over the dual carriageway that separates the station from the town. • Providing safe ways for pedestrians to navigate the three streams of traffic when accessing the station
- Wheelchair friendly buses servicing the station
- Outdoor seating.

#### Environmental concerns:

- The Environment and Sustainability section of the Sligo PPN Vision for Community Wellbeing is clear on the importance of green transport networks.
- Written in aspiration language, the vision states:
- Transport networks in Sligo ensure that communities throughout the County are well connected through integrated, green public transport systems that are affordable and frequent.
- There is widespread infrastructure to facilitate green transport for work and recreation, such as cycle paths, greenways and electric charging points. Bringing it all together.
- The issue of better public transport, including rail services, was one of the core issues to arise across a range of wellbeing themes, which highlights the importance of improved transport for the environment, social inclusion and the economy.
- Greenways are important to the people of Sligo but where there is any chance of reintroducing the rail, this needs to take priority – particularly when we consider inclusion and accessibility, as the train can better cater to a broader range of accessibility requirements.
- There was an expressed desire to see the Western Rail Corridor restabilised. However, instituting a parallel greenway should also be considered.
- Commuter rail between Sligo and Longford was another key area that would be of benefit to the people of Sligo.
- In conclusion, the Sligo PPN Vision for Community Wellbeing established that there is a vision for Sligo as, “a rural county where transport is of critical importance in all aspects of life. We pioneer affordable, green transport options that enable us to support enterprise, workers and daily life and work consistently to deliver integrated systems that support quality of life for our people.”

We are aware and directly involved in developing a strategy for Co Sligo called Vision for Sligo 2030 with KPMG Consultancy facilitating it for Sligo County Council and are surprised that Irish Rail, Bus Eireann, Transport for Ireland are not involved or participating in such an important process which involves the people and their needs into 2030. Our representatives have raised this concern at the meetings but nothing has changed.

We also advocated at the steering group for Sligo 2030:

- The need for electrification of rail line from Dublin to Sligo
- The need to have Sligo Town Bus Service extended to Carraroe, Calry, Rathcormack /Drumcliffe where public car parks exist and could be used by residents of a surrounding areas to travel to Sligo Town thereby saving on parking etc.

We would appreciate if our suggestions and concerns can be taken into consideration during the review

Kind regards



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Patrick Benson  
Honorary Secretary

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