



South East Chambers  
C/O 2 George's Street  
Waterford

**Minister Shane Ross**  
**Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport**

26th January 2018

Dear Minister Ross,

**Re: Upgrade of N24**

South East Chambers would like to take the opportunity to highlight the importance of better connectivity between the Regional Cities, which is identified as a priority in the National Planning Framework.

The South East Chambers Co LBG is the vehicle through which the various Chambers of Commerce based in the South East of Ireland share information, adopt best practice and make decisions on regional issues

It is an collaboration of County Carlow Chamber, Dungarvan & West Waterford Chamber, Enniscorthy Chamber, Gorey Chamber, Kilkenny Chamber, New Ross Chamber, Wexford Chamber and Waterford Chamber, collectively representing the business community across the South East Region.

As outlined in the National Planning Framework, we are now facing a time of tremendous growth and it is clear that the cities of Waterford, Limerick and Cork in the Southern Region will be instrumental in that vision, particularly in complementing the role of Dublin.

Offering major international access through four of the country's five major ports, all of which have substantial expansion plans, and two international airports, a road network must be put in place to offer efficient connectivity between the cities as a matter of priority.

The N24 in its current state presents a major obstacle to commercial operations and does not present a progressive image to potential investors coming to Ireland or to the South-East and Mid-West regions.

Notwithstanding the importance of the proposed M20 from Cork to Limerick, South East Chambers recommends that first consideration should be given to upgrading the existing N24 to motorway standard running from Waterford to Limerick, connecting the M8 to Cork at Cahir and linking the M18 to Galway. This proposal also has the support of Limerick City & County Council, Kilkenny County Council, Tipperary County Council and Waterford City & County Council as per the attached N24 Submission document.

This is the optimal solution to achieve maximum connectivity between the four Regional Cities (Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford) in the most cost-effective way possible.

### **Key Benefits**

- The upgrade of the N24 would reduce the urgency for the construction of new direct motorways between Limerick and Cork and Waterford and Cork, saving significant amounts of public expenditure, maximising existing public infrastructure and creating key connectivity across the Southern Region and between its City regions.
- On completion the proposed M24 route will ensure motorway connectivity between the cities of Waterford, Limerick, Galway and Cork thereby connecting the South East, South, Mid East and Western regions and enabling the four city regions to become a very real and viable counterbalance to growth and development in the Dublin region.
- The N24 suffers from slow journey times, is sub-standard in its design and alignment and is congested where currently routed through a number of towns and villages. As a result of Brexit, trade to and from continental Europe, via Rosslare, negotiating its way through Tipperary to Limerick and the West, is likely to increase, putting severe strain on already busy roads.
- It would create the possibility of opening up the M8 and linking with the M7.
- Average journey times per km need to be improved, in a manner that doesn't undermine metropolitan area population and jobs growth.
- The viability of the ports in the South East (Rosslare, Belview/Waterford), the Mid West (Foynes/Limerick) and the South West (Cork) to act as import and export centres with the EU and the UK are dependent on high quality and direct land routes within the region.

In conclusion, the Southern Region is on course to develop and grow significantly in the coming years and must be given every opportunity to reach its full potential.

As a result, South East Chambers recommends the region be given due consideration during the consultation process of the National Planning Framework and Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, particularly in respect of better connectivity between cities.

Kind regards,

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**John Hurley,**  
Chairperson, South East Chambers