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Chapter 7: Sustainable Movement

Caibidil: Volume 1: Written Statement» Chapter 7: Sustainable Movement

Transport emissions are a key issue to be addressed in Ireland. Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) are responsible for a disproportionate amount of transport emissions. They comprised 4%[1] of registered vehicles nationally in 2018, however, SEAI estimates indicate that they produced 14% of total transport emissions. The decarbonisation of HGVs is particularly challenging as electricity is currently not a viable alternative to diesel. CNG has the potential to address transport emissions with reduced carbon emissions relative to diesel and also has significant air quality benefits. When the injection of renewable gas is increased on the gas network, and utilised by CNG vehicles as bio-CNG, carbon neutral transport can be achieved.

GNI would welcome the inclusion of CNG and CNG infrastructure in the Sustainable Movement chapter of the County Development Plan and some suggested text for consideration is provided below.

“Compressed Natural Gas (CNG)

CNG is natural gas that has been compressed to fit into a vehicle’s tank and is particularly suitable for use in commercial vehicles. The development of CNG Infrastructure will enable fuel switching from diesel to CNG for heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and buses. CNG is an established technology that is used in many countries around the world. CNG contains virtually no particulate matter (PM) and has low emission levels of nitrogen oxides (NOx)[2]. CNG vehicles can be run on 100% biomethane. Biomethane is a renewable and carbon neutral fuel, produced via AD plants from existing waste streams and a variety of sustainable biomass sources, including grass, animal waste, crop residues and food waste. Infrastructure development for CNG is already underway in Ireland, with 14 fast fill CNG stations being installed across the Core TEN-T road network via a project called the Causeway Study[3] that is supported by the European Commission through the CEF Transport Fund[4] and the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU). The Council will support the use of gas in transport by a presumption in favour of applications for CNG refuelling infrastructure, provided planning and environmental criteria are satisfied.”

The development of CNG in transport supports ‘The National Policy Framework: Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport in Ireland[5]’ which sets out a target of 70 CNG fuelling stations by 2025. The Climate Action Plan has an action to develop the CNG fuelling network to support the uptake of CNG vehicles (Action 76) which is supported by the Causeway Study. The Interim Climate Actions 2021 document, which was published in March 2021, has an action (Action 123) to commission three CNG fuelling stations and to progress the remaining stations planned for the network

by Q4 2021. In addition, the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midlands Region[6] highlights the decarbonisation of transport as an objective and calls for modal shift to be supported by increased availability of low carbon fuels such as CNG. The RSES also highlights the use of CNG powered commercial vehicles as a means of addressing air pollution emissions.

[1] In calculating this figure SEAI include all goods vehicles over 2 tonnes.

[2] <https://www.ngva.eu/policy-priorities/air-quality/>

[3] Causeway Study: <https://www.gasnetworks.ie/business/natural-gas-in-transport/the-causeway-project/>

[4] CEF Transport Fund: <https://ec.europa.eu/inea/en/connecting-europe-facility/cef-transport>

[5] National Policy Framework Alternative Fuels Infrastructure For Transport In Ireland
<https://assets.gov.ie/26377/3075c29a37b84b10acae95da89d756ea.PDF>

[6] https://emra.ie/dubh/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/EMRA_RSES_1.4.5web.pdf

Documents Attached: Níl