



Department for

Infrastructure

An Roinn

Bonneagair

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Aire a chara

IRELAND 2040 OUR PLAN – ISSUES & CHOICES PAPER

I wish firstly to congratulate you on the publication of your "Ireland 2040 Our Plan" Issues and Choices Paper. The importance of this document and the longer term plan that develops from it will clearly have a significant contribution to make to the creation of a prosperous and vibrant island both now and in the longer term.

I believe your consultation document succinctly captures many of the economic, social, cultural and spatial challenges we jointly face as we look to develop a strategic vision for the future. I welcome the emphasis you have placed on Ireland in an All-Island context and agree that many of the issues that remain to be addressed are mutually shared by both administrations. There are multiple benefits to adopting a co-operative approach, particularly in respect of issues around spatial planning, transportation and infrastructure development.

Much has already been achieved by co-operative working between the two Administrations, both at Ministerial and official level and I believe it is important that we continue to capitalize

on progress made to date, particularly in the context of the potential implications of the UK's decision to leave the EU. It is essential that the new National Planning Framework continues to align with the Regional Development Strategy 2035 to ensure that our places are not defined by an administrative boundary but rather, that functional relationships between settlements and interactions at local and regional level are allowed to develop and grow for mutual economic gain.

Similarly, the importance of a coordinated approach to infrastructure development cannot be underestimated. There is a need to maintain ease of access and connectivity between Ireland north and south and to promote improved infrastructure between the two. By continuing to adopt a shared approach to infrastructure development, locally at border level, at a regional level and across the range of infrastructure modes, we will enhance connectivity between the jurisdictions and further strengthen cross-border co-operation.

I believe that many opportunities remain for our two administrations to work closely together in respect of those issues outlined above. Your National Planning Framework provides a significant vehicle via which these issues and challenges can be progressed and addressed. In addition, I have recently tasked my officials to begin early scoping work in respect of a long-term infrastructure delivery plan for the north which will form a vision for the delivery of infrastructure at a regional level up to 2050. As this work develops I believe it will also provide an opportunity for collaboration and joined up working to ensure a coordinated approach to infrastructure provision and spatial planning.

I hope that the current consultation process helps you to establish a clear vision of Ireland in 2040 and look forward to seeing the final National Planning Framework when it is published later this year.

Is mise le meas



CHRIS HAZZARD

Minister for Infrastructure