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To: National Planning Framework
Subject: Ireland 2040 Plan submission

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To whom it may concern,

I have read your strategy document with some enthusiasm and, as a citizen of the county, I take a very keen interest in this subject.

My main concern is the dispersed nature of our population, in both a rural and urban context and the extra costs this causes. While the information you supplied has shown that 40% of the state's populace now reside in the Dublin region, additional infographic show that the core centres in our cities actually saw a population decrease. This is somewhat of a contradiction in my mind and illustrates the extent of urban sprawl and the increase of commuter towns, therefore explaining the two thirds who use cars to get to work. I am resident of central area in Dublin and experience the consequence of this: the difficulty in finding suitable accommodation and the exorbitant rents yet I walk past vacant sites and unused houses, I see the Luas, a major piece of transport infrastructure, trundle past derelict building. It's absurd really and so very frustrating.

While I live in our capital I am actually from rural Ireland and return there frequently. I see a countryside blighted by unsightly bungalows and even large one-off suburban style houses, completely out of character with the surrounding countryside. As you are well aware this makes the delivery of services, be that transport, health or education, difficult and certainly not economically viable. And while people are scattered over a wide area, rural towns suffer from dereliction and stagnation and once again it leads to car dependency.

The people in these bungalows should be living in towns and villages, within walking distances of local businesses, restaurants, cafes and pubs.

And supplying electricity, energy, broadband and transport is more expensive than our European neighbours due to the fact that we've to supply this sort of settlement pattern. And tourism, which is seen as a major strategy to rejuvenate rural Ireland, will suffer: we market ourselves as a green island but this is contradicted with a landscape with bungalows and septic tanks polluting the land.

In summary we must have proper planning that cluster the population together allowing to create properly connected communities. You must not let parochial self-interest or indeed corporate vested interests to take precedence over the national good.

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