

## Submission for National Planning Framework – public consultation 2017

### Climate Action as an overarching ethos

It has been recognised that it can no longer be 'business as usual' and that there is a need for alternative strategies. This must include a systemic approach that focuses on an overarching ethos of Climate Action which guides the implementation of the strategies. Twenty percent of the €960 billion EU budget is to be spent on climate action evidencing this as a critical priority that must be reflected in the Ireland's 2040 plan.

### Life cycle analysis

Within this context, the understanding of 'oikos' as the management of all resources begins to reframe the current EU debate on growth versus cohesion. If we redefine growth beyond fiscal economics and GDP to equitably include quality of life, then it is no longer a binary debate and removes the issue of sacrificing one for the other. This necessitates a life cycle analysis (inputs, processes and outputs) for every implementation of policy, procurement and tendering which may challenge the concept of off-setting, yet prioritises decisions on policy order. This informed decision making process sets the stage to enable managed risk as a way to develop alternative strategies fit for purpose for our changing context.

### Emergent solutions through collaboration

A tangible precedent is [Loop City](#) in Copenhagen, a regional collaboration across administrative and geographical borders initiated through a new public transport system. The ten municipalities complement each other and do not compete thereby supporting emergent behaviour; as they try to solve problems, new processes of implementation are forming as they collaborate. How could this be applied to Ireland? The 5 hubs of Galway, Cork, Limerick, Waterford and Dublin act in alliance to deliver place-based responses to the National Planning Framework which embeds regional complementarity. Implementation could be encouraged through rewarding cooperation and disincentivising competition. This would prevent resources being driven by the speculative market or traded as a political instrument.

For example in terms of transport infrastructure, none of the 5 hubs would be more than an hour's journey from Dublin or each other; interconnected through national time tabling for train, bus, plane and ferry. This with competitive transport pricing would incentivise the use of public transport, and disincentivise private car use while contributing to quality of life being convenient and stress free.

### Quality of life gaining competitive advantage

A 5 hub regional approach could capitalise on the competitive advantage of the quality of life where it is seen as a tradable commodity i.e. people would prefer quality of life over long commute or job/ income. By second tier cities auditing and promoting their quality of life and social capital potential, it could identify measures to encourage both rural and urban regeneration to address decline.

Funding like EU JESSICA which promotes and funds sustainable development of

- urban infrastructure
- heritage or cultural sites
- redevelopment of brownfield sites
- creation of new commercial floor space for SMEs, IT and /or R&D sectors
- university buildings
- energy efficiency improvements

offers a framework of categories which the 5 hubs and their regions could use in preparation for an audit for world ranking. For example it has been shown that when cities prepare for world heritage status the depth and breadth of preparation required even if unsuccessful raises the overall standards in that city. This focus supports employment potential, relieving development pressure on the eastern part of the country. As with the change in demographics in 2040, cities need to promote their social capital and quality of life as what contributes and addresses each group's quality of life (age, gender) is changing.

### Involve citizenship and participation.

Since urban systems are social systems, a regional approach to the NPF should involve citizenship and participation. We suggest embedding the National Planning Framework in all aspects of civic life. The ordinary citizen needs to know the thinking and information that have contributed to the policies. Using the Arts through the All Government Creative Ireland Programme to engage communities in participatory governance would disseminate the planning framework to civic society e.g. schools, GAA, community centres, etc. Embedding an All Ireland awareness and pride for a national unifying project that everyone can get behind, follows the model of the 2016 celebrations.

### Compliance order between plans

To avoid the NPF following the same fate of the NSS 2002-2020 being without implementation, a strong compliance order between plans of different scales needs to be adopted.