



## **Joint Business Council**

### **A Submission on the National Planning Framework: Issues and Choices**

#### **Introduction**

The Ibec/CBI NI Joint Business Council (JBC) was formed in 1993 to support the emerging peace process. Our vision is a fully connected All island market that supports greater prosperity and employment through increased flows of people, goods, services, energy and investment. Working collaboratively has provided proven benefits for citizens from both jurisdictions. And this work must continue where appropriate supportive and value adding in the context of the UK leaving the EU.

Many of our collective member businesses are organised on an all-island basis with production and supply chains of inputs and outputs stretching across every region covered by the National Planning Framework (NPF) . As a result of this integration and collaboration these firms are more productive and competitive. Beer brewed in Dublin, is canned in Belfast and exported from Dublin Port; people who live in the North work in the Republic and commute daily; wind energy generated in Mayo powers the lights in Belfast homes. And of course there are the regions adjacent to the border for whom cross border regional planning and development is of immediate and compelling interest given their location.

The NPF is a key element of this work. It's all island approach is well developed and it has closely considered the cross border dimension in notable depth and detail. Crucially the NPF Team in the Department of Housing Planning Community and Local Government (DHPCLG) is working closely with their counterparts in the Northern Ireland Department of Infrastructure to scope and include what will be of mutual benefit to plan for and progress on a joined up, cooperative and collaborative all island basis. Consequently the NPF's All island Chapter is a model in this regard.

---

#### **Protecting peace, prosperity and stability**

The case for continuing to focus on planning for, and delivering, the island's long term sustained prosperity is compelling. And while the UK leaving the EU clearly creates a new and shared challenge to doing so the JBC believes the response should in fact be to accelerate investment in all-island infrastructure that is coherent and so planned to be 'joined up'. This will enhance both jurisdictions capacity, along with that of their constituent regions, to be globally competitive for growth, investment and job creation.

The All island Investment Project (AIIP) is the JBCs most recent initiative to progress this task. It is scoping, compiling and presenting a new vision for delivering mutual economic value add by highlighting, considering and supporting the need to plan for the long term aim of securing the 'demographic dividend' of a prosperous island reaching its potential population growth potential of 10 million people by mid century.

**The All island infrastructure investment** to facilitate long term population growth where choices are being made **today** that can be 'joined up' to mutual benefit in an island context, and which private sector investment can help to deliver, includes:

- ***Providing a comprehensive all-island motorway network:*** as set out in the JBC AIIP 'Connected' Report that has scoped what this should be, how it is to be paid for and who will benefit. Included in its proposals are completion of planned A5 upgrade **and** a *motorway ring road around the island* linking Belfast and L'Derry and then on to Donegal, Sligo and Galway connecting with Limerick, Cork, Waterford and Wexford (a more in depth answer on Connected is provided later in this submission);
- ***Strengthening all-island energy infrastructure*** in response to a rapidly evolving landscape for energy supply by continuing to support long term energy investment opportunities such as construction of the North/South Electricity Inter-Connector to facilitate completion of the *Single Electricity Market* and its capacity to provide energy security and support renewable energy options and climate change actions.<sup>1</sup>
- ***Optimising the Belfast/Dublin Economic Interaction:*** towards achieving a conurbation of sufficient scale to be competitive with European and UK equivalents and be an attractive place to live and work because local authorities in the GBA and GDA jointly develop positive and proactive collaboration on a plan for the two areas to growth simultaneously and be mutually supportive especially in attracting many more of the energetic and ambitious young people who have left this island to return;

This last point not should be read as in any way suggesting JBC does not support other cross border initiatives to join up what should be. In fact it is very much the opposite. It is fully supportive of the North West Strategic Growth Partnership and the work in the Mid Border to progress cross border cooperation including in response to the very local and potentially hugely disruptive challenges of UK leaving the EU.

However there is a risk these initiatives that are particular to the border region result in reference to an 'all island approach' being seen outside these areas as referring spatially to only those regions of the island adjacent to the border and not to the entire island.

---

<sup>1</sup> A Report by Grant Thornton on '*Strengthening the all island electricity network by 2020*' details the benefits to business in both jurisdictions of increasing grid interconnection between Northern Ireland and the Republic

Therefore the challenge of the work done by the JBC is show that delivering mutual benefit is not confined say to Derry and Donegal but instead measurably includes Antrim and Cork!

---

### **The All Island Market**

A highly integrated All island market providing thousands of additional jobs has evolved since the creation of the EU Single Market in 1992. Back then this island had the lowest level of trade between two Member States. Today cross border business has risen to the EU norm. **Peace** has been fundamental to this progress along with the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement that underpins the cessation of violence.

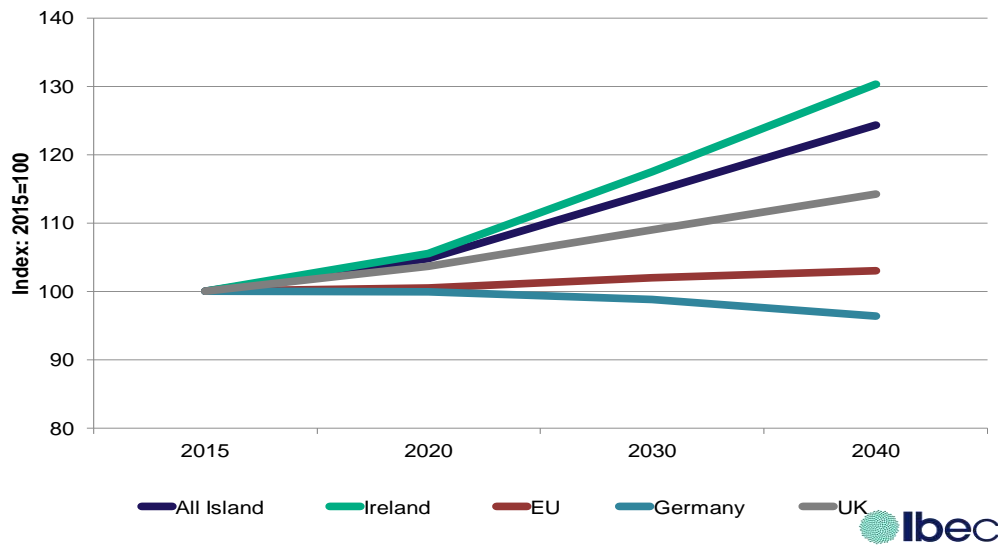
The resulting **Prosperity** is the bedrock of the stability essential for investment, growth and job creation across the island and the full extent of this All island Market is only now beginning to truly emerge. This is because the UK leaving the EU is putting **at risk** the deep and diverse investment already made by firms who have taken advantage of the possibility to develop and operate an all island business model.

This model is predicated in most instances on companies moving quickly if not immediately from targeting local to global markets. So it is crucial when the NPF is being finalised that a **global perspective** is not confined to highlighting best practice in planning elsewhere, valuable as this is. It must also take into account the economic fact this island is a supplier of products and services to the rest of the UK, the EU and the world. So the All island Market that provides thousands of additional jobs in both jurisdictions is at the epicentre of the commercial risks being created by the UK leaving the EU. The NPF is an essential tool for Government to use effectively in managing those risks in an all island context

Firms compete with local conditions and producers in every market they enter. So they need all the support that can be provided by the conditions that apply in their own back yard. And this includes the speed at which planning decisions are taken and not just the decisions themselves. And here there is a risk likely to become more acute that because a matter is dealt with on an all island/cross border basis it takes longer to process and progress. This should not, and must not, occur and the NPF must specifically warn against this happening and propose how it is to be avoided.

Crucially all island business and economic interaction has the **potential for future growth and job creation** by the SMEs and large companies in many different sectors that operate in it (eg agri food; energy; tourism; transport and logistics; R&D and manufacturing). This growth will be enabled and enhanced by **joined up investment** in necessary strategic infrastructure such as the NPF identifies to support a prosperous island population of 10m by mid century. The following table illustrates this growth:

## In the next 25 years, Ireland's population will grow by 30%



**The role of the NPF must include enabling the All Island Market to grow** by means of planning that directly or indirectly facilitates this objective. So this submission compliments, supports and seeks the further development of NPFs all island approach including looking beyond administrative and jurisdictional boundaries for the effective development of the entire island as well as its constituent regional and jurisdictional parts.

With the triggering of article 50 Negotiations much uncertainty, unpredictability and speculation is inevitable. That is all the more reason for the NPF to focus on what can and must still be done and is somewhat in the control of both administrations to get on with.

This should be helped by the fact there is a notable degree of shared agreement in Belfast, Brussels Dublin and London as to what the areas of mutual concern are. And they are well know and established at this point. For the purpose of this Submission these can be said to have been concisely set out by the Taoiseach in his address to the IIEA (15/2/17) on his Government's aims for the EU negotiations:

- *We must remain at the heart of Europe and open to the world*
- ***We must protect the hard-won peace on our island, and***
- *We must pursue thoughtful, prudent but ambitious economic policies.*

(And) *The Government's plan for Brexit combines these three essential elements.*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.merrionstreet.ie/en/News-Room/Speeches/Address\\_by\\_the\\_Taoiseach\\_on\\_Ireland\\_at\\_the\\_heart\\_of\\_a\\_changing\\_European\\_Union.html#sthash.y2uguDhD.8MKiOs5r.dpuf](http://www.merrionstreet.ie/en/News-Room/Speeches/Address_by_the_Taoiseach_on_Ireland_at_the_heart_of_a_changing_European_Union.html#sthash.y2uguDhD.8MKiOs5r.dpuf)

This clear statement of Government priorities was repeated a few days later at the All island Civic Dialogue Plenary in Dublin Castle and during his subsequent discussions in Brussels.

In his IIEA speech the Taoiseach also said the Irish Government will protect the prosperity that is underpinning peace and stability on this island by:

- *Recognition of the unique circumstances of Northern Ireland, bearing in mind its geography and history;*
- *Ensuring that the treaties and agreements between Ireland and the UK are fully taken into account;*
- *Protecting the free movement of people, goods, capital and services, and;*
- *Maintaining the economic and social benefits of co-operation.*

The Taoiseach's recognition of the unique circumstances of Northern Ireland and its exceptional situation within the UK of having a unique land border with the EU and sharing an island with a EU Member State has been acknowledged by all sides to the negotiations. They have also stated their intention to seek to minimise the impact of whatever is agreed on what currently happens. Time will tell the degree to which this intention can be delivered upon. But it is certainly a necessary start point that the JBC fully supports. Ibec and CBI will of course be closely monitoring and responding to in detail, and on an ongoing basis how things are actually evolving during the negotiations.

Therefore the rest of this submission is confined to outlining the JBCs response to the specific questions posed in the all-island section of the 'Ireland 2040: issues and choices' consultation document (section 4.4).

---

*Q 1: How can the NPF facilitate co-ordination between settlements that share connections across the border between Northern Ireland and Ireland and how should this be reflected in the document?*

**JBC Response:** The NPF having an All island Section is itself facilitating co-ordination between settlements that are adjacent to and so share the most connections across the soon to be unique EU/UK land border. And the holding of a NPF Consultation event in Derry/Londonderry broadened and deepened that beneficial effect. Having participated and contributed to this event JBC has the following recommendations on further facilitating coordination and sharing connections and how this should be reflected in the NPF:

**RECOMENDATION 1:** DHPCLG carefully considers for adoption the constructive, practical and progressive points made at the NPF Consultation event in Derry/Londonderry by the diverse range of voices and interests mobilised to be there by the ICLRD, including those made by the speakers from Ibec and CBI NI .

The JBC would highlight in particular

- The suggestion the NPF supports governance and delivery models that encourage and facilitate the use of many more PPPs to deliver essential infrastructure.
- Explicitly recognising and so embedding into the NPF as core criteria to be taken fully into account by planners what every speaker highlighted in one form or another: ***what is spatially unique about Northern Ireland and Ireland is that we share this island!***

**RECOMENDATION 2:** it will be prudent and necessary to have some form of mechanism in place to enable and maintain the dynamic and inclusive interaction that occurred at, and on the margins of, this event. Therefore to ‘mainstream’ this coordination and support the implementation of the NPF in an all island context, thereby facilitating both local and island wide coordination cooperation and collaboration, the JBC propose that:

- To enhance the efficient and effective implementation of agreed cooperation a joint N/S grouping is established that can facilitate and enable interested parties from Northern Ireland to input on the all island dimension of NPF once adopted<sup>3</sup>.

The Group’s objective will be to progress the NPF’s all island plans both bilaterally and in conjunction with the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) and its Sectoral and Plenary meetings. Finally this Group should seek inputs to support its work from ICLRD (International Centre for Local and Regional Development), the JBC and other all island entities with expert knowledge, insight and expertise.

**RECOMENDATION 3:** In terms of how co-ordination is reflected in the document much of the ground work has already been done in the all-island section. In particular the JBC would highlight and support what is proposed for the NPF when adopted to include:

- ***NSMC is crucial:*** due to its governance role and all island responsibilities Coordinated approach to infrastructure: on both sides of the border is definitely essential
- ***Cooperation Framework:*** must be evolved to guide and direct shared implementation solutions including a coordinated approach to infrastructure and this work should be the responsibility of the proposed All island NPF Working Group
- ***Joined up mechanism:*** must be fit for purpose of the new unprecedented functional relationships that will result from the UK leaving the EU <sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> An option is to form a group similar to the N/S Infrastructure Group already set up under the Fresh Start Agreement that has a formal structure format and governance process overseen by the NSMC

<sup>4</sup> Such as Derry/Londonderry being UKs only city that crosses its border with the EU (ie 16% of its urban area)

- **Realising economic potential:** as the primary functional criteria for determining resilience is certainly the essential choice to make and must be prioritised for the NPF to help sustain the prosperity necessary to provide additional and sufficient employment and embed peace
- **Sectoral Clusters:** there are sectors with potential for more cross border, regional and/or all island clustering and the NPF could usefully request more work to be done on how the NPF can go about facilitating their development <sup>5</sup>
- **Spatial Relationships:** should be place based to accelerate sustainable growth because as was highlighted by many presentations to the NPF Consultation in Derry/Londonderry these spatial relationships invariably connect adjacent sides of the border (as per 4.4.6)
- **City Regions:** are the way forward and Derry/Londonderry/Letterkenny is certainly in pole position to be a leading cross border example that also provides all island benefits (due its contribution to re-balancing economic development to the island's geographic north west)
- **Leveraging economic efficiencies:** means doing so for the All Island Market and not just regional planning (ie the NPF supports infrastructure that benefits every region due to connectivity it provides and/or the economies of scale advantages delivers)
- **Tourism is global:** and tourists want/need seamless all island local and regional products and more of these are needed.<sup>6</sup>
- **Dublin Belfast Interaction:** as the powerful primary engine of all island economic growth, and that must proceed as already suggested above
- **Shared Environment:** is protected by jointly funded N/S bodies being retained and enabled to operate even more effectively

**RECOMENDATION 4:** Economic growth and especially Ireland's strong and continuing recovery, creates a shared opportunity to identify and promote strategic investments that will help to sustain a competitive, connected and more prosperous island of Ireland. But while both economies are growing the Republic's is growing quicker, Northern Ireland has a deep seated problem of low productivity that has to be addressed. And many businesses are investing to do so, but they their individual efforts must be matched by public investment that supports the new levels of productivity they seeking to achieve.

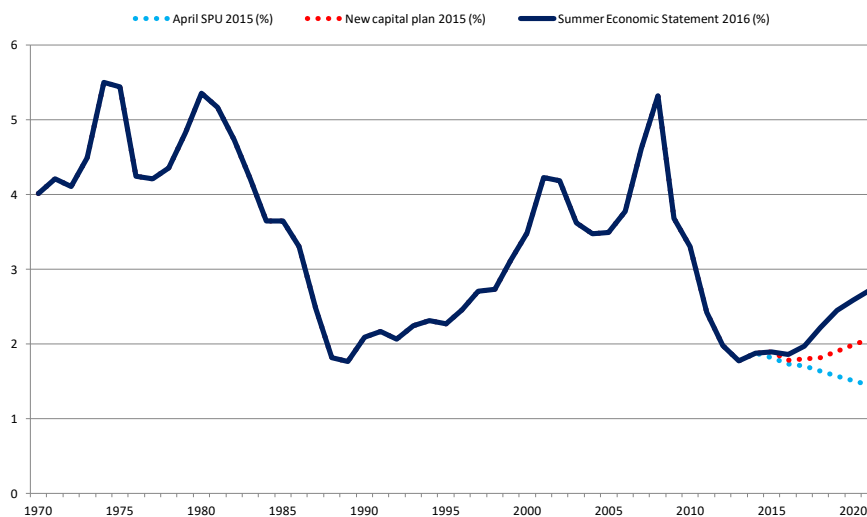
---

<sup>5</sup> those listed by DHPCLG in 4.4.9 have indeed the most immediate potential, but for this development to be optimum the local regional and State agencies must also work very much harder to do so and InterTradelreland must have more scope and resources to help

<sup>6</sup> In fact tourism provides a best practise example of how and where 'all island' economy of scale delivers benefits to all: Tourism Ireland is an island body doing the global marketing and Dublin Airport has the global connectivity and the capacity to process 28 million passengers from multiple destinations as it did in 2016

So while it is understood that this is a submission on the NPF and not the Capital Programme, if the current under spend as reflected in the following table is not corrected then the infrastructure of support much of what the NPF plans to achieve, and the value of investments being made by firms on both sides of the border to improve their productivity and grow their business, may be undermined.:

## Govt Capital spend, % of GDP, 1970 to 2021



So instead the NPF is correct to

- Highlight the importance of all island infrastructure proposals such as have been put forward by the All-island Investment Project (AIIP) because investing in island wide infrastructure will support business in creating more job opportunities and enhancing living standards.

**RECOMENDATION 5:** A measure of the success of an ambitious NPF (and it should be such) will be the development and dissemination of credible investment opportunities of interest to business across the island, in its two jurisdictions and various regions. Therefore:

- The NPF must explicitly support planning that enables Investments to proceed that have the potential in both the short and longer term to help deliver the benefits of all island growth, additional demand, job and wealth creation and achieving the demographic dividend of the island's natural potential population reaching 10 million people by 2050.

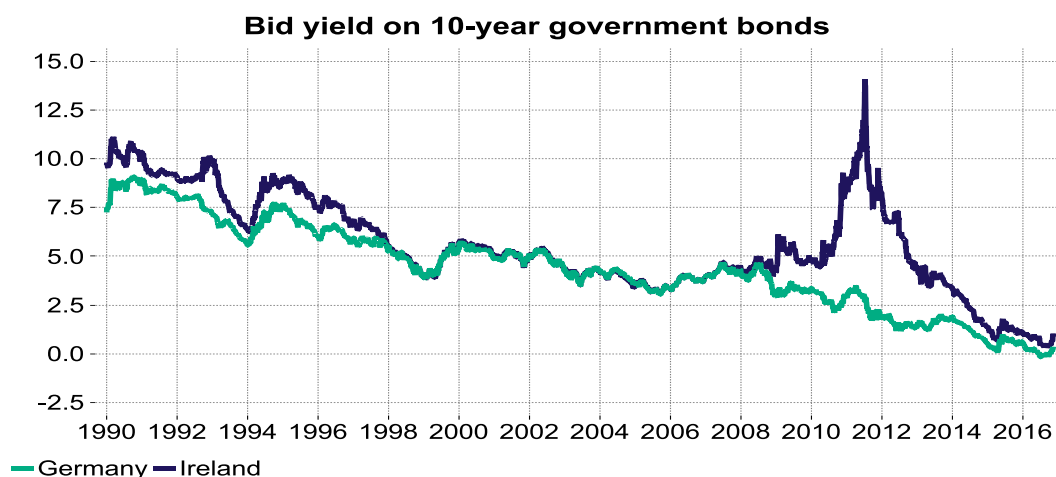


Q 2 What economic opportunities and sectoral clusters exist that can benefit economies within both jurisdictions and how this best be captured and supported in the NDF?

**JBC Response:** In a separate submission from Ibec there is more in depth consideration of the relationship between the NPF and economic development. So the following comments are designed to highlight those aspects of the NPF that have an all island and/or cross border dimension in a spatial context.

Arguably the most immediate economic opportunity that can benefit the economies of both jurisdictions is the fact that the cost of money for long term productive investment such as in infrastructure has never been lower, as the following table illustrates.

## Borrowing costs at all time lows



And why is this relevant in an all island context? Because the economies of scale provided by an all island project have the potential to significantly improve the projected return on investment.

The Single Electricity Market (SEM) is a good example; providing vital additional electricity generating capacity was more attractive to investors because the project would operate in and serve the entire island. The result was a higher level of interest and better choices for both governments.

The same principle of economies of scale and its benefits are being applied to the provision of certain public services. There have been initial, collaborative approaches in the health sector and transport, as well as activities covered by the cross-border agencies, such as enterprise development. The National Procurement Service also has a representative from Northern Ireland's Central Procurement Directorate on its board. Potential areas for greater cross-border collaboration involving the private sector could be included. Examples, such as in the provision of emergency services where both jurisdictions benefit from sharing the task in ways that are achievable, enhance operational effectiveness and are cost effective.

Essentially, areas for collaboration or shared service provision can ‘be found where there are synergies to be obtained from planning and providing specific public services on an intra-island and inter-regional basis between the two jurisdictions’. While cross-border co-operation is a ‘matter of official policy for both administrations’, a systematic and proactive stance to joint-service provision is needed, as opposed to the spontaneous and/or reactive approach that has tended to occur. Also, in addition to boosting cross-border co-operation, there is an opportunity for both governments to make public services more effective.

**RECOMENDATION 6:** how the NPF will facilitate and enable delivery of more public services on an all-island or cross-border basis:

- There must be more in depth and detailed work done to scope the potential benefits to both administrations.
- And the urgency for doing so is only added by the fact that doing so should also help to protect those services where cross border provision is already in place and successfully operating to mutual benefit.<sup>7</sup>

For the NPF to support all island and regional enterprise development adjacent to the border, the political and economic drivers are broadly similar: the promotion of exports’ job creation and economic growth by the encouragement of additional private sector activity .

To facilitate ‘economic opportunities’ there must be synergies to be secured from the cross border collaboration that benefit the firms involved. This can be most evidently supported by encouraging the formation of sectoral clusters.<sup>8</sup> Such synergies include:

- The potential benefits from the development of all-island ecosystems providing additional scale and scope
- Circumventing the potential difficulties for a sectoral cluster where the spatial scope crosses a series of administrative boundaries and/or the jurisdictional border”

The scope for the NPF is somewhat constrained in being a driver of economic opportunity and sectoral clusters in both an all island context and indeed in the immediate border region. So JBC suggests further thought and reflection in an all island context during the next phase of consultation process would be merited and useful as follows

**RECOMENDATION 7:** the NPF acknowledges there is more work to be done in this area to scope precisely where, for whom and how this question can be optimally answered both in the regions adjacent to the border and across the All island Market. And the NPF can help by being aligned to supporting potential benefit of developing truly all island clusters including from recognising that given the current geography of these sectors, such developments could include greater operational interaction between Belfast and Dublin so that the two economic regions combined support internationally significant industry clusters.

---

<sup>7</sup> For a more in depth consideration see:, *Delivering a prosperity process: opportunities in North/South public service provision* Michael D’Arcy, Centre for Cross Border Studies (May 2012)

<sup>8</sup> For a in depth consideration and illumination of this potential see ‘Mapping the Potential for All–island Sectoral Ecosystems: A Summary Report, September 2015

But while developing all island sectoral clusters offers potentially substantial rewards both at the regional and all island level it also poses significant challenges. And because these challenges are amplified by the UK leaving the EU they will need greater attention and more effort including in the context of the NPF.

**RECOMENDATION 8:** The spatial dimension is important to the emergence and development of clusters. Interaction between local and/or regional stakeholders who are geographically close to one another evolves more naturally. And this can involve crossing over administrative and jurisdictional boundaries. The NPF in 4.4.6 and 4.4.9 identifies acknowledges and so captures this fact and provides an initial overview of what is currently being done, especially in terms of specific cross border initiatives. The next iteration of the NPF should therefore:

- Incorporate in more depth and detail what is proposed to be done in the short medium and longer term under these initiatives to develop economic opportunities and sectoral clusters based on inputs from the relevant authorities and agencies,

Some of this detail began to be provided during the NPF Consultation event in Derry/Londonderry. However the next phase of the consultation process should seek more details by asking for example:

- Precisely what interaction is each responsible enterprise agency undertaking with local enterprises and the higher education sector to develop their plans?
- Are these interactions aligned with the fact that enterprises have close interaction with other enterprises, agencies or individuals that are distant (ie from the local or regional authority area or the jurisdiction)?
- Given the need to accelerate enterprise development in response to the UK leaving the EU what are the 'best practice' examples the final NPF should identify and put forward as most likely to develop and build regional resilience ?

---

*Q 3: What mechanism are needed to ensure a joined-up approach to strategic infrastructure and investment decisions that have a cross border dimension and are there examples of best practice?*

**JBC Response** The fact this first iteration of the NPF is seeking to be aligned with its Northern Ireland equivalent is a welcome and significant step to having a joined up approach to strategic infrastructure. As was evident at the consultation event in Derry/Londonderry this approach is welcomed by the Department of Infrastructure.

**RECOMENDATION 9:** the NPF must fully capitalises on the potential of existing relationships to align spatial strategies in both jurisdictions including maximising the possible degree of connectivity by:

- Creating imperatives to take this work forward
- Doing so in ways that helps to consolidate existing N/S relationships
- Supporting opportunities to achieve globally competitive scale
- Enabling the respective strategic frameworks to be interlinked
- Developing coordinated regional infrastructure delivery plans

- Ensuring governance helps and not hinders speedy implementation

**RECOMENDATION 10:** as highlighted above the SEM is a best practice example of the mutual benefits of all island economies of scale for investment in an essential strategic infrastructure. The NPF should therefore adapt and incorporate the following principles that underpin the successful all island solution it is delivering:

- Put a structure and process in place to join up two separate regulatory regimes
- Have a all island plan that measurably delivers mutually beneficial additional investment
- Facilitate the creation of necessary new systems and procedures
- Set more ambitious investment targets commensurate with the additional capacity being sought and consequent new economy of scale to provide a return on investment

---

*Q 4 In terms of delivering cross border infrastructure as detailed for example in the Ibec/CBI NI All island Investment Project what structures need to be developed to leverage joint financing, including through the private sector?*

**JBC Response** The Ibec/CBI NI All island Investment Project (AIIP) got underway in 2015 in response to the desire of both organisations members for a new joined up strategic and long term vision for the island and to improve the operating and investment environment for all island economic interaction and the All island Market.

The first task to be tackled in detail was to find the answer to this strategic question: what is the comprehensive 21<sup>st</sup> century inter-urban road infrastructure needed to effectively move people and goods around, to and from this island so that everyone benefits?

Developed European countries already have such a network. But despite the island's first motorway being opened in 1969 from Belfast to Craigavon, and the Republic recently adding considerably to it; today you can drive on only 2,500km of the 5,000+ km of motorway and high class dual carriageway this Scoping Paper maps out. Planning to complete this Network should start now because:

- There are significant economic, social and personal benefits to be gained
- These benefits are evident compelling and universal and their absence is a unnecessary cost
- Congestion is occurring from not planning for 2016 in 2010, so work on 2020 needs to start
- The cost of completing the network *is* affordable because money is so cheap
- Bureaucratic obstacles/difficulties to doing so are understandable but also resolvable.

Research for Connected established that when it comes to modern road infrastructure the island is served by the same incomplete network it had in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as these maps of the 'modern' (in each era) primary strategic roads from 1729-49 and 2015 illustrate

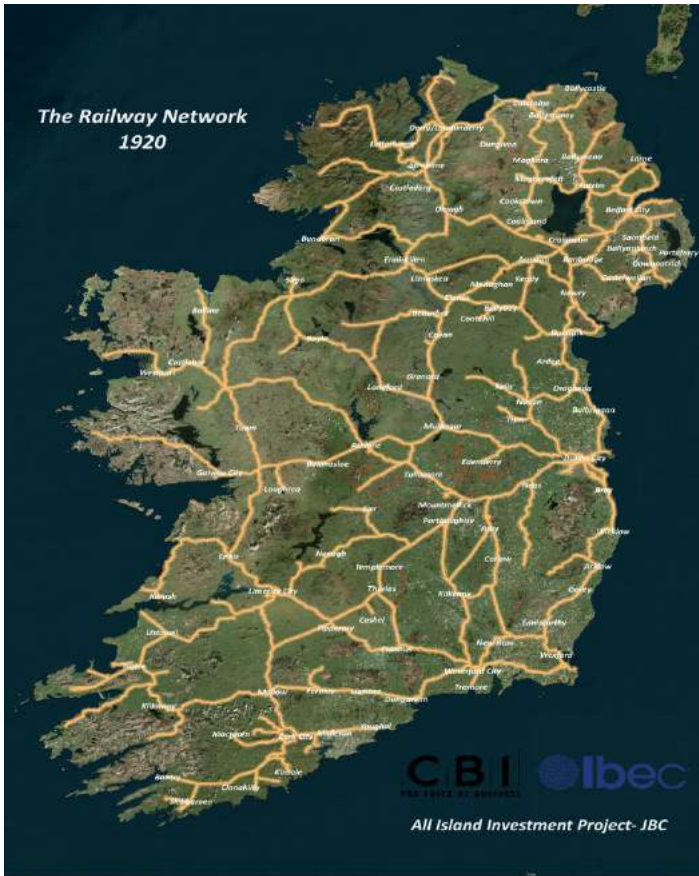
Figure 2: Early turnpike routes (1729-1739)



Figure 3: Current motorway network (2015)



However there was briefly a moment in time when the island had a modern European standard and comprehensive all island network to move people and goods. In 1920 after close to a century of predominantly private sector investment there was a comprehensive railway network that provided this critical infrastructure as the following map illustrates (and their density was such that that it seems most people were no more than 20 minutes from a station)



Regrettably this network is seriously diminished in both jurisdictions and will not be re-built. And as the following map illustrates the impact is most severe in the north west.

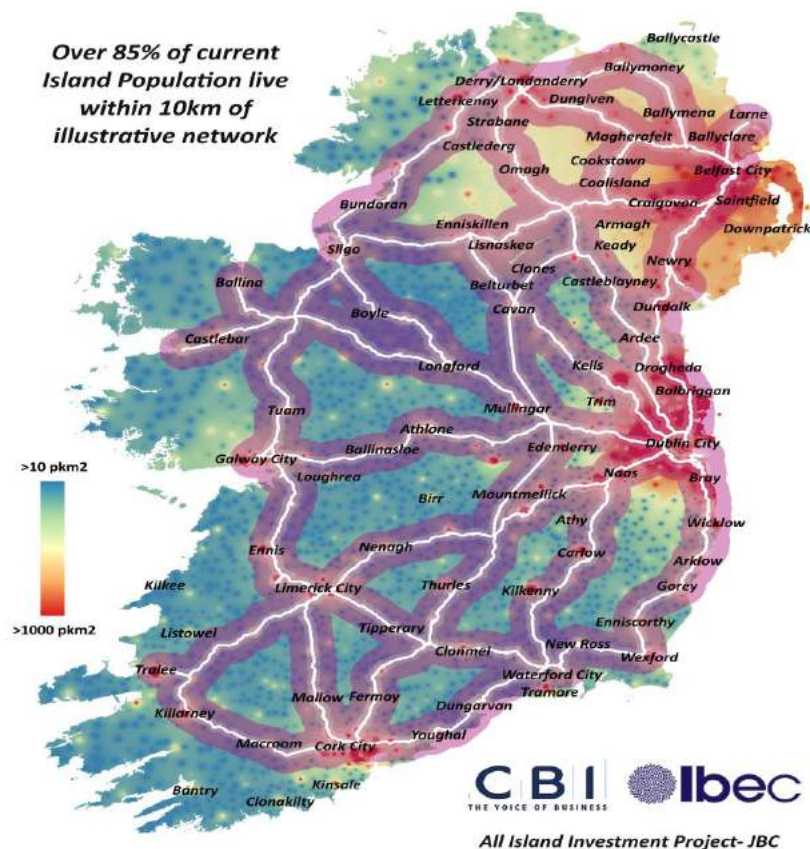




The evident conclusion is that to be truly comprehensive a all island motorway/dual carriageway network to move people and goods as required in the 21<sup>st</sup> century would have to be the equivalent of the rail infrastructure in 1920 as illustrated in this map:



Finally to match the proximity to the network measure of no one being 20 minutes from a rail station in 1920 (recalling the mode of travel for most people to do so was still a horse and car) the following map illustrates how 85% of the population would be within in 10km or a motorway or dual carriageway:



Placement and category of roads for illustrative purposes only. Data source: CSO, NISRA

**RECOMENDATION 11:** the NPF when adopted:

- Supports the delivery of the entirety of the network proposed in Connected as the strategic transport infrastructure needed to effectively connect and enable both the desired City Regions and rural places to interact with each other economically, socially in a sustainable efficient and resilient manner

And what are the “structures need to be developed to leverage joint financing, including through the private sector”? The JBC believes they are as follows:

**Identify funding & delivery mechanisms**

As a consequence of Ireland’s recent fiscal crisis, the economy can no longer look to the Exchequer as the main source of funding for this much needed infrastructure. In order for the private sector to help fully develop these investment opportunities, Government and the public administration system must embrace the concept of non-Exchequer funding mechanisms and integrate them fully into long-term planning.

To date, commitment to funding models such as public-private partnerships (PPP) has been uneven and greater buy-in is needed from all stakeholders in order to substantially increase the level of private sector funding in infrastructure provision.



### ***Use more PPPs***

Over the next five years, Government needs to be ambitious in delivering a programme of infrastructural investment and PPPs will increasingly offer a cost effective means of spreading public funding over a greater number of projects.

PPPs are a proven model having already been successfully used to delivery strategic motorway projects in the Republic and Northern Ireland should now appropriately follow suit<sup>9</sup>. As with any such mechanism PPP's can be further refined and improved based on experience including dealing with identified concerns.

### ***Have a comprehensive All island Project Pipeline***

Investment opportunities will increase over the coming years for the right type of projects. So were completing the AIIPs proposed network offered as one coherent cohesive and coordinated '***All island Project Pipeline*** of PPPs investment opportunities it would attract the interest of the leading providers from around the world. And all of them would partner with local companies to bid and provide the requested projects

In a similar way smaller value projects, such as upgrading and/or adding capacity to existing motorways or high grade dual-carriageways could be bundled together into a single procurement projects

### ***Work with the European Investment Bank (EIB)***

EIB is a potential source of funding for long-term capital investment and options to attract their financial support should be pursued. The EIB has developed alternative approaches to financing investment in infrastructure including looking at a project bond initiative, which would provide a mechanism by which international investors could obtain a level of comfort in investing in Irish infrastructure projects, possibly including on an all island basis. These options should examine the alternatives being proposed and other short-term solutions available to secure international finance to ensure the island is connected.

### ***Seek additional EU support:***

Work should continue to align infrastructure priorities with the EU2020 strategy and examine possible funding from European Institution sources (e.g. under current financial framework or next Multiannual Financial Framework). And there is the potential of the Juncker Fund to be more ambitiously leveraged.

However the UK leaving the EU has created an additional challenge. So cooperative interaction will be required in the context of the NPFs all island dimension to agree arrangements whereby Northern Ireland can benefit from additional EU Funding.

### ***Examine all the options***

A really determined effort to deliver a connected island would also consider options such as:

---

<sup>9</sup> CBI NI for example has been highlighting the need for PPPs in Northern Ireland to have appropriate robust and variable mechanisms to provide the necessary return on investment for each project

- Direct capital investment: where total Government-funded projects are the only feasible option, investment in economic infrastructure that supports growth and competitiveness should be prioritised;
- Co-funding: use traditional funding for a portion of the scheme, enabling Government to attract private funding for the balance; Pension funds: explore pension fund investment options to invest in Irish infrastructure projects (€70 billion held in Irish pension funds);
- New financing structures: new structures are being considered in the marketplace to address the decline of the monolines. Private sector entities such as Hadrian's Wall Capital and also the EIB are considering offering support to different tranches of debt to de-risk the senior debt element;

Set up under the Fresh Start Agreement, Jointly chaired and reporting to the NSMC the N/S Infrastructure Group is the mechanism to progress, coordinate and drive the development agreement and delivery of the joint financing approach set out above. And given the ***NPF All island Working Group*** proposed earlier is established it is represented on this Group to maximise the potential coherence and mutual synergies with the NPF in both jurisdictions

**RECOMENDATION 12:** Based on all the points made above the JBC requests that the NPF:

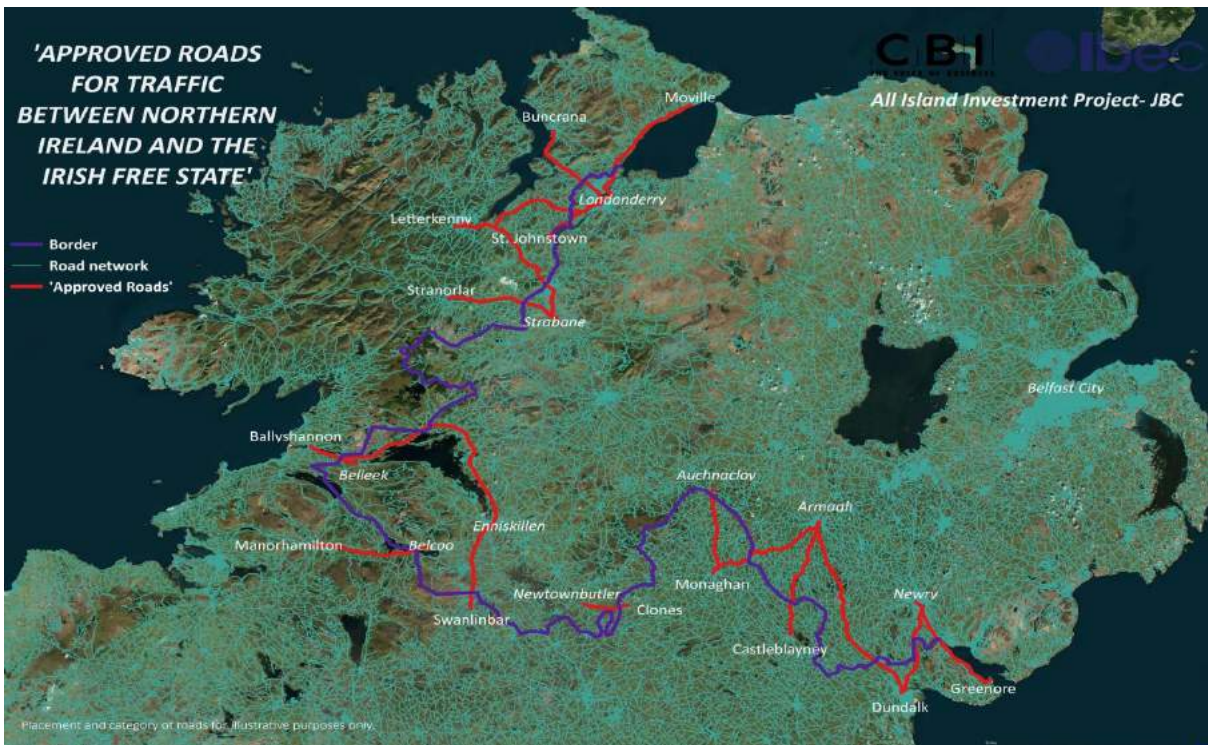
- Adopts as a specified objective that all necessary preparation and planning for the delivery of the entire all island network proposed by the AIIP in Connected begins in 2017

## Appendix A

The movement of people goods and services is at the heart of delivering the potential spatial synergies in the regions adjacent to the border. The UK leaving the EU presents considerable challenges to retain the current freedom this movement enjoys

To help illuminate the practical geography of is challenge the following is an original Ibec map created using details provided in a Table included in 1950's AA Road Guide. It is notable that there were not simply 'crossing points' but specified routes between adjacent towns.

And it seemed to be the case that it was in at least some of these towns that the Customs Station and Frontier Posts were located that those people and goods of every kind crossing the border requiring to be formally reported, recorded, officially processed checked and approved for entry and so onward movement. So the towns listed and the roads/distances between them as set out in the Table are the details used to create this illustrative map.



)