

The analysis of the Expert Group is supported by examination of current development trends and work undertaken by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) for the NPF in projecting likely future development scenarios to 2040. This suggests that there will be:



Continuation of sprawling growth around but mainly outside our cities and larger towns.



Stagnation of inner city and older suburban areas, with missed opportunities for the utilisation of existing infrastructure and services.

Cities like Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford growing



but not at the pace or scale required to function as realistic alternatives to Dublin.

An ongoing shift in population and jobs



towards the east and to the counties around Dublin in particular.



A degraded environment with, the loss of farmland and habitat to predominantly greenfield development and increased risk of groundwater pollution.



Greater distance between where people live and where people work, notwithstanding changes in technology, as many businesses are increasingly drawn to create the employment opportunities of the future in close proximity in urban areas.



Social disadvantage and inequality perpetuated by geographic location.



Duplication of new investment in services and infrastructure in rapidly growing areas.



Further decline of rural areas and towns remote from large urban centres of population.

Haphazard approaches to planning for infrastructure and climate action, reacting to trends rather than preparing for a low/no carbon future.

