



**P R E S I D E N T**  
**T o n y W i l l i a m s**

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**Date: 31 March 2017**

### **Submission on the National Planning Framework**

To:

Department of Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government,  
Custom House,  
Dublin 1.

Attn: Minister Simon Coveney T.D,  
National Planning Framework Team

Dear Minister and colleagues,

The International Federation of Landscape Architects is the umbrella body for national associations of landscape architects globally and IFLA Europe are the representative for European Region (based on the Council of Europe area and including Israel)

The ILI is the professional body representing Landscape Architects and Parks Professionals in Ireland. As members of the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) they are represent by us at European Level, and globally - through *IFLA World*.

We are writing to raise some issues of relevance to your department and our, profession, insofar as its contribution to Irish society and the island of Ireland is concerned.

We understand that the ILI have written to you in a general sense in December 2016 and informed you that they are in a position to offer advice, including pragmatic solutions that address issues, based upon their analysis of the evidence-base, regarding the design and planning of the urban and rural (and peri urban / semi rural) in general and in particular on issues relating to climate-planning-infrastructure and local government.

**National Planning Framework**

We understand that the ILI will be submitting a detailed response to the request for public comments on the National Planning Framework (NPF) and thus our submission is focused more on trying to ensure that your working groups and steering committees are informed by our members and in the first instance we would invite you, should you wish to, to avail of our extensive membership and their professional advises.

We would also request that the ILI be invited to your steering committees and feel sure they could provide suitable candidates to sit on the NPF steering committee and on any working groups informing th work on the NPF and advises to the steering committee.

We note that there was a meeting recently regarding the National Planning Framework and that many of the Irish professional institutes dealing with the built and natural environments such as Royal Institute of Architects in Ireland (RIAI), the Irish Planning Institute (IP and others were represented. We understand that the ILI have worked closely with colleagues in the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (as it was then, now the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs) on the steering committee of *the National Landscape Strategy* and would be pleased to do so with the National Planning Framework. We are further informed that the ILI could therefore provide a suitable representative in order to inform the development of the NPF.

**We respectfully request that the ILI be invited to participate in such meetings as representative of Landscape Architects in Ireland.**

The National Planning Framework is a very welcome in Ireland and we feel sure that the ILI, as an organisation would add to the body of knowledge and ensure the NPF is delivered whilst ensuring multidisciplinary engagement.

Our colleagues in the ILI have informed us of a number of examples and we attach them herewith in Annex 1.

With best wishes

For and on behalf of IFLA Europe

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tony Williams".

Tony Williams  
President



## Annex 1

### Submission on the National Planning Framework

The Irish Landscape Institute (ILI) have cited the following examples of how they feel they might engage with your team on the further development of the NPF.

#### **1. Blue-Green Infrastructure (B-G.I)<sup>1</sup>, Planning and Local Government**

The planning and provision of Blue- Green Infrastructure (Nature Based Solutions) presents several key challenges and these should be addressed in the context of a whole-of-government policy context (i.e. portfolios held by Minister Naughten and Humphreys and Environment, Climate Action & Communications, and Arts, Heritage, Rural Affairs, An Gaeltacht). These challenges relate to 2 policy areas:-

##### **i. Blue-Green Infrastructure (B-G.I) and Planning** (Housing, Communities, Placemaking)

There is a proven, evident need to provide and enhance effective governance in order to address flaws and deficiencies in development standards, policies, human resources and capital investment (as part of the 2017 mid-term government review of ‘ *Building on Recovery: Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2016-2021* ). Those systemic improvements would put Ireland on a course to becoming a leading-edge state in this vital and globally-significant area. Inclusion of B-GI principles will ensure positive outcomes for the delivery of quality housing and sustainable communities; improve local services and ensure innovation in urban planning and design. In tandem with these principles, practical delivery will greatly ensure that Irish towns, cities and rural areas become climate-resilient and economically viable into the future. This comprehensive approach addresses the State’s obligations and the current government’s commitment to achieving sustainable quality of life, economic progress and human well-being for all citizens.

#### **2. Housing – Communities and Placemaking**

The Irish Government’s recent public statement of the government’s goal of building sustainable housing and communities is welcome. The ILI shares that goal. The planning, design and management of sustainable, climate-resilient communities to the appropriate standards and best professional practices, is essential to social progress and cohesion. We believe that addressing issues such as above (B-G.I) would be of benefit to the development of such resilient communities. When appropriate professional resources are included in the planning process they play an essential and important advisory and monitoring role in Development Management, especially for residential developments in urban areas but of course true also for rural areas regardless of how remote. The engagement of landscape professionals, must be included in all stages of the planning process and will ensure a productive collaboration with planners, engineers and other officials. Of course, this will require adequate resourcing of the planning process to include such a collaborative process as otherwise the shortage of resources will lead to constraints and diminishing service delivery.

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<sup>1</sup> With particular reference to Urban Parks and Greenspace/Urban Forestry/Biodiversity as planned, delivered and managed by Parks & Landscape Services units in regional and local government structures.



The department's 2009 planning guidance - *Urban Design Manual and Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas* – recognises the role of Landscape Architects and landscape professionals in general, in the design and management of greenspace, but solely within the planning framework. Unfortunately, the Republic of Ireland is out-of-step with progressive states and city administrations in Europe and globally. We would urge the government to modernise and align the State's policies and governance with the most progressive and innovative practices at international level.

**ILI would welcome the opportunity to discuss these matters with you and your officials.**

ILI can assure you of their continued attention to these matters and would welcome an opportunity to meet and discuss these with you and your officials. Please direct all correspondence and queries regarding the ILI, in the first instance, to their [Honorary Secretary, Ms. Maeve O'Neill MILI](#) at the P.O Box no. above and/or to her email at: [greenoneill@gmail.com](mailto:greenoneill@gmail.com)

With best wishes

For and on behalf of IFLA Europe

Tony Williams

President

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