

An Update on the National Planning Framework

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Mullingar, 280916

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Introduction

The National Planning Framework (NPF) will be the successor to the National Spatial Strategy 2002 (NSS)

It will be a long-term, 20-year National Strategy

The spatial expression of Government Policy

High level, strategic document

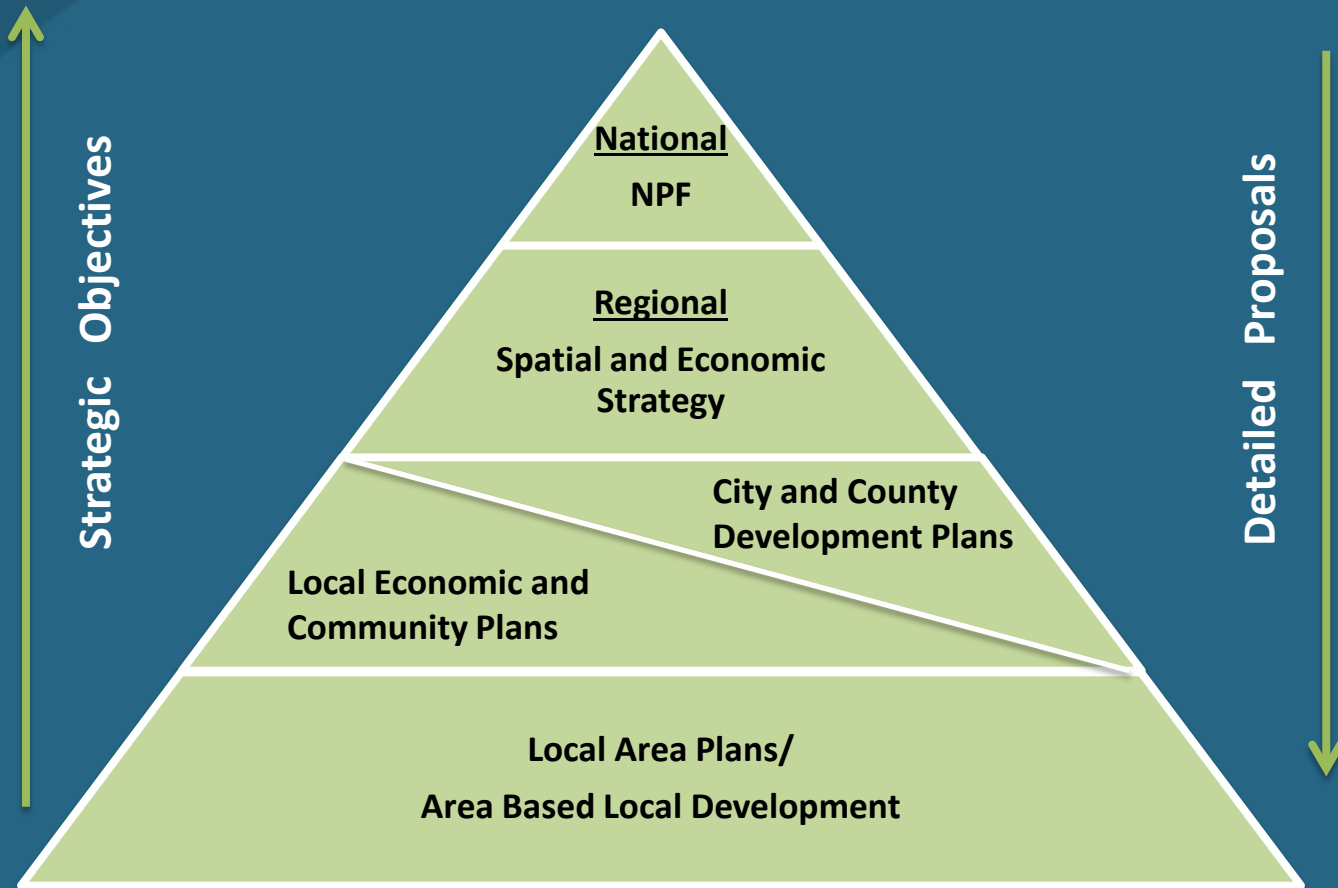
Basis for planning and investment



Why Now?

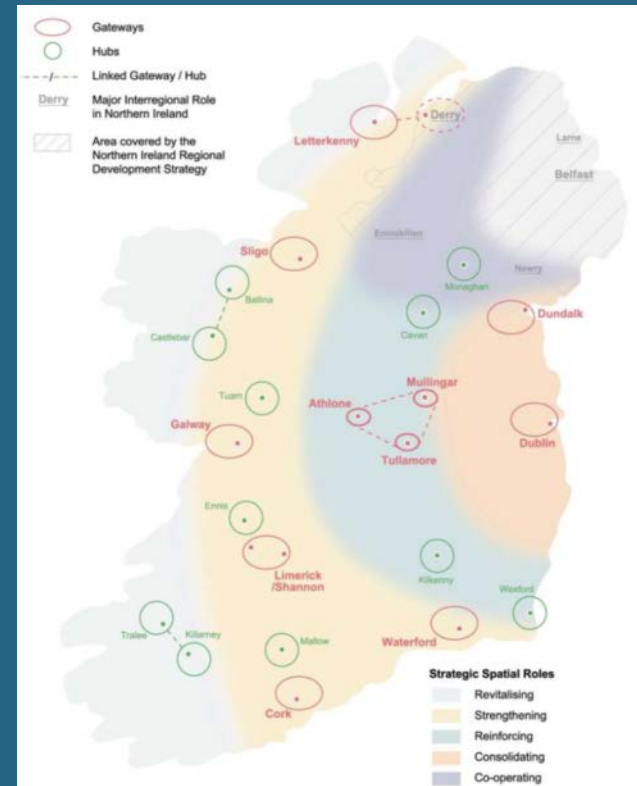
- An up to date national strategy at the top of the planning hierarchy is essential to ensure sustainable development, referenced in PfG, APH
- Growing, ageing, dispersed population, households, changing patterns of employment, climate change targets, decarbonisation by 2050
- Next 20 years:- 5.5m Population, +0.5m homes, >2.2m jobs...
- Need to align investment priorities with settlement, employment and environmental strategies
- Legislative changes, including SEA & opportunity to put National Planning on a statutory footing

Planning Policy Hierarchy, Ireland 2016



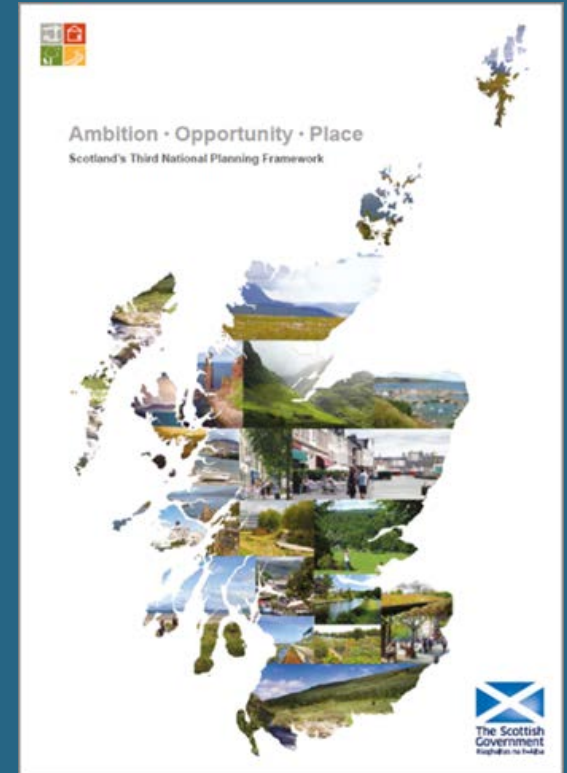
NSS - 2002

- First 'National' Spatial Plan for Ireland
- Projected +1.19 million people by 2016 – 'strong growth' scenario (prelim Census +1.13 million)
- Sought to focus growth on 9 'Gateways' and 9 'Hubs' comprising 23 centres
- Expert Advisory Group Report 2014



NPF Expert Group 2014

- Aim should be to have a short statement to guide investment and policy decisions
- *National* in scope
- *Spatial* to capitalise on potential of places, reflect & influence key sectoral policies
- A *Strategy* – not wish list, will involve ‘hard choices
- “NPF should aspire to challenge” some market trends, “through considered policies and investment decisions”



NSS Outcomes 2002-16

- Gateways and Hubs grew at less than National Average 17% as opposed to 21.5% & lost population share
- Only 33% of national population growth occurred in Gateway and Hub settlements i.e. 67% happened elsewhere
- Actual growth of 22 non-Dublin Gateway and Hubs was matched by growth in 22 completely different settlements
- 22 fastest growing settlements average 2002 population (6,000) was five times less than average Gateway & Hub population
- Smallest Gateways and Hubs were fastest growing, Galway only City above average, Sligo lost population

Lessons Learned From NSS

- Influencing the spatial pattern of Ireland over the next 20 years requires evidence base, strong leadership and political support
- Must avoid the concept of perceived ‘winners’ and ‘losers’
- Nor can all regions or settlements be treated in the same way
- It won’t be possible to deliver everything everywhere – likely need to prioritise
- Will only work where all Depts/Agencies co-ordinate policies and priorities – whole should be greater than the sum of parts
- Need to align investment and policy decision
- Invaluable learning experience for the ‘system’

NPF Ambition

- Opportunity for a *shared vision* to realise Ireland's potential in terms of society economy, and environment
- An *evidence based* plan for action instead of reaction – requires up-front decision-making
- The role of the Citizen and the opportunity for engaging meaningfully to build *societal influence* considered important for success of the NPF
- Scale of growth and extent of change over 20 years - many uncertainties, but vision needs to be *adaptable*

Legislative Background



Timeline of Key Milestones

Mahon Tribunal: - National Spatial Strategy on a statutory footing

Putting People First - Action Plan for Effective Local Government: Changed the role and configuration of regional planning structures

Local Government Reform Act 2014: Stronger local government role in economic development

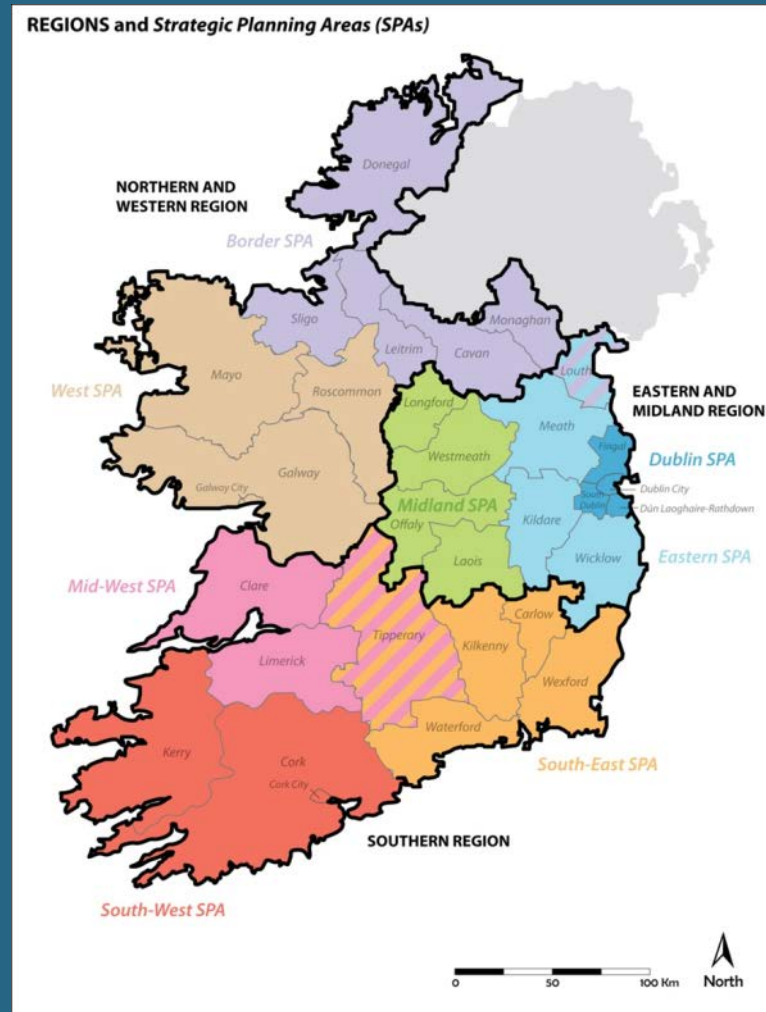
Legislative Background

Regional Governance

3 Assembly Areas

Sub Regional Planning :
Strategic Policy Areas

Regional Spatial
and Economic
Strategies



Legislative Background

Planning Amendment Bill 2016

The Planning Amendment Bill 2016 (which is currently awaiting an order for commencement of Second Stage of the legislative process) makes provision for establishing a legislatively defined approach to the NPF

Specific provisions relate to:

- Public consultation and participation
- Periodic review
- Promotion of co-ordination of development between the terrestrial and marine sectors
- Oireachtas approval of the framework

NPF will be advanced following procedure set out

Legislative Background

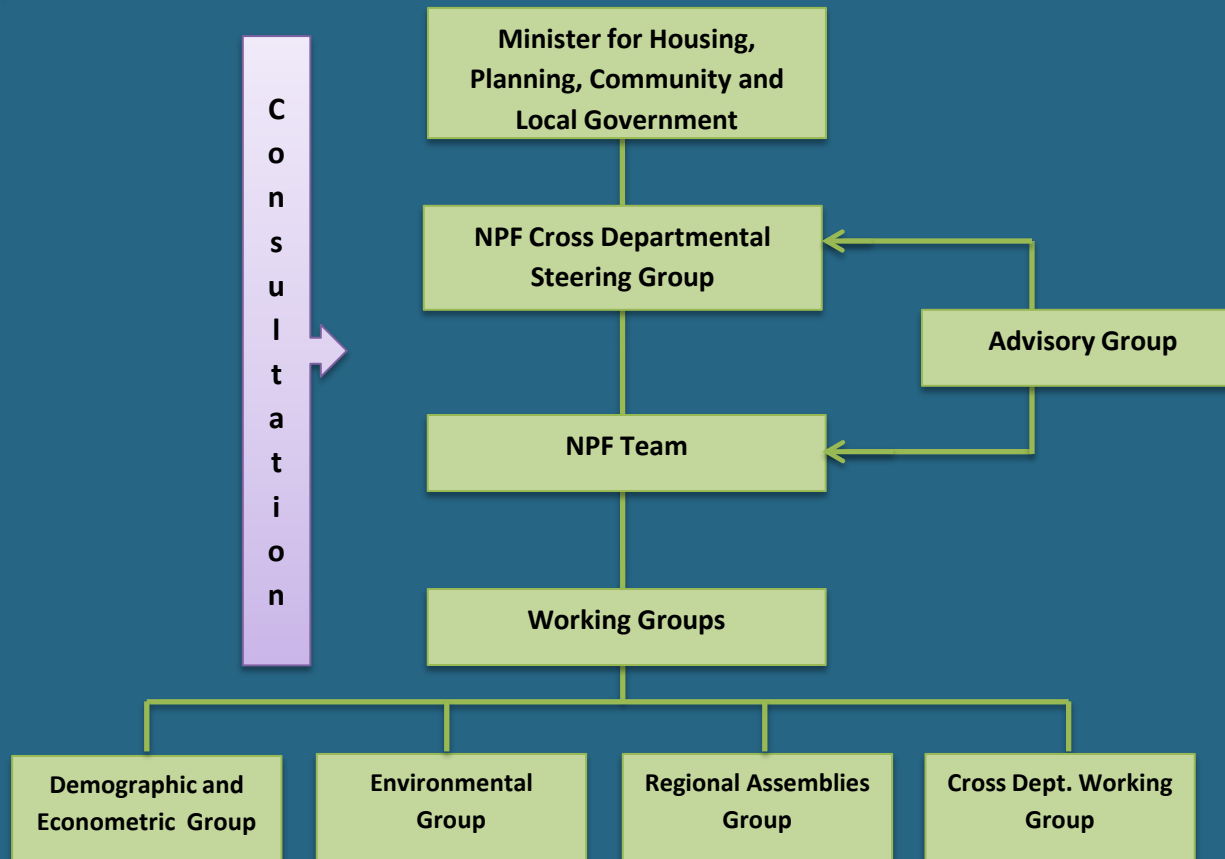
Political 'Visibility'

- Programme for Government – Commitment to deliver NPF in 2017
- APH – 'Rebuilding Ireland': NPF as part of longer term solution
- Aligning sectoral support across Departments
- Oireachtas approval

Briefings

- Cabinet Committee on Infrastructure, Environment and Climate Action
- Oireachtas Members
- Regional Assembly Members
- EU Commission Country Office

NPF Governance Structures



Additional working groups may be formed as the project progresses

Project Governance

Cross-Departmental Steering Group

This group, made up of high-level representatives of government departments, is leading and overseeing the preparation of the NPF. It is chaired by the Minister for Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government.

Advisory Group

Being established to ensure the participation of relevant non-governmental organisations, professional bodies and technical experts -economic, environment, social and knowledge sectors.

Demographic and Econometric Steering Group

The role of the group is to co-ordinate the demographic and econometric output of key national agencies in the context of long term planning and to ensure strong empirical evidence is developed to support spatial policy formulation in the preparation of the NPF.

Project Governance

Regional Assemblies Working Group

The NPF Unit works with Regional Assemblies to ensure effective co-ordination, dissemination, delivery of work packages and to lead to the formulation of the three new RSES's.

Cross Divisional Working Group

Key Departmental staff have a role in the progress of the NPF and its integration with other cross cutting policy areas e.g. housing, marine, climate change, energy, rural development.

Environmental Steering Group

Provide objective technical and general advice regarding the development and integration of SEA/AA/SFRA processes in the preparation of the NPF.

Key Areas of NPF Work Programme

01

Consultation

02

Framework
Development

03

Environmental
Assessment

04

Implementation

Timetable

Roadmap

Preliminary Stakeholder Consultation

Stakeholder and Sectoral Consultation

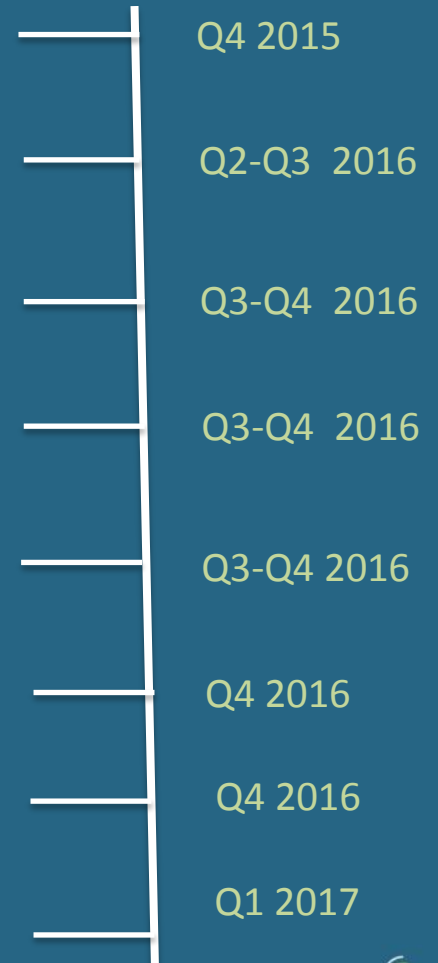
Briefings, Conferences & Events

Position Paper & Website

Initial National Public Consultation

Options and Scenarios

Draft NPF & Further Consultation



Timetable

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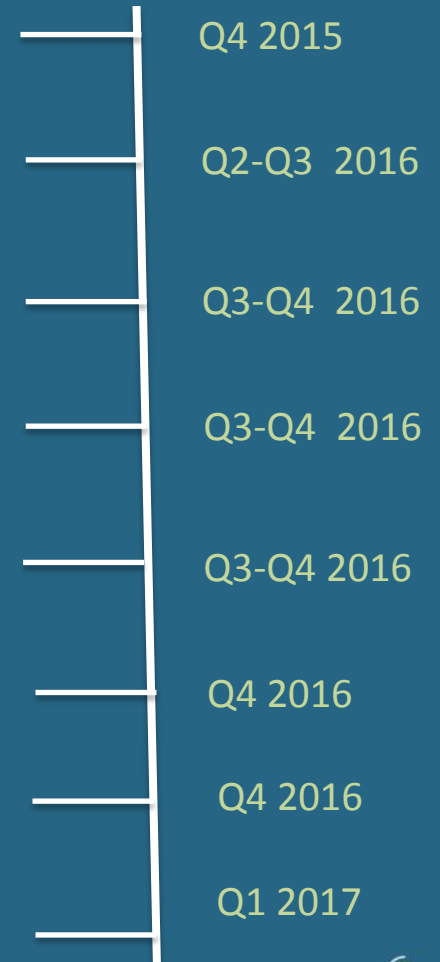
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Preliminary Stakeholder Consultation

- Purpose – identification of issues for review and analysis
- Initial high-level engagement over 9th, 10th and 14th June in Dublin
- Targeted engagement with all Local Authorities on 9th
- Invitees represented on 10th and 14th June - bodies and agencies from Society and the Regions, the Economy and Infrastructure, Higher Education and Recreation, Management and Protection and Governance
- Selection of invitees: CIF, An Bord Pleanála, Universities and ITs, An Taisce, Friends of the Irish Environment, The Housing Agency, The EPA, Transport Providers, Ervia, NTA, TII, all Government Departments, Coillte, Bord na Móna, Údaras na Gaeltachta, Bord Bia, IDA, Enterprise Ireland, NAMA, Chambers Ireland, Eirgrid

Themes and Outcomes

1) 'Sphere of Influence'

- Enact legislation that gives the **statutory footing** to the NPF
- Opportunity for Ireland to **comprehensively communicate and coordinate** national policy
- Create a framework for **identifying the assets** that contribute to making 'places' in Ireland successful
- To clearly establish the national planning policy framework that will inform and guide the formulation of planning policy for the **3 Regional Assembly areas and the 31 Local Authority areas**

Themes and Outcomes

2) Ambitions and Strengths

- To reflect strong **international and national ambitions** for Ireland as a growing economy and a transitioning society in a global context
- To comprehensively guide the growth of Ireland through a robust spatial policy that **recognises the potential of ‘place’**, whether within a rural or an urban context
- **‘Next Generation Ireland’** - to create a national coordinated policy that is capable of guiding how future generations may continue to realise the potential of Ireland’s places, in a sustainable and planned way
- To create a positive, resilient policy document that has the **buy-in and stakeholder commitment** enshrined in its content and as part of its implementation

Themes and Outcomes

3) Drivers – Living and Working

- As a priority, to **identify the nature and scale of infrastructure** required to realise national ambitions, particularly within the economic sector
- The need to **align the NPF with capital spending**
- In order to promote durable and balanced growth in the future, address infrastructure needs as a means to support a structural shift in the composition of government **expenditure towards investment**
- The role of **Irish cities as key ‘drivers’** and the clarity and direction that the NPF needs to provide in this regard was heavily referenced
- Communities across Ireland were identified by attendees as being **‘champions of ‘place’, and ‘drivers’**, particularly where they are responsible for delivering local initiatives and projects

Themes and Outcomes

4) 'Gamechangers' – Infrastructure

- Examine how **cost benefit analysis** can be embedded into the NPF
- **Prioritisation essential** to managing expectations and capturing potential
- The **opportunities that investment in transport infrastructure** offers as it often 'opens up' land
- The **management of finite resources** and consideration of the future export potential of renewable energy

Future Consultation

NPF Website

Development of a dedicated website to act as a 'hub' for public and stakeholder interaction throughout all phases of the NPF preparation process is a key priority

Promotional Video

A short promotional 'call to action' engagement film has been prepared

National Public Consultation Strategy

As a critical element in the design, transparency and delivery of the NPF, a consultation strategy is currently being devised for a likely pre-draft stage launch in October

NPF & Environmental Assessment

As part of the preparation of the **National Planning Framework**, the Government is required to carry out a number of environmental assessments of the proposed Framework.

These include:

- Strategic Environmental Assessment (**SEA**)
- Appropriate Assessment (**AA**) and
- Strategic Flood Risk Appraisal (**SFRA**).



NPF & SEA

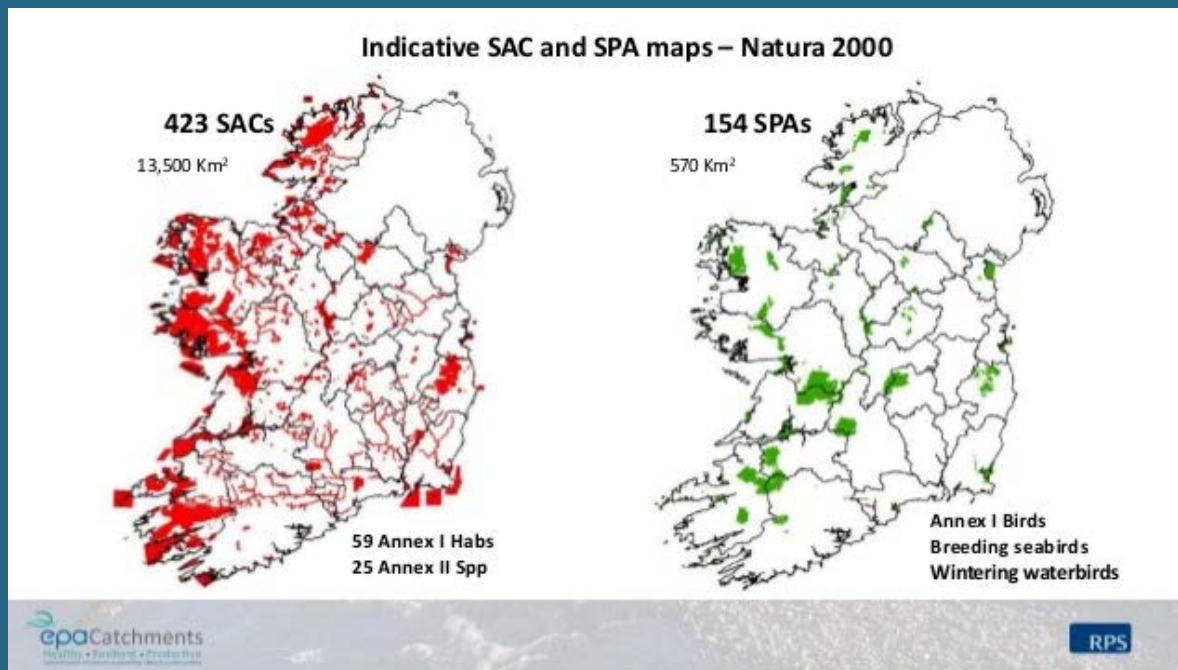
SEA will be concerned with the likely significant effects of the National Planning Framework on the following:

- Population, Soil, Biodiversity, Water, Human Health
 - Climatic Factors, Flora/Fauna, Material Assets
 - Cultural Heritage including Architecture, Archaeology, Landscape
- and the interrelationship between each of these factors

Appropriate Assessment (AA)

The National Planning Framework may also be subject to Appropriate Assessment, as required by the **EU Habitats and Birds Directives**

Network of protected wildlife sites through the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs - habitats and wildlife) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs – Bird species) collectively known as Natura 2000 sites



Strategic Flood Risk Appraisal (SFRA)

The EU Directive on the *'Assessment and Management of Flood Risks'* requires EU member states to assess and manage flood risks.

The preparation of the National Planning Framework will be informed by national planning policy such as the Guidelines on Flood Risk Management which state that Flood Risk Assessment should be **integrated into the SEA process**. Scoping of the SEA will normally include flood risk as an environmental criterion.

A **Strategic Flood Risk Appraisal** will be published alongside the Draft NPF and the related Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment reports

Environmental Assessment

Key Stages and Outputs

Stage 1:

Screening SEA & AA

Scoping workshop

SEA Scoping Report

Pre-draft SFRA

Stage 2:

SEA Alternatives

SEA Env Report

AA Screening &/or NIS

Draft SFRA
Management Plan

Stage 3:

Final SEA Statement

Final NIS

Final SFRA
Management Plan

Current Status:

Consultants (RPS) appointed to carry out the integration of environmental considerations (SEA, AA & SFRA) into the NPF process

Framework Development

The NPF will:

Be national in scope to guide and shape spatial development of Ireland and capitalise on the potential of all places

Be a decision-making framework for other plans, for regional and local planning policy and for key decisions by ABP (strategic infrastructure)

Identify and integrate national development and investment priorities as well as seeking to influence emerging sectoral policies

Promote sustainable development and environmental protection

Co-ordinate with other plans - Marine Spatial Plans, NI Strategic Plans

Framework - 10 Key Questions

1. What should Ireland look like in 20 years?
2. How do we ensure that every place can realise it's potential?
3. Where will jobs be located and what will those jobs be?
4. Where will we live and what types of housing will be needed?
5. What are the key services will people need?
6. Where will Ireland fit in a wider (geographical) context?
7. What are the planning responses to key environmental challenges?
8. What infrastructure is required – what are the national priorities?
9. How should a National Planning Framework be implemented?
10. What will success look like?

Framework Development

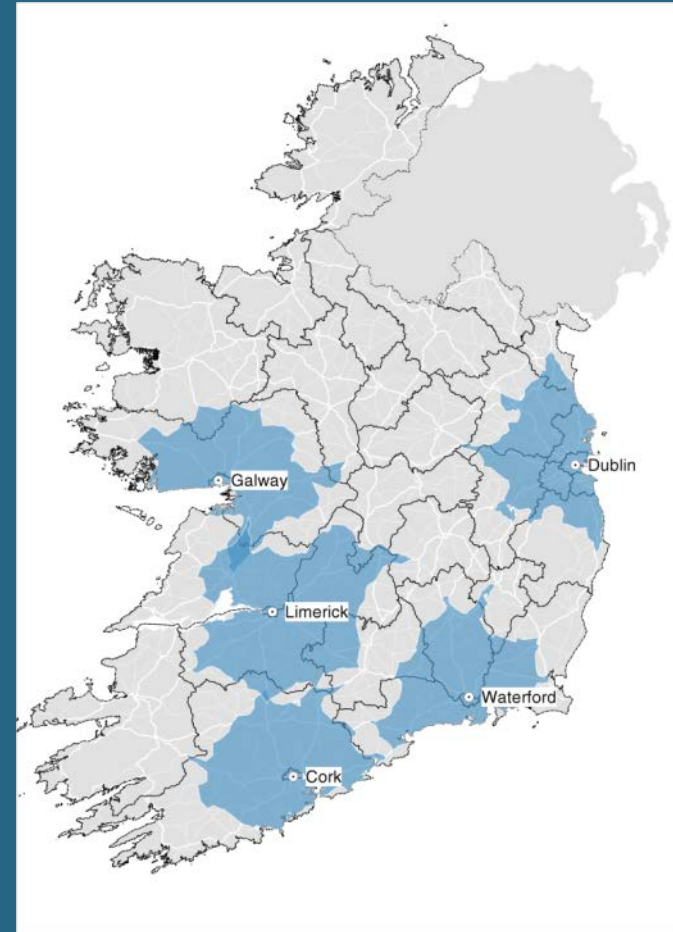
Inputs Include:-

ESRI working with NPF Team on

- Demographic and Econometric modelling and projections
- Development and testing of alternative scenarios

TII assisting with mapping, drive-time accessibility

AIRO (NUIM) assisting with spatial data & mapping



Framework Development

Broad Characterisation:-

- Dublin (i.e. built-up area, including zoned development land)
- Regional Cities (Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford) defined by built-up area and zonings)
- Dublin Commuter Hinterland including towns and wider rural areas
- Regional City Hinterlands (including Derry/Londonderry related area)
- Accessible Rural Areas within 30-45 min drive of larger settlements, outside city hinterlands
- Peripheral Rural Areas remote from larger settlements and cities

Framework Development

Draft Position Paper: Strategic Issues and Policy Choices

'Business as Usual' or Influencing the Spatial Pattern

- 1: Strengthening Ireland's Cities and Regions**
Importance of Dublin, potential of other cities & towns
- 2: A Place-based Planning Strategy for Rural Ireland**
Integrated rural-urban catchments, sustainable growth
- 3: Equipping Ireland for Future Development**
Strategic and social infrastructure, building form
- 4: The Health and Well Being of People and Places in Ireland**
Lifestyles, the environment and climate change
- 5: Delivering the National Planning Framework**
Support, structures, funding, monitoring

Some Quotations

"In 2015 Ireland had the second lowest level of gross public investment as a percentage of GDP (2% of GDP) when it should be 4%"

"Aspirations are great if they are free"

"Conservation not always a constraint but it sometime is"

"The NPF must be aligned with spending"

"Requires a new approach to infrastructure investment, shift in mind-set from seeing infrastructure investment as a mechanism for dealing with legacy issues to being more forward focused and developmental"

"More urban and dense is more efficient"

"Balance not uniformity"

"Radical new approach needed; re-imagining urban"

"Moving to cities is a fact of life"

"The NPF is not about growth, it's about achieving potential"

Contact Details

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