

From: WordPress <wordpress@npf.ie>
Sent: 25 October 2017 16:25
To: National Planning Framework
Subject: Ireland 2040 Submission from John-Paul Patton Patton
Attachments: ireland-2020-submission.docx

Name: John-Paul Patton
Surname: Patton



Message:

See attached ref need for explicit advocacy and provision for Ecovillages in this Plan.

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Ireland 2020 Submission

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to advocate for the explicit inclusion of 'Ecovillages' as a holistic solution to practically all the areas outlined in the plan. It is good to see Cloughjordan referenced as an example of good practice, being the community with the lowest carbon emissions of anywhere in Ireland. But even this appears as a passing footnote, rather than the clear advocacy needed and indeed deserved for such an achievement against incredible odds.

As an Ambassador for GEN (Global Ecovillage Network) in Ireland, I request that the pioneering and UN supported Ecovillage movement be given clear advocacy in this plan. GEN is currently working with over 10,000 Ecovillages across 5 continents and this is an area that Ireland can really improve on working with.

I refer you to the One Planet Development policy of the Welsh assembly which enabled Llamas Ecovillage to be the first ground-up Ecovillage in the UK. I also note that Cloughjordan (prior to even stricter current planning regulations) were very much hampered in exemplifying best international practice in Ecovillages, due to planning laws which do not take into account this pioneering form of sustainable development. With Ireland set to be only one of two countries in all of Europe to miss its 2020 Carbon Reduction targets, Ireland needs to enable this type of low-impact, land-based ecological development, if it to seriously address the sustainable development of the Island.

I also refer you to www.EnrichedEarth.org we are seeking to pioneer an Educational Ecovillage in Co. Roscommon and it will greatly help us to win the planning permission we need to set up a world-class centre for environmental education (working in synergy with Green-Schools) if our local council and An Taisce have an explicit green-light for such in this new planning document.

I refer explicitly to the relevant National Policy Objectives:

National Policy Objective 20 Ecovillages are a key 'innovation in rural economic development and enterprise through sustainable diversification of the rural economy into new sectors and in particular those with a low or zero carbon output.' For example Findhorn Ecovillage in Scotland has an annual revenue of over £2,500,000 and has the lowest carbon footprint of any community in the UK. Damanhur Ecovillage in rural North Italy has an incredible total annual revenue of over €70,000,000 and is a world leader in sustainable development. The Eden Project in England is also worth over 1 Billion £ to the Cornwall economy. Ecovillages have the potential to dramatically enable this policy objective IF explicit provision is made for them.

National Policy Objective 21 again may best be achieved through the Ecovillage movement. Ecovillages exemplify best practice in 'on-farm' and 'off-farm' sustainable and educational activities and low-impact housing provision in planning will help protect the natural landscape and attract rural tourism.

National Policy Objective 59 again can be enabled via the Ecovillage movement and its ethos, which internationally is at the cutting edge of Green Infrastructure. We need things like reed-bed waste solutions, compost toileting, off-grid renewable energy systems and best practice in low-impact housing e.g. turf roof, cob and hempcrete which ecovillages exemplify to be clearly enabled in planning regulations and this planning policy.

National Policy Objective 67 in order to enable ecovillages, provision in terms of zoning for both urban and rural areas needs to be made for ecovillages, with very strict criteria such as advocated by GEN and One Planet Development, which clearly enable ethical development, whilst prevent any abuse by unscrupulous developers.

National Policy Objective 70. We need the SEA, EIA and AA to be informed ref Ecovillages in terms of enabling consent for such low-impact developments.

Finally the Ecovillage movement can work not just in terms of the kind of rural regeneration, which is clearly needed in areas like Boyle in Co Roscommon but can also provide ecological solutions in urban areas.

However, whilst much of this document and its noble aspirations can be clearly realised via Ecovillages, we need an explicit endorsement in National Planning to help ensure the growth of genuine sustainable development and regeneration.

Myself and our team of experts in Enriched Earth are available for further consultation on these matters if required.

Yours Faithfully,

John-Paul Patton

