

# Commentary on The National Planning Framework's Ireland 2040 Plan

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Ireland faces a number of pressing issues in regard to urban planning in the coming years. The Ireland 2040 Plan, as outlined by The National Planning Framework (NPF) lists 10 key questions. This response focuses on Question 4: "Where will we live and what types of housing will be needed?". In order to keep up with unrelenting housing concerns the NPF needs to focus on the increase of urban sprawl of the larger towns and cities eating into essential rural landscapes. Furthermore, there is need to have an emphasis on the regeneration of abandoned or vacant apartments and the lack of multi-room apartments within the city centres themselves.

Focusing in on Dublin, as an essential area for the future development of the urban centres in Ireland<sup>1</sup>, the apartment situation is far from ideal. Dublin lacks multi room apartments with the majority of inner city dwellings being comprising of 1-2 bedrooms. In order to halt urban sprawl an emphasis needs to be placed on the increase of families living within the city centre. By increasing the amount of 3, 4 and even 5 bedroom apartments, there will be an increase of family living with the city. This will reduce transportation congestion and rural lands being eaten up by urban sprawl, benefiting both Dublin and the surrounding lands alike.

The issue of a lack of inner city dwelling, or a push to move out of the city is emphasised by the abundance of vacant or abandoned residences in the city centre. As of 2016, Dublin has over 9000 apartments and houses vacant in its city centre and 20,000 in the greater Dublin area.<sup>2</sup> An urban planning focus to increase density should be the revitalisation of these vacant properties instead of the reconstruction of newer ones. Although a more expensive process, it does however, reduce the environmental impact of construction, as well as preserve a much desired and sought after streetscape and neighbourhood aesthetic within the city.

Reference List:

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2. Kelly, Oliver. "Over 20,000 homes in Dublin are vacant." *Irish Times*, 17 December, 2016. Accessed February 25, 2017.  
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