



President's Foreword

The National Planning Awards seek to recognise and celebrate outstanding planning achievements at all levels. The IPI considers the Awards to be a fundamental initiative to celebrate the role and development of spatial planning in Ireland, to reward examples of planning solutions and to promote the dissemination of good planning practice amongst practitioners, decision makers, stakeholders and citizens. The Awards honour recent projects, plans and programmes, which have made an outstanding contribution to the quality of life in urban and rural Ireland and internationally.

The Institute received a record number of nominations for the 2013-2014 National Planning Awards and I would like to thank and commend all the entrants for the high quality of their submissions. Of these nominations, the Jury shortlisted 40 plans and projects undertaken by a wide variety of groups including local authorities, development agencies, semi-state bodies, private sector professionals, students and community groups. This clearly demonstrates the interest in spatial planning and the positive role that it plays in shaping Ireland's future. The variety of entries also demonstrates that spatial planning has moved far beyond its traditional view of development management and forward planning, and that it now embraces a much wider role with greater public participation and use of modern technology being key features of good planning. This is especially pertinent given that 2014 marks fifty years of the Republic's planning system following the commencement of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act in 1964.

Good planning, proper planning and sustainable planning provides value not only to the exchequer in terms of the efficient use of infrastructure, but, also, to every citizen who engages in the built environment. Effective, collaborative plan led development is central to building quality places where people and families want to live and work. Many of the projects presented here are exemplary and successfully demonstrate the possibilities of planning, confirming that good enough is no longer good enough.

The organisation of the 2014 National Planning Awards commenced many months ago and on behalf of the IPI I would like to thank the members of the jury who gave of their time so generously. Events of this scale and nature do not happen without a great deal of effort, commitment and professionalism and I wish to pay particular compliment to National Planning Awards organiser, Amy Hastings and acknowledge the extraordinary achievement that has been released this evening in making this year's awards our most successful (and stylish) to date. I would also like to acknowledge our overall sponsors, William Fry Solicitors, along with GeoDirectory and RealSim. Finally I would like to acknowledge the continuing support of the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, who host this year's ceremony and have provided us with this prestigious venue.

*Mary Crowley MIPI
President, Irish Planning Institute*



A Note from the Jury

It is often said that the best times for planning are the quieter ones, it being much more difficult to find the space or time for reflection and planning when in the heat of activity and change.

Given the very difficult economic circumstances facing our country and its planning process over the past six years, it seems that planners and the planning process have been very busy indeed getting ready for the upswing.

It is remarkable to note that despite recent difficulties, the uncertainty around funding for key projects, local authority cutbacks and record lows in new building starts that the Jury was faced with assessing the highest ever number of entrants across 12 categories.

Of course, the 2013-2014 process marks the most significant change in the history of the National Planning Awards, because of the introduction of eight new award categories, including an International Planning Award.

The Jury was particularly struck by the breadth of the concepts, plans and projects put forward for consideration.

Nominations were made by individuals, by voluntary and community groups, by public sector organisations.

The nominations were also remarkable for the variety of ways in which the projects demonstrated how and where the planning profession now works

with confidence and vision, hand in hand with other built environment professionals, in promoting a truly multi-disciplinary approach to planning for the future of our communities, whether living in cities, towns or the countryside.

It is a difficult thing to put your project forward for peer review and consideration in an awards context. It takes commitment, confidence and effort and then there is the waiting for the result as the envelope is opened.

On behalf of the Jury, I would like to thank all entrants for participating in the Awards and congratulate them on the quality of the work submitted. The unprecedented quantity and very high standard of the nominations shows that planning is the real winner here and demonstrates that despite our recent difficulties, Irish people and Irish planners are not afraid of thinking positively about the future.

So it should be. Ireland has a bright future and planning is a key activity in building that future.

There were particularly impressive projects that demonstrated where the planner played a significant role in very large and multi-phase projects as in the case of the Grangegorman Planning Scheme 2012.

There were also very impressive projects that demonstrated a growing awareness of the value of planning and the planners skillsets in the wider commercial semi-state setting as in the example of

Bord Gáis Networks' environmental planning toolkit ('EnviroKit') and EirGrid's Project Development and Consultation Roadmap.

With regular calls for more certainty and consistency in the planning process, the development of toolkits and standard methodologies can only improve the efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of the planning process.

Another significant trend noted by the Jury was the increasingly central role played by Irish planners in major international research and data gathering projects that also use innovative presentation formats. The new firm Future Analytics was involved in two nominated projects: 'Gateways and Hubs Development Index, 2012 - A Review of Socio-Economic Performance' and 'Raising the Awareness of Urban Resilience and Citizen Safety and Security in Spatial Planning'.

The Jury would like to strongly encourage more research and education projects of this calibre entered in future awards.

Lastly, I would very much like to sincerely thank my Jury co-members, Frank McDonald, Ozgur Yucel Finn, Derry O'Connell and Primrose Wilson.

The Jury worked very hard, taking time out of busy schedules in a process that was challenging because of the scale and quality of proposals to be assessed but that was also very enjoyable because of the way we worked well together and the way we were ably supported by IPI President Mary Crowley and Vice President and that human dynamo Amy Hastings.

*Niall Cussen MIPI
Chair of Jury Panel*

Purpose of the Awards

The National Planning Awards seek to illustrate the diversity and wide scope of planning activity today, and give recognition to successful and innovative planning strategies, schemes or developments, which make an outstanding contribution to the quality of life in urban and rural parts of Ireland. Through the National Planning Awards, the Irish Planning Institute aims to highlight the best examples of planning practice and to raise the standard of townscape design and planning awareness both within the public and private sectors.

The aims of the Awards are to:

- Demonstrate to the general public and to the planning profession in particular, successful and innovative planning projects and developments through which the quality of life of the general public is enhanced and improved, socially, economically and environmentally.
- Promote, create and enhance conditions favourable to the promotion of sustainable development.
- Illustrate the diversity and wide scope of planning activity today: in regeneration of urban and other areas, economics and leisure, transport and traffic management, as well as promoting economic and social cohesion and enhancing cultural identity.
- Demonstrate clearly the advantages of the participatory planning process, facilitated and enabled by professional planners, showing how the cooperation between and the direct participation of stakeholders, local authorities, development agencies and interested public can have a synergistic effect of benefit to the whole planning process.



Overview of the 2014 National Planning Awards

The 8th National Planning Awards represent a significant change in the format and operation of the Awards. In addition to the original five award categories, eight additional and more focused categories were added including:

- The Environmental and Sustainable Planning Award
- The Transportation Planning Award
- The Infrastructure Award
- The Economic Planning Award
- The Heritage Planning Award
- The Housing and Community Design Award
- The International Planning Award
- The Digital Media in Planning Award

As a result, the Awards attracted a record number of entries, almost double the largest number of entries ever received. In addition, nominated projects were more evenly distributed throughout the country than in previous years, with a significant number of entries originating from outside the Greater Dublin Area. The 2014 Awards are also remarkable for increasing the proportion of projects with regional, national or international focus. Such projects are key to developing and promoting spatial planning to a wider audience in fields such as environmental management and climate change.

Whilst the number of entries received was substantial, a majority of the entries were urban focussed with few entries of planning schemes or projects in rural areas. This marks the continuation of a trend that has arisen in recent years and the future submission of plans and projects relating to rural contexts for consideration under the National Planning Awards is encouraged for future years.

The Jury panel was selected having regard to their diverse and varied experience in the field of planning and urban design and included:

- Niall Cussen (Senior Planning Advisor, Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government)
- Frank McDonald (Environment Editor of *The Irish Times*)
- Derry O'Connell (Lecturer, UCD School of Geography, Planning and Environmental Policy)
- Primrose Wilson CBE (Chair, Irish Follies Trust)
- Öznur Yücel-Finn (Board Member, An Bord Pleanála)

The Jury was chaired by Niall Cussen, Senior Planning Advisor with the Department of the Environment,

Community and Local Government. All Jury members signed a formal Jury declaration of independence and integrity.

The Jury met on three separate occasions in the office of the Irish Planning Institute on 12th September, 25th October and 9th December 2013. All entries were reviewed and it was agreed that fifty four valid entries had been received.

During the first meeting, the Jury agreed that the criteria outlined for each category in the 2013 Entry Requirements brochure would form the basis for the assessment of entries to the National Planning Awards. In addition to the requirements of each of the categories, the Jury took all or some of the following criteria into consideration in the evaluation of each project and plan submitted:

- Originality and innovation of the achievement or approach;
- Quality of the professional work involved in design; in the development of planning concepts; or in the application of planning techniques; or in the design and application of the decision making process;
- Application of the principles of sustainable development, for the enhancement of the environment and any recognisable social and economic benefit;
- The extent to which the scheme may serve as a reference for other work elsewhere or as a base for the development of further related schemes;
- The role played by the planner as enabler or co-ordinator and the demonstration of the added value brought to the project through the involvement of the planners;
- The extent to which the project promoted / incorporated green technologies; and
- The extent of public participation and its effectiveness in changing outcomes.

As the entries varied greatly in scale, topic and ambition, the Jury also considered other differentiating factors throughout the evaluation process including:

- Scale: cross-border, region, urban, rural, local
- Agents: public, private, cooperation, participation
- Project status: completed with tangible results, in process of completion, not completed
- Topic, aims and ambitions: is the object under consideration a plan or a research report or is it a project to be implemented. If it is a project to be implemented physically, is it a new development, a renewal or upgrading of existing structures and what are the implications for the environment, climate and social conditions and for the use of energy.

The first meeting culminated in the short listing of thirty three entries across ten categories, plus an additional seven entries in the student category. Each of the thirty three entries were invited to prepare and submit two presentation boards to the Jury panel for consideration. Where it was considered that an entry was unclear or weak in certain aspects, entrants were invited to focus on those aspects in their presentation.

Selecting the winners was the difficult responsibility of the Jury and in selecting the winners the Jury sought to emphasise a broader planning perspective, embracing broadly based urban, rural and regional planning issues. During the evaluation, the projects were considered and reconsidered several times with reference to the selected criteria in order to establish the exemplary nature of the project. A final but important part of the evaluation concerned the actual presentation of material put forward before the Jury panel. The clarity and quality of the presentations and the ability to present messages, findings and outcomes in a concise, clear and professional manner.

The second and third meetings concentrated on a final evaluation and assessment of the short listed entries. It was agreed to put forward nine category winners and to commend eight projects across seven categories. The Jury panel then finally agreed on an overall National Planning Award winner. The details of the winning nominations are considered in more detail in this publication.

In closing, as the Awards Organiser, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to all those who submitted nominations, whose projects were short listed and who have been awarded honours as part of the 2013-2014 National Planning Awards. The entries demonstrate the range of experience of planners in Ireland and highlight the skilful and innovative work undertaken throughout the country. The National Planning Awards provides an arena in which some of this experience can be shared and there is no doubt that there are many other projects out there that could prove themselves worthy of an Award.

I would also like to thank our very generous sponsors:

Overall National Planning Awards Sponsor - William Fry Solicitors

William Fry offers unrivalled legal and tax expertise across the full breadth of the business sector. We advise a substantial number of leading Irish and international companies, covering both the public and private sector.



National Planning Awards Headline Sponsor - Geo Directory

Whether your business is looking for solutions with logistics, accurate customer records, online activities, or are you researching for future opportunities, GeoDirectory's comprehensive database of 2.2 million addresses and 200,000 businesses will benefit you.



Innovative Planning Practices and Procedures Award Sponsor - RealSim

RealSim are suppliers of ultra-realistic simulated environments designed specifically for planners. Simulations are easy to use and highly insightful allowing planners to see proposed changes to urban and rural environments from any perspective, and under any lighting and sound condition. Dynamic environments are also possible with animated traffic and crowds which react to the environment around them. Spatial fidelity and accuracy is assured as all simulations are based on high resolution 3d survey data. RealSim harness the power of modern game engine technology to put the world and all its possibilities, at your fingertips.



On behalf of the Institute, I wish to express my heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the Jury panel. Without their professional commitment, invaluable expertise and generous donation of time, this initiative would not be possible.

Amy Hastings MIPI

National Planning Awards 2013-2014 Organiser

Nominator	Project Title
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National Planning Award: Regional and City Areas / Rural Areas and the Natural Environment

For a comprehensive or general plan that advances the science and art of planning, there are two separate divisions and nominations can be lodged under two separate headings. Local authorities are particularly encouraged to enter this category.

- *Regional and City Areas – major schemes and regeneration in larger urban areas*
- *Rural Areas and the Natural Environment - all aspects of planning in rural areas from development guidance to village regeneration and the protection and enhancement of the natural environment*

Future Analytics Consulting Limited / Regional Assemblies	Gateways and Hubs Development Index, 2012
Grangegorman Development Agency	Grangegorman Planning Scheme 2012
GVA	Limerick 2030 An Economic and Spatial Plan for Limerick
The Heritage Council	Community-Led Village Design Statements Toolkit
South Dublin County Council	Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets
South Dublin County Council	Sustainable Transport Planning Programme

Urban Design and Place Making Award

An award will be made for a plan or project that, as a direct result of the effort and specific planning input, demonstrates improved quality of life for the community and demonstrates significant benefits outside of the site itself. Emphasis is on how creative housing, economic development, and private investments have been used to improve quality of life, provide employment and / or services in an area, using best conservation, urban design and planning practices.

Box Architecture	Ballyroan Library, Ballyroan Community, Ballyroan Pastoral Centre
Clare County Council	Shannon Town and Environs Local Area Plan 2012-2018
Limerick City & County Council	Aras Mainchin Seoighe, Killmallock, Co. Limerick

Environmental and Sustainable Planning Award

This award honours a plan or project, which promotes environmentally sustainable development through the conservation and protection of natural heritage; and the promotion of the principles of sustainability and environmental awareness in local communities. Plans or projects falling under this category could include green infrastructure plans; spatial planning strategies including integrated sustainable energy aspects; sustainable transport initiatives; conservation initiatives and programs for the promotion of biodiversity; education initiatives; and any and all projects or plans (small or large) that seek to reduce the impact of development on the natural environment.

Cavan Town Council & Cavan Tidy Towns Ctte	The Green Lough Nature Area
Clare County Council	Shannon Town Green Infrastructure Plan 2012
South Dublin County Council	Newcastle Local Area Plan (2012)
South Dublin County Council	South Dublin Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP)

Nominator	Project Title
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Transportation Planning Award

The Transportation Planning Award will be made to a plan or project demonstrating outstanding achievement in the planning or implementation of transport initiatives promoting modal shift towards more sustainable travel patterns at local, regional or national level. Plans or projects falling under this category could include those that: reduce dependence on travel by private car; promote public transport or walking and cycling as a means of travel; reduce traffic congestion; promote and improve traffic safety; promote active leisure activities (e.g., trails or walks); or improve accessibility and legibility within a town or local area.

Limerick City & County Council	Limerick Smarter Travel Schools Project 2013
South Dublin County Council	Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets
South Dublin County Council	Travel Smart Communities

Economic Planning Award

The Economic Planning Award honours plans or projects, which apply national spatial planning policy in the development of initiatives for stimulating sustainable economic development and job creation at local, regional and national level. Economic planning projects and plans could include local economic development strategies; enterprise support initiatives; retail and town management strategies; town centre developments and developments resulting in major economic benefit to a community or region; and urban renewal projects.

Clare County Council	Strategic Integrated Framework Plan for the Shannon Estuary
GVA	Limerick 2030 An Economic and Spatial Plan for Limerick
HRA Planning	Shannon Foynes Port Company Vision 2041

Heritage Planning Award

Having regard to the major role that Ireland's historic environment plays in the national economy, the Heritage Planning Award recognises excellence in the conservation, preservation and re-use of buildings, features and landscapes of heritage importance as part of a plan or project.

Clare County Council	Lough Derg Heritage Trail
Clare County Council	Shannon Town Green Infrastructure Plan
Dublin City Council	Aungier Street: Revitalising an Historic Neighbourhood
Healy Partners Architects	Milk Market, Mungret Street, Limerick
Limerick City & County Council	King Johns Castle Redevelopment
Sheridan Woods Architects + Urban Planners	Kavanagh County: Literary Landscape Character Assessment
South Tipperary County Council	Historic Town Walls Restoration and Interpretation Programme

King John's Castle Redevelopment

Nominated by: Limerick City and County Council

Jury Citation:

"The redevelopment of King John's Castle in Limerick City is an exemplar regeneration within the confines of a sensitive cultural and historic site. As the Midwest region continues to grow, the manner in which this insightful intervention in the fabric of the castle will facilitate access for those who wish to visit and comprehend the site will add to the historical and cultural amenity of the wider medieval quarter as well as Limerick city centre.

This involved remaking the visitor centre, a controversial addition to the castle when built in the early 1990s, rendering it less opaque by the replacement of metal panels with glass and the relocation of the audi-visual projection room to an old granary building alongside, as well as the installation of a café at ground-floor level "bridging" the archaeological layer beneath."

King John's Castle is the corner stone of Limerick City's tourism experience and is an iconic image of Limerick for citizens and visitors alike. It forms a core pillar in developing the city's economic and cultural potential through the enhancement of its existing heritage pedigree.

In 2011, King John's Castle attracted only 38,221 visitors. The interpretation at the visitor centre was tired, the visitor experience out-dated and underwhelming, despite the site's inherent and profound archaeological, architectural and historical interest. Shannon Free Airport Development Company (Shannon Development), was awarded €5.7 million capital investment funding (of which €2.6 million was available for interpretation) by Fáilte Ireland to reinvigorate the castle and the adjoining Limerick Museum buildings on Castle Lane in order to upgrade the visitor experience and make the castle – and Limerick – a must-visit attraction, achieving annual visitor numbers of 100,000 within 3 years.

The project set out to expand and redeveloped the castle as a modern day visitor centre. This was complemented by the re-development of a civic plaza on Nicholas Street and the revitalisation of Castle Lane as a new access point to the castle complex. The project was undertaken to improve the visual amenity of the castle from all locations – Thomond Bridge, Clancy Strand, Nicholas Street and from the inside of the complex. It thoughtfully expanded the traditional built castle with a connection alongside the natural asset of the River Shannon. The key elements of the city-wide regeneration strategy had to be considered and met as part of this project. The planning process also had to meet the challenges of such a major construction project taking place in an area that incorporates a National Monument and traditionally narrow streets in close proximity to local housing and shops.

