

# THE EMERGENCE AND EVOLUTION OF URBAN PLANNING IN IRELAND

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**Abstract:** We have described the operation of modern planning in Ireland in an earlier article (Bartley and Waddington, 2000). Here we track the evolution of the Irish planning system and identify some of its links with the U.K. system. We sketch the political and economic background in Ireland against which the modern form of compulsory planning was introduced. This provides a useful context for understanding the reasons for and timing of the introduction of mandatory planning to Ireland. We then examine the experience of planning in Dublin as a case study to illustrate the subsequent trajectory of Irish planning. A future article will analyse the 'problems' associated with contemporary planning in Ireland.

## NEAREST NEIGHBOUR ANALYSIS -- THE U.K. EXPERIENCE

Contemporary planning in Ireland is based on the system devised in Britain in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. The U.K. planning system was established by legislation in 1947 to oversee the reconstruction of Britain after the devastation and abnormality of a prolonged period of war and to address many of the long-standing negative consequences of the Industrial Revolution. For over a century, momentum and agitation had been growing in the U.K. in support of an orchestrated approach to government regulation of the land market. It was considered that the absence of controls under the traditional *laissez faire* market-led approach had produced many of the undesirable and 'irrational' outcomes equated with industrialisation and urbanisation. Uncontrolled development had given rise to urban squalor and unhealthy living conditions during the early stages of British industrialisation. It was also viewed as a source of unbalanced growth and urban sprawl in the 1940s. A particular concern at this time was the loss of valuable agricultural land in the southeast region of England, as London grew at the expense of the rest of the country creating an increasingly congested region. Cities and towns with existing industrial infrastructure in the north of England, Wales and Scotland were being abandoned as both industry and people gravitated to the London area. In short, the uncontrolled market, which allowed industry to locate where it pleased – the boom area around London – was producing an undesirable geography and a host of associated problems as people migrated to jobs in the growth areas.

Mandatory planning was adopted as a way of controlling these trends. It was welcomed as a comprehensive and integrated management approach to town and country development that was inherently more efficient, more effective and fairer than the uncontrolled and unsustainable approach that had prevailed in the past. As such, planning was expected to curb the excesses of *laissez faire* development and improve

working and living conditions for the general populace through a more rational, balanced and democratic approach to using resources based on scientific management principles. Staff, resources and legal powers were put in place to implement and operate the new system. Planning was established as an action-oriented, results-driven form of government regulation or 'managerialism'. It was part of the new post-war political agenda that required the state to play a much more active and interventionist role in managing the economy and welfare aspects of society. This was a period when there was great confidence in the potential of technology and scientific thinking to improve the human condition. It was widely believed that the brilliant innovations and ambitious management efforts that had flourished during the emergency period of wartime could be applied to benefit society in peacetime. Thus, planning was the new 'buzz-word' of the post war era. Its aim was to shape and control the development of the physical environment through intervention in the land market – and thereby improve the economic and social environments within which people worked and lived.]

The main question addressed by the new planning system was whether London's growth should be allowed to continue unabated whilst other regions experienced major decline or should the growth of London be curbed and development deliberately directed away from London towards the other regions? The key issue revolved around the question of which came first people or the market – should people have to move to follow jobs (to wherever industries preferred to locate) or should jobs be directed to people (by requiring business companies to locate in places where resources and people were plentiful)? It was decided that the new planning machinery would oversee a new era of balanced development with growth being channelled away from the congested London region to areas of need that had underused resources. The physical outward growth of London would be restrained by surrounding it with a 'green belt' within which development would be prohibited. New towns would be built beyond this green belt to accommodate the natural population

growth and over-spill of post-war London. New towns would also be constructed in the declining regions outside London as counter-magnets to attract and intercept industry and population that would otherwise gravitate towards the metropolis. Planning functions and responsibilities were assigned to local authorities and also to independent development companies established to plan build and manage new towns as part of a new national strategy of promoting industrial and population balance throughout the country. The role and scope of planning had been extended beyond concerns with physical design to include economic, social and environmental dimensions. It also operated at multiple scales, ranging from single buildings to whole towns, to wider regions and the national economy. Town planning could not be separated from its wider contexts of country, regional and national environment.

### EMULATING BRITAIN – THE EMERGENCE OF PLANNING IN IRELAND

The contemporary Irish planning system shares many similarities with the post-war British system. This is not entirely surprising given that the Irish founding legislation of 1963 drew significantly on the 1947 U.K. model. This seemed to make good sense at the time in view of the shared experiences of the two countries – the structure of the Irish legal system was inherited from Britain, as was the political-administrative machinery of local authorities. However, Irish planning did not completely mimic its British counterpart. At about the same time that the Irish legislation was being drafted, British planning was undergoing a major upheaval because it was perceived to be undemocratic. Reports of problems being experienced in the New Towns undermined confidence in the 'managerial' (scientific decision-making) aspect of planning. Accordingly, the right of planners (as unelected technocrats) to make decisions about where people should live and work was widely criticised. The absence of sufficient opportunities for involvement of the public in matters that affected them was perceived widely as a 'democratic deficit' and this applied most acutely to the unelected New Town Corporations.

The Irish legislation did not allow for the creation of such new town companies. Instead, the political nature of planning was emphasised and, in an attempt to reinforce and widen the democratic remit of planning, the new Irish system allocated all of these new planning functions to the local authorities and provided channels for consultation at all stages of the planning process. The 'technical' and 'managerial' aspects of planning in Ireland were subordinated to the 'political' aspects. Local authorities were designated as planning authorities but also charged with the responsibility of facilitating, initiating and pursuing appropriate development in accordance with the new pro-development, macro-economic policy of the period. The

Irish legislation also explicitly linked planning with development - the act was entitled the *Local Government (Planning and Development) Act 1963*. Planning was conceived as the allocation and use of resources and development was viewed as the processes of innovation and activities designed to increase resources or wealth. Industrialisation was envisaged as the means of achieving development whilst planning was seen as the means of managing the process. A brief review of the transition to the new economic policy of industrialisation is necessary to contextualise the introduction of modern planning in Ireland.

### PLANNING FOR MODERNISATION IN IRELAND

Three phases of macro-economic strategy and associated physical planning can be identified for modern Ireland (Table 1). The first of these is the pre-industrial minimal-planning era, which stretched from national independence to the late 1950s. The emergence of modern planning in Ireland must be understood in the light of the political and economic conditions that prevailed in Ireland after it secured independence from Britain in 1921. In economic terms, Ireland was not an industrialised (or urbanised) country when it embarked on its first steps as an independent state. Early initiatives to modernise the country involved the establishment of peat and hydroelectric power plants by the Free State government as a means of stimulating and supporting native industrial development. This early emphasis on facilitating the emergence of an indigenous manufacturing and business sector was reinforced in the 1930s by the 'Dancing at the Cross-roads' speech of Fianna Fail Taoiseach, Eamonn DeValera, which described his vision of Ireland as a self-sustaining nation supported by small scale industry and traditional values. These *Sinn Fein* principles envisaged a country capable of both governing itself and providing for its own economic needs.

The second macro-economic phase is the era of industrial modernisation from 1960 to the mid-1980s. The decade of the 1960s represented a turning point in Irish economic and spatial development with the introduction of national economic and physical planning policies. Up until the 1960s, Ireland continued to be a predominantly rural society with an agricultural base and very high rates of emigration. However, a major shift occurred in macro-economic policy during the so called Lemass-Whittaker era of the late 1950s and early 1960s when the country embarked on a clear policy of achieving industrial growth through attracting multinational companies to establish in Ireland. The aim was to open Irish markets to inward international foreign investment with a view to creating significant growth in industrial employment. These new, growth-oriented economic policies attempted to stem the haemorrhage of Irish emigration by discarding Ireland's prevailing protectionist trade policies.

Table 1: Policy Phases and Related Trends in Ireland

	Phase 1 1921 to 1960	Phase 2 1960 to 1986	Phase 3 1986 to 2001
Economic Policy	Economic isolationism: Sustainable indigenous development ('Sinn Fein')	Industrialisation and integration into world economy: strategy to attract inward investment	Post-industrial strategy to attract only high growth, hi- tech industries and services
Governance	Centre populist party dominance of central government: weak local government	Centre populist party dominance of central government and emergence of coalition governments: weak local government	Proliferation of partnerships: relaxation of central government controls over local government
Urban Planning	Minimal (ad hoc): main focus on housing provision	Local government urban planning introduced but authoritarian control maintained by central government	Adaptive entrepreneurialism: targeted regeneration (4 models evolution) & flexible planning
Landscape	Rural / agricultural landscape and society: compact cities and towns	Urbanisation: low density- suburbanisation model & inner city decline	Urban reassertion and revitalisation: polymorphic inner city renewal & suburbanization & commuterization
Docklands Site	Busy docklands area	Decline and dereliction of up-river docks	From (a) single focus 'exclusive' economic/physical regeneration of city to (b) Integrated Area Development & social inclusion community focus

It was against this backdrop of new open-trade economic policies in the early 1960s, that the Irish Government accepted expert advice from the World Bank and United Nations about the need to introduce a new physical (land use) planning system. Modernisation was equated with industrialisation and it was considered that Ireland could emulate more prosperous modernised societies by following their industrialisation paths on a planned basis. Thus, in order to deal with the anticipated pressures of economic development, increasing population and urbanisation the Irish national government introduced legislation in 1963 to create a modern planning system in which planning would be obligatory throughout the country. The purpose of the proposed planning system was to facilitate and regulate the changes that were expected to emanate from the newly initiated course of economic development through rapid industrialisation.

Planning as an obligatory state activity in Ireland was envisaged as having a major role to play in smoothing the way for the emergence of the new geographies, or spatial patterns, required by this modernisation of the Irish economy and society. It would manage these transformations by making appropriate Development Plans and harnessing (or regulating) land-use change through development control policies so that future change would be 'rationalised' and undesirable change restricted where necessary. In this way, the desired gains of industrialisation could be secured as quickly and

effectively as possible whilst potentially negative consequences would be anticipated and avoided. Planning was also expected to manage the potential conflicts that could arise in the course of these transformations through accountable ('democratic') procedures which would allow for public involvement at all stages of plan making and implementation.

The third and current phase of economic and physical planning policy, the urban regeneration era, effectively began in 1986, when blighted urban zones were officially designated by central government for renewal and provided with tax exemption status to attract investment into targeted redevelopment projects in these areas. In the 'post-industrial' era of the late twentieth /early twenty first century, success is based on attracting investment that will provide jobs in the knowledge and service sectors rather than traditional manufacturing plants. These 'weightless' businesses typically need to be located in high quality office complexes and business parks. It is this latest post-industrial phase that coincides with the latest pressures of globalisation and intensified city competition trends. During this period Irish cities, including Dublin, have witnessed the construction of new 'flagship' projects (such as urban regeneration and hi-tech business parks) and the emergence a new politics of 'implementation' in the race to attract such investment and 'avoid being left behind' by national and international competitors.

Table 2

TABLE 2: EU and Irish policy linkages	
EUROPEAN UNION: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICY	IRELAND: NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMMES
• Single European Act [SEA] (1987)	• Programmes for National Recovery – PNR (1987)
• Maastricht Treaty [Economic Union] (1991)	• Programme for Economic and Social Progress – PESP (1991)
• White paper on Growth, Competitiveness and Employment (1993)	• Programme for Competitiveness and Work – PCW (1994)
• Green paper on European Social Policy – Options for the Union (1993)	
• Amsterdam Treaty [Social Union] (1997)	• Partnership 2000 for Inclusion, Employment and Competitiveness – Partnership 2000 (1996-1997) • Programme for Prosperity and Fairness – PPF (2000)

The Irish national government's minimalist approach to policy change began to alter in the early 1980s with the advent of minority and coalition governments (Table 1). Since 1986 successive Irish governments have adopted the new business-friendly, partnership strategy that has underpinned all subsequent national development programmes - that of *National Partnership Agreements*. Local authorities have been encouraged to become more entrepreneurial while planning has also become pragmatic and results-oriented. 'Planning' for cities such as Dublin and other towns throughout the country has evolved. It is now less concerned with seeking integrated, comprehensive planning for all areas within the planning authority's area of control. The new approach is based on planning for fewer areas, selected according to potential for success and, more recently, greatest need. It favours renewal over new town type development and places a strong emphasis on achieving renaissance through targeted urban regeneration. This 'planning for fragments' on a project-by-project basis has itself evolved. Initially it was concerned only with pursuing economic objectives through exclusive, property-led projects. More recently the emphasis has shifted to projects which seek to achieve a wider mix of economic and social objectives in targeted areas through partnership schemes. So why has Irish planning followed this route? Why has this recent emphasis on regeneration and partnerships occurred? To answer these questions, we must turn to the issue of globalisation.

## GLOBAL SWARMING: CHASING INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT

The Irish experience is part of a wider trend that reflects international competition between cities in an age of international reorganisation. New patterns of urban development and new approaches to urban policy have emerged in recent decades as a result of an increasingly open and competitive international arena of trade and commerce. As traditional national boundaries and national urban hierarchies become less relevant in the information era of borderless business, new super-regions are emerging. Thus, the European Union (EU), North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) and Asian Pacific Region (APR) are emerging and associated city

super-leagues are being created to fill the vacuum produced by the dissolution of nation controls. National governments adapt to these developments in a variety of ways. In some cases the adopted strategies mirror the approach and programmes adopted by the super-region. In the case of Ireland, this can be illustrated by the manner in which the National Partnership Agreements emulate the EU agenda in terms of policy focus and language (Table 2).

Their 'control' functions may be diminishing but national governments clearly continue to have an important influence on the competitive outcomes that are now appearing in the era of 'globalisation' - the term currently used most frequently to describe the process of accelerated internationalisation. Cities are increasingly seen as the engines of economic prosperity in this new regime. It is for these reasons that Irish and British urban centres are scrambling with their European counterparts for places in the newly emerging European city hierarchies and networks emanating from the consolidation of the EU super-region. In the shake-up associated with the recent transformations, many national governments and their municipal centres have adopted adventurous entrepreneurial practices and regeneration policies designed to modernise or 're-image' their major urban centres with a view to boosting their competitive advantage and obtain pivotal positions in the emerging new urban order.

In short, the quest for urban renaissance is no longer viewed as a matter for governments or their subordinate agencies alone. Indeed, it is increasingly seen as a collaborative effort involving new and flexible political, administrative and participatory arrangements employing a range of options such as single objective regeneration agencies like Urban Development Corporations (UDCs), public-private partnerships and, more recently, tripartite public-private-community partnerships. This process can be seen at work in Dublin through the evolution from a traditional trend planning approach up to the mid 1980s to the emergence, after 1986, of a piecemeal, entrepreneurial (vision-led) model designed to facilitate urban renaissance and enhance the international competitiveness of the city. The following sections of this article review the experience of Dublin

during Policy Phase 2 when planning was first introduced and the current Policy Phase 3 when the urban regeneration approach came to prominence.

## THE IRISH PLANNING EXPERIENCE (POLICY PHASE 2)

### Regional Framework Plans

The Irish planning code came into operation in October 1964 and required each planning authority to devise a development plan within three years, and thereafter review it every five years. To assist the newly established planning authorities with their tasks, international planning consultants were commissioned by the Irish Government to prepare regional scale strategy plans as frameworks for the preparation of the statutory local plans. In 1964 the Government's *Programme for Economic Expansion* defined nine planning regions for the country. International planning consultants produced separate advisory plans for Dublin City and the Dublin Region designed to articulate national economic policy spatially and provide the physical basis for the local plans of the Dublin planning authorities. A similar strategy was prepared for the Limerick-Shannon region and a separate regional planning framework, called the Buchanan Report (Buchanan, 1968), was prepared for the seven remaining regions covering the rest of the country. It was envisaged that the regional plans would foster complementarity and co-operation between neighbouring planning authorities and provide a way to achieve co-ordination of their activities and avoid unnecessary waste or duplication of resources.

It was also considered important that the regions outside Dublin should foster local growth and divert pressure from the capital. Ironically, although Ireland had not experienced the Industrial Revolution on the scale of Britain, it mirrored the British situation in one sense – it had a dominant metropolis that continued to grow by drawing people and resources away from other centres. Balanced planning was viewed as the key to ensuring that the gap between Dublin and the rest of the country would not intensify in an industrialised Ireland. Without proper planning, Ireland might replicate the problems encountered in the U.K. due to the polarisation between London and the lagging regions: a concentration of people and investment in Dublin could produce similar congestion and decline problems in Ireland. The Buchanan Report had advised that balanced regional and national development could best be achieved by promoting the industrialisation and demographic growth of a limited number of urban growth centres across the country as potential counter-magnets to Dublin. However, the recommendations of the Buchanan Report were not implemented. Dublin

continued to grow and the regional plan prepared for the metropolitan region had a major influence on the pattern of its future development.

### The Myles Wright Strategy (1966 - 1986)

The regional framework settlement strategy commissioned for the Dublin Region was devised by the U.K. planner Myles Wright (Wright, 1967). Drawing upon the then latest ideas about New Towns in Britain, particularly the Milton Keynes experiment, it proposed the selective relocation of inner city populations and industries to new towns to the west of Dublin which would accommodate a population of almost a half-million people. The Myles Wright strategy was adopted in modified form by the city and county planning authorities of Dublin and was incorporated into their Development Plans for the next two decades. As a result, residential suburbanisation and decentralisation of industry became dominant trends in the capital city.

Significantly the advisory plan did not envisage any serious potential for increasing the residential function of the central city area. The settlement strategy contained several other elements including a transportation strategy based on the motor car and the self-fulfilling prophecy that its role would become dominant in the future. The three villages around which the new towns were built - Tallaght, Clondalkin and Blanchardstown - expanded to form an outer arc from the south west to the north east of the city. Their construction transformed Dublin from a small, compact, high density city into a large sprawling decentralised metropolis around a declining inner-city. In short, Dublin transformed very quickly from a European type city designed for maximum accessibility and low vehicular mobility to an American type urban sprawl model where private car ownership and mobility became essential for access to work opportunities and services.

The Dublin new towns policy was also implemented as cheaply as possible. Reliance was placed almost entirely on the private sector to develop all aspects of the new towns apart from necessary infrastructural development and social housing. This approach resulted in the rapid provision of public and private residential accommodation during the 1970s and 1980s. The majority of new housing estates were constructed as low-rise, low-density (six to ten dwellings per acre) developments with three or four-bed roomed two-storied, semi-detached houses as the architectural vernacular. Unfortunately, the extensive housing provision was not matched by accompanying commercial, retail or social facilities. The local authorities took the blame for many of the problems that arose due to funding shortfalls and the absence of

integrated development in the new towns. However, without a statutory regional level of government to promote co-ordination, local authorities could do little to change prevailing trends. In the absence of central government commitment to redress matters, attempts by the local authorities to address the resulting 'planning drift' and its associated problems were hampered, and the decentralisation of Dublin City continued as a 'default urban policy' until the mid-1980s.

#### The ERDO Strategy (1986 - 2011)

It was only with the publication in 1985 of a new draft settlement plan for Dublin that matters came to a head in relation to urban policy. A new plan that became known as the ERDO Report (named after the organisation that produced it, the Eastern Regional Development Organisation), was commissioned to take over from the Myles Wright plan, which was reaching the end of its 20 year life-span (ERDO, 1985). The planners who produced the ERDO Report acknowledged that central government was presiding over an urban policy limbo and that the resources and policy tools to significantly alter existing decentralisation trends simply were not in place. They chose to 'go with the flow', rather than 'swim against the tide'. Accordingly, they proposed what they considered to be the only 'realistic' settlement strategy possible at the time - to produce a 'trend plan' to follow the prevailing patterns. The implications of this proposal were continued dereliction of Dublin city-centre (and inner city areas) and the possible emergence of an American-style, empty centre city (the so-called 'doughnut' type).

The ERDO trend plan provoked a huge outcry and reaction from many quarters. While it was never adopted as official policy, ERDO united most actors (including significant elements of central and local government, statutory bodies, local communities, and the private sector) around the need to rejuvenate Dublin city, and to 'save' the city centre in particular. After decades of indifference, widespread public debate was stimulated about the decline of the inner city and the ever-widening commuter belts that were resulting from the relocation of residents and industry to the urban fringe. In the ensuing debate, the decline of the city centre was viewed as 'not just a problem' but also as 'an opportunity' for fresh initiatives and experiments that could draw on similar experiences abroad. The Dublin situation was presented as yet another example of failed planning by local government in Ireland. Central government took the baton from local government and ushered in policy phase three (the urban renewal era) by introducing designated urban regeneration areas in Dublin and the country's other major urban centres. The

local authority in Dublin was side-lined as central government sought to emulate a similar experiment in London Docklands by establishing an independent, single task organisation for the purpose of rejuvenating the Dublin Docklands at Custom House Quay. An overview of planning in Ireland up to 1988 is provided by Bannon (1989).

### CURRENT PLANNING – THE URBAN REGENERATION APPROACH (POLICY PHASE 3)

Thus, in 1986 the transition to post industrial planning (phase 3) commenced when Ireland's first Urban Development Corporation (UDC), the Custom House Docks Development Authority (CHDDA), was established under the Urban Renewal legislation. The docklands project became the prototypical first model of urban regeneration (Mark 1) for Dublin. As an independent organisation with its own planning powers, the CHDDA was given responsibility for the largest urban renewal project in Ireland. Its remit was to secure the regeneration of the redundant Custom House Docks area (CHDA) in the northeast inner city of Dublin, fronting onto the River Liffey. It could enter into partnership with private companies in order to achieve its objectives and was boosted in 1987 by the decision of the Department of the Taoiseach to designate the CHDA as the site for an International Financial Services Centre (IFSC). Dublin now had a local regeneration project with global ambitions.

By the mid-1990s, the CHDDA had successfully achieved the physical and economic regeneration of the CHDA in partnership with a private property development consortium. The direction of development in the CHDA and in the IFSC, with its emphasis on entrepreneurial approaches, set the stage for new and competing models of urban regeneration into the 1990s. The collapse of the international property and equities markets at the end of the 1980s, together with criticisms about democratic and community deficits associated with the Docklands project due to (a) the exclusion of local government from the project, and (b) the lack of regeneration benefits accruing to local residents, led to changes in urban regeneration policy in Dublin in the 1990s. Three subsequent stages or models can be identified in these evolving changes.

If the first model of urban regeneration is the independent UDC approach, as represented by the CHDDA, the second urban regeneration model (Mark 2) is exemplified by the Temple Bar regeneration

Table 3: Four models of Urban Regeneration in Dublin

Model	Mark 1	Mark 2	Mark 3	Mark 4
Representative Project (Inception)	CHDA UDC (1986)	Temple Bar (1991)	HARP Site (1995)	Integrated Area Plans (IAPs) (1998)
Changing Governance / Planning Procedures	Local authorities bypassed by independent executive agency (UDC) which produces Master Plan for designated area	Local authority included in negotiated framework plan by dominant UDC	Local authority leads project and prepares planning scheme for site; local authority also retains planning control over site	Central government selects IAPs via competitive bidding contest; local authority, UDC or other agencies can lead project
Partnership	Public-private partnership (PPP) only	Public-private partnership (PPP); some formal co-operation between UDC and local authority	Early tripartite partnership approaches. Liaison between local authorities, community, private sector	Intensified and more diverse partnership approaches (including tripartite stakeholder partnerships between state agencies, communities, businesses, etc.)

project. Financial centres and office complexes went out of favour as the stock exchange and property markets declined rapidly in value in the late 1980s. As a result, heritage related tourism projects quickly became the prevailing fashion in urban renewal for most 'competitive cities'. Temple Bar is a typical example of the new fashion which emerged at that time. This second model still required an independent agency (Temple Bar Properties) to manage the project. Private sector businesses were invited to participate in the regeneration process in partnership with Temple Bar Properties. However, Dublin Corporation retained planning control in Temple Bar, and worked in conjunction with Temple Bar Properties to develop a Framework Plan for the site. The local authority was back in the picture as a key player, albeit not in the leading role. The **third urban regeneration model (Mark 3)**, brought about under new Urban Renewal Schemes in 1994, is typified by the HARP and Ballymun urban regeneration projects. Here, the local authority took the lead in choosing which sites were designated for regeneration, and retained planning control over these sites. This model allowed for considerable involvement by local community representatives and others interested in the development of the area. In this model the local authority led the potential public-private sector partnerships but the community and other elements of 'civil society' were also drawn into the partnership arrangements.

In 1996 the Management Consultancy firm KPMG was commissioned by central government to review the first decade of the Urban Renewal Schemes. The findings of the KPMG report (KPMG, 1997) echoed the results of a similar KPMG study carried out in the UK for the British government. The Irish report recommended that subsequent urban regeneration schemes should be based

on a social model similar to the Mark 3 model, which was considered to be a more 'democratic' model than its predecessors. Following on from the KPMG report recommendations, the Dublin Docklands Development Authority (DDDA) embraced the KPMGs Mark 4 (partnership) model in 1997 when it replaced the CHDDA at the end of the latter's ten year term of office. The KPMG Model 4 approach was adopted by central government in 1998 when the Integrated Area Plan (IAP) approach to urban regeneration was introduced. In this model, local government (or another management agency) is responsible for leading and co-ordinating the plan for its designated IAP. In order to obtain designated status as an urban regeneration zone from central government, IAPs must demonstrate clear development potential, social needs and other credentials in competition with other potential IAPs. Moreover, this competition for selection favours applicants who can express creative 'visions' for the total regeneration of the area and show a commitment to local participation through partnerships in the ensuing planning and development process.

## PLANNING IN IRELAND – THE FUTURE?

The IAPs are the latest embodiment of the 'adaptive entrepreneurial' approach that evolved in Dublin after the inception of the CHDDA. IAPs have, in many respects, moved to the opposite end of the spectrum from the first independent UDC urban regeneration model, as represented by the CHDDA. As Table 3 demonstrates, each of the subsequent models of urban regeneration incorporates progressive moves towards new partnership strategies, with increased local



government and local community involvement apparent in each case. Planning has also become more targeted and fragmented as flexible, piecemeal approaches are employed in pursuit of urban regeneration 'visions'.

Local authorities have also squeezed themselves back into the equation as active entrepreneurial agents - ironically with a strong emphasis on development that is often at the expense of planning. Most local authorities in Ireland now have separate development departments, which operate alongside and often in conflict with the department that discharges planning functions. Clearly, Irish local authorities were not successful in their initially assigned role as combined planning and development agencies. However, this may have been largely attributable to the limitations placed on them by their subordination to central government in Ireland's highly centralised government system. Unlike most European countries, Ireland does not have a statutory level of regional government. Like Britain, Ireland has a dual political system comprised of two levels of government - local and central. The local/central divide in Ireland involves a high degree of political and administrative centralisation. Despite the allocation of planning functions to local authorities in the mid-1960s, central government retained control over the allocation of resources and, therefore, over economic promotion and development in Ireland. In short, despite the allocation of planning functions to local authorities in the mid-1960s, the dual political nature of Irish government meant that the pro-active 'development' powers of the 'planning' authorities were severely restricted.

The current central government sponsored approach of fragmented planning is subject to growing criticism (see Bartley and Treadwell-Shine 1999; Graham and Marvin 2001). Obviously, the urban regeneration model and competitive IAPs have the potential to become a useful tool in the armoury of urban planning. However, critics of this 'multi mini-visions' approach to development do not view it as an alternative to wider, comprehensive planning strategies. As the current housing crisis in Ireland illustrates, piecemeal urban regeneration cannot compensate for the absence of comprehensive housing and settlement policies. Wider urban policies and strategic planning, linked to coherent economic policies, are still essential to viable and sustainable development. Despite the apparent successes of the various urban regeneration models, it is worth remembering that there still is no national or formal urban policy in Ireland. However, recent calls for balanced national and regional development though a comprehensive planning strategy have resulted in the preparation of a National Spatial

Strategy - the recommendations of which are remarkably similar to those of the 1968 Buchanan Report (see European Commission 1998; Department of the Environment and Local Government 2001). Ironically, based on where we are now, the future of Irish planning may lie in the past!

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