



*Interviews with the new President of the Irish Planning Institute available on request*

## **IRISH PLANNING INSTITUTE ANNOUNCE CONOR NORTON AS NEW PRESIDENT FOR 2020/2021**

Dr Conor Norton MIPI has been elected President of the **Irish Planning Institute** (IPI) for 2020 & 2021. The IPI is the all-island body for professional planners engaged in physical, spatial and environmental planning in Ireland.

Dr Norton is a professional planner and urban designer with 25 years experience in the private and public sectors in Ireland and abroad. He has been involved in academia at both the Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin) and University College Dublin since 1998 and is currently Head of the School of Transport Engineering, Environment and Planning at TU Dublin. As a consultant he has prepared and contributed to national policy and best practice for local area planning, flood risk management, urban roads and streets and unfinished residential developments. He has extensive project experience in plan-making, in particular, local area plans, SDZs, urban framework plans and urban design guidance. His PhD investigated the impact of urban form on the sustainability of urban centres and his current research areas span green infrastructure, planning for renewable energy and marine spatial planning. Dr Norton is a corporate member and served as Vice President of the Irish Planning Institute for 2018 and 2019 and was formerly chair of RTPI Ireland in 2015.

Commenting on his election Dr Norton said “It is a great honour to be elected President of the Irish Planning Institute at such a crucial time for Planning. The Planning Profession is at an exciting cross roads following a period of unprecedented change and policy development. Following the publication of the National Planning Framework, the draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies, the spotlight is now falling on our Local Authorities charged with publishing their six year statutory Development Plans. The Irish Planning Institute has always acknowledged that sustainable development and better outcomes for communities is dependent on strong and effective Plan Making that meaningfully engages with the public and other key stakeholders.”

Dr Norton further outlined his ambitions for the Planning Profession during the course of his presidency. “Recent changes in planning policy, planning legislation and environmental directives and the forthcoming National Marine Planning Framework have placed an increasing burden on Planners at all levels across the Planning System. During my Presidency the Institute will implement a comprehensive and robust programme for continued professional development of Planners working right across the Planning System to ensure they are equipped to meet the challenges of a new era in Planning.”

Dr Norton is acutely aware of the role Irish Planning Institute Members working as professional planners will play in tackling the challenges of Climate Change. “Climate Action will be a key focus of my Presidency. The Institute is actively developing a new overarching policy in the area of Planning and Climate Action. This will be launched during my first year as President”.

Following the commencement of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies, Dr Norton is keen that the Institute focus on opportunities for renewing the planning system in Ireland. “I am keen for our Membership to lead the debate around a renewal of the planning system in Ireland and

challenge how the system itself might function at local and regional level in 2030 and 2040. This will be a key focus of my discussions with Members across the country and I envisage making key recommendations to Central Government in this regard by the end of my term of office in 2021.” The Irish Planning Institute draws its membership from across the Planning System and is uniquely positioned to champion better relations between all levels and actors in spatial planning in Ireland. “Following a period of unprecedented challenges and opportunities for Planners, the long awaited establishment of the Office of the Planning Regulator, I will be keen to work with the Council, Committees and individual Members of the Irish Planning Institute building on existing strong relations, leveraging synergies and opportunities at all levels between all stakeholders and actors in spatial planning across Ireland “ he concluded.

Ends.

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