

## **Accelerating Infrastructure Taskforce**

### **Blockages in delivery**

- Government funding for projects
  - Multi-annual funding / project lifecycle funding is vital to ensuring projects can progress through project gates on schedule and be delivered on time and on budget
- Utilities & non-alignment of stakeholders
  - Uisce Éireann - lack of water and wastewater connections and services for new developments
  - Grid infrastructure – lack of electricity grid connections and capacity for new developments, speed of connection to the grid
  - Enabling infrastructure, including local roads, including access roads to new developments
  - Increase funding for stakeholders - UÉ development plan (Capital water & wastewater allocation)
  - Statutory utility connection guidelines – shorten the period for the development of new infrastructure to enable new developments (e.g. water services for residential developments)
  - Joint ventures for enabling infrastructure (e.g. councils/developers delivering on-site and off-site infrastructure, such as water or wastewater, to standard before handing over to Uisce Eireann or other utility providers)
  - Timelines associated with applications for increases in Maximum Import Capacity (MIC) have increased from months to years.
  - Timescales associated with reviews for energy upgrades, such as retrofits, can take considerable time.
- Finance
  - Access to finance (public and private)
  - Increased financing government schemes (Croí Conaithe, Project Tosaigh, LDA schemes running out of funding early in year)
  - VAT changes (on apartment buildings to motivate activity)
  - Other tax changes – RZLTs (developers cite this as an unfair tax on development land they can't activate)
  - Borrowing framework: technological university sector does not have a borrowing framework which means that projects must be managed centrally through the Higher Education Authority which causes delays and undermines the option of flexibility in project funding. (particularly relevant for student accommodation)
- Planning reform and speed of delivery
  - Appoint extra judges for Judicial Review cases related to planning. Ensure all cases are resolved within six weeks.

- Resource An Bord Pleanála properly. Ensure all cases of national strategic importance are solved within six weeks.
- Fully resource planning authorities at a local level to ensure applications are seen without delay.
- An Bord Pleanála missing statutory guidelines – e.g, the Marino Point development by Gouldings was approved by Cork County Council but the An Bord Pleanála decision on the appeal took two-and-a-half years.
- Compulsory purchase process takes is slow – objections, disputes over compensation etc can all slow down projects, often for years
- Legislation
  - Incorporate revised NPF targets into local area plans (without timely incorporation of NPF targets, development could be delayed)
  - Fast-track development plan variations
  - Increase zoning and serviced land
  - Rent Pressure Zones - reform system and publish review of RPZs
- Public Spending Code / Public procurement
  - Multiannual funding commitments
  - Tendering reform – prioritise quality, sustainability and lifecycle cost resources vs lowest-cost
  - Public procurement reform – wider access to procurement systems, simplify processes and administrative burdens, adapt to digital requirements, increased transparency
  - Some government departments and funding bodies have devolved procedures aligned to the public spending code. This was designed to speed up the process and it can work, but in other areas it can lead to delays in decisions too.
- Streamline regulatory burdens impacting indigenous enterprises. When implementing new regulations, Government must account for the amplified impact on SMEs through appropriate supports and communications.
- Support modern methods of construction / innovative methods of delivery.
- Accelerate timeframes for holding DMAP auctions and implementing vital infrastructure and demand strategies or risk missing connection timelines and 2030 targets
  - Statutory timeframes around planning, development, appeal and commencement of these projects
  - Turnaround times for applications, such as dredging licences are too long

## Priorities for Cork Chamber



## Cork Chamber Priority Projects

- **Utilities**
  - Investment in the electricity grid, which is suffering capacity constraints
  - Water and wastewater infrastructure
- **Housing**
  - 7,500-10,000 units per annum in Cork city and county
- **Cork Docklands**
- **Transport**
  - Luas Cork
  - Cork Area Commuter Rail Programme
  - Bus Connects
  - Cork-Dublin-Belfast rail
- **Roads**
  - Great Island Connectivity Project (Cobh / Fota road, Belvelly bridge)
  - Cork Northern Distributor Multi-Modal Route
  - M/N20 Cork to Limerick
  - M25 Carrigtohill to Midleton
  - M28 Cork to Ringaskiddy

- N72 Mallow relief road
- **Social and Educational**
  - Flood defences (Lower Lee Flood Relief Scheme, Midleton, Skibbereen, Clonakilty, Bandon, Bantry)
  - Events Centre
  - Cork elective hospital (also dental school project)
  - Tyndall North
  - Cork University Business School
  - Student accommodation
- **Infrastructural development**
  - IDA strategic lands
  - Cork Airport development plan
  - Port of Cork development plan
- **Renewables**
  - Designate Cork Harbour region as an energy park
  - Support the development of enabling infrastructure for the offshore renewables sector
  - Support the development of a skills hub within the NMCI
  - Support the development of large-scale solar projects
- **Planning reform**