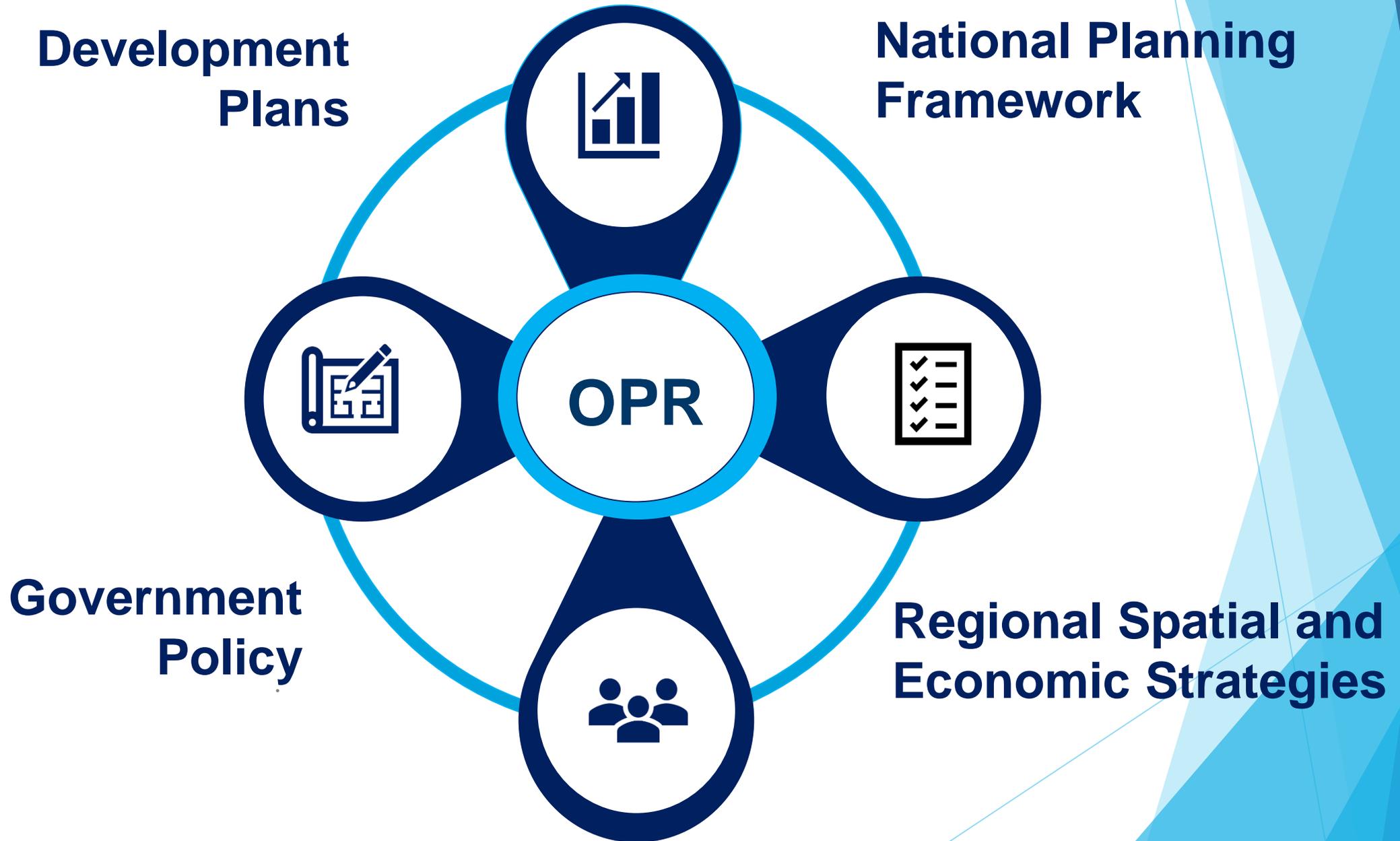




**Oifig an
Rialaitheora Pleanála**
Office of the
Planning Regulator

Climate Action & Planning Key Enablers

Niall Cussen
Planning Regulator
www.opr.ie



OPR Assessments of LA Plans on Climate:



Sustainable Settlement Strategies...

- ▶ *Shifting patterns of future population change to avoid long commutes and reliance on energy intensive personal transport*
- ▶ *Outlining measurable objectives to create self-sustaining communities consolidating housing/employment/amenities around existing services and amenities*
- ▶ *Aligning future development with availability of resilient infrastructure*



Objectives (vs aspirations!) on Climate Action...

- ▶ *Mapping energy demands, renewable resources, measures to harness*
- ▶ *Actively promoting measures realising national renewable energy targets in the LA area*
- ▶ *Modelling how the LA sustainable settlement strategy will help reduce emissions*
- ▶ *Identifying any weaknesses in resilience and taking steps (eg flood risk management)*



Demonstrating alignment with relevant national/regional policies...

Addressing Climate Change in LA Development Plans....

Ireland 4th highest EU state in energy intensity of transport– patterns of development key...



Alignment of city/county development plans and Climate Action Plans key to tackling causes and effects of climate change



'Avoid-Shift-Improve' (ASI)

“avoid”: energy demands,
‘shift’: sustainable travel
‘improve’: energy efficiency



Climate Action Plan commits to statutory plan evidence based measurement methodology (awaited)



Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) can be harnessed to demonstrate climate action outcomes from plans & implementation



Climate & Future Planning Policy

5 practical areas for climate-compatible planning



Reject car based mobility and/or development likely to be accessed primarily by sustainable travel modes...(calculating CO2 reductions)



Identify where/how renewable energy solutions can be rolled out in line with wider environmental considerations to go from 40% to 80% renewables...(analyse potential MW)



Identify and designate specific areas as carbon sinks – peatlands – forestry...(calculate KT potential)



Target areas for retrofit programmes – walking/cycling networks - energy efficiency - district heating initiatives for delivery by associated programmes ('tonnes CO2 saved per head...')



Stress-test existing built-up areas and key infrastructure to extreme weather events...(analyse/show areas at risk from flood/storms..incorporate resilience measures)

Baseline..

- ▶ Gathering data on existing energy demands/consumption...
- ▶ Working back from national data LA Energy Agencies - identify what planning policy will be crucial in shifting...
- ▶ Example from Dingle Hub Project

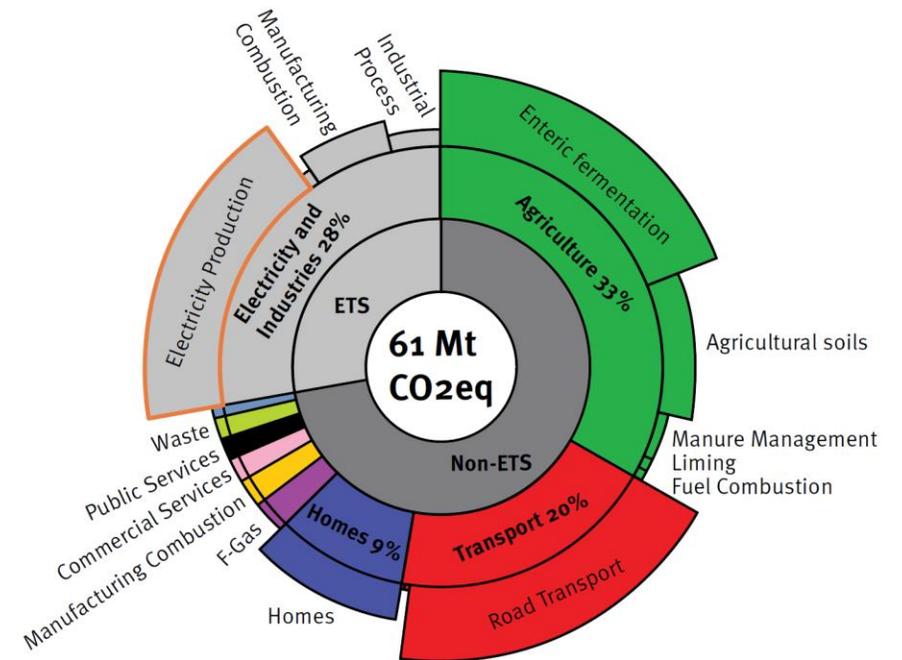
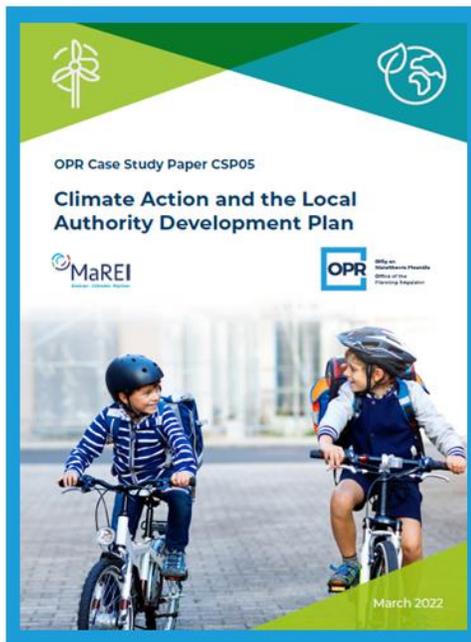
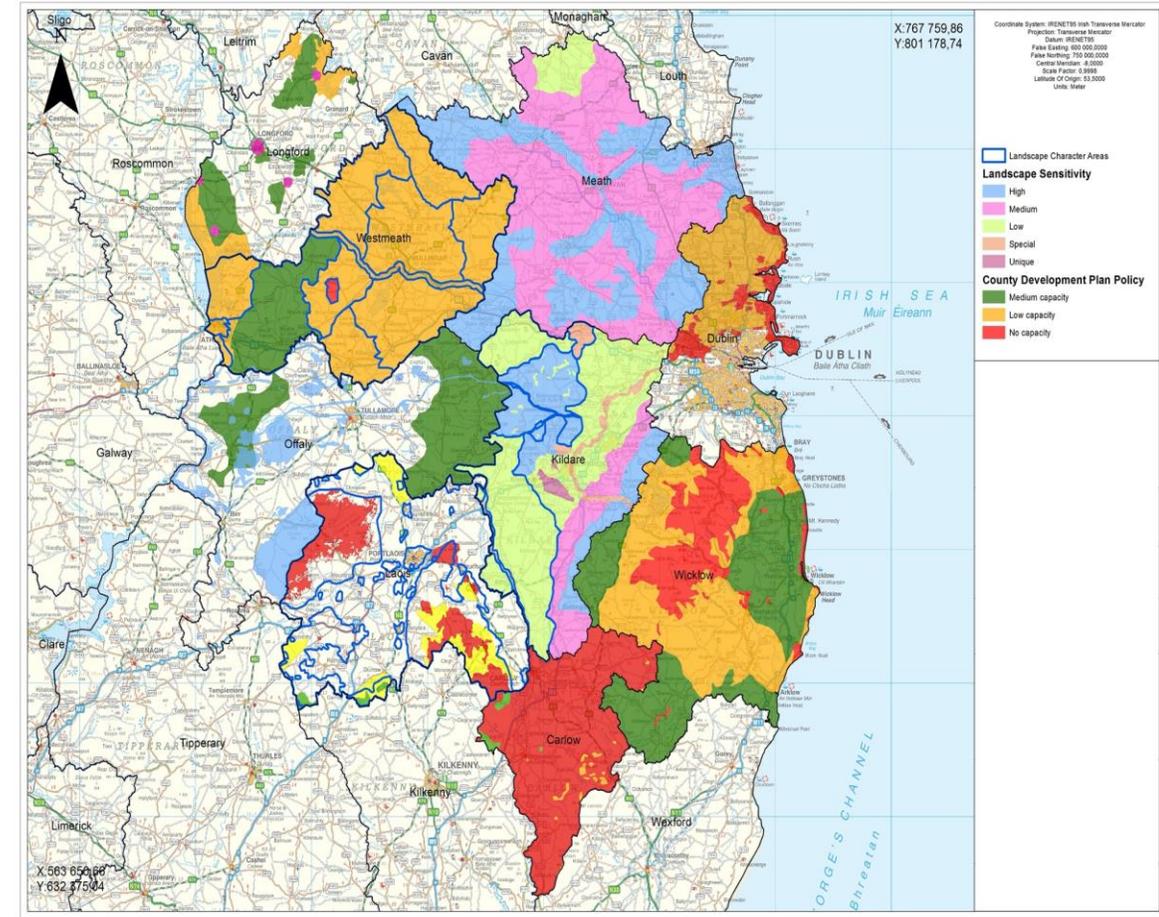


Figure 4: Ireland's GHG emissions, 2017
(reprinted with permission from the Environmental Research Institute, [ERI](#), UCC)

Development Plan Co-ordination: Not Yet – But Soon

- ▶ Objective of a plan-led approach...but...
- ▶ Restrictions undermining delivery
- ▶ Onshore RE crucial in short/medium term
- ▶ Emerging revised EU RE Directive
- ▶ Potential to re-invigorate a plan-led approach



2023 Renewable Energy Directive (RED III)

Plan-led approach to provide ‘**clear deadlines and legal certainty**’ re outcomes of the **permit-granting procedure**’

- ▶ 18 month transposition period
- ▶ **Renewable Acceleration Areas** – ‘renewables go-to areas’ - exempted from certain environmental impact assessment requirements
 - ▶ Areas to be mapped / must be capable of meeting national targets
 - ▶ Avoid protected areas/ restoration plans (Nature restoration Law)
 - ▶ Plan to be prepared setting out rules and mitigation measures for projects
 - ▶ Strategic Environmental Assessment
 - ▶ Derogations from Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
 - ▶ ‘Softening’ of Appropriate Assessment
- ▶ **Repowering**
 - ▶ Time limit (1yr)
 - ▶ Original EIA mitigation measures still stand
- ▶ **Presumption that renewable energy plant / connection to the grid / related grid / storage assets are of overriding public interest**

Conclusions...



Converting National Ambition to Local delivery

- ▶ Much work to do in adopting plans at local level that will deliver climate action and renewables matching CAP ambition
- ▶ Emerging EU law will be key
- ▶ OPR committed to ongoing training and learning and development support



Evidence Gathering Key...

- ▶ Planning process works best when it has a strong evidence base and clear roadmaps
- ▶ DHLGH & DECC joint initiatives under CAP??



Need to ensure process does not overwhelm delivery...