

Planning for a new era: Reconciling the Common Good with Private Development: (Re) Imagining the Role of the Private Sector

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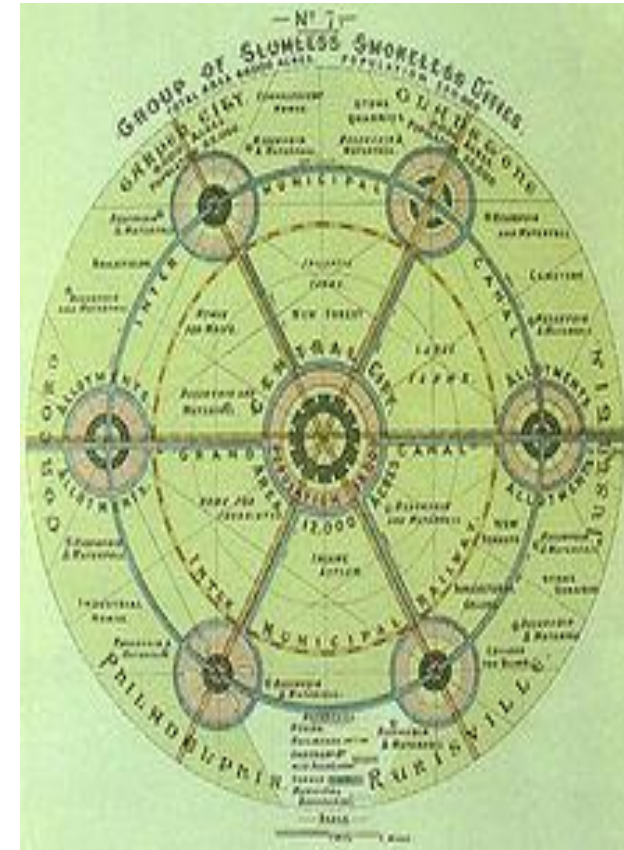
Overview

- **The emergence of planning**
- **Our development frenzy & role of planning**
- **The new shape of planning & development & the role of the private sector**
- **How the Planning Profession should respond**
- **Disclaimer:** Whilst I am an External Member of the NAMA Planning Advisory Committee, views expressed in this presentation are mine & mine alone in my capacity as a Planning Consultant

The emergence of planning

The emergence of planning

- Response to industrialisation in late 19th century
- Ebenezer Howard founding Garden City Movement
- 1947 Town & Country Planning Act - nationalised the right to develop land
- Purpose: To control the use of land & design of the urban environment for the 'common good'.



Our development frenzy & the role of planning

What Happened?

- Increased prosperity in the 90's with development of multinational sector
- As employment & income increased, house prices rocketed
- Construction rose in response & this increased employment & income, leading to multiplier effect
- Returning migrants in late 90's & early 00's drives demand for houses further
- € introduced with reduced interest rates, making cheap money available so borrowing large amounts became norm & construction intensified
- Bench marking drove up wages & prices further
- As property prices rose, value of collateral increased and banks perceived risk of property lending fell
- Tax incentives
- Need to get on the property ladder
- Property Developers were everywhere
- Global financial meltdown & Irish banks exposed



Where was Planning?

- Culture of 'every place should be developed'
- Politically watered down NSS
- Developers & vested interests had undue influence on plan making
- Councillors & management succumbed to pressure
- Mere 'regard' given to national & regional policy when Plan making.
- Little if any citizen participation, just 'men with fields'.
- Bad development plan zonings
- Developers had little regard to statutory Plans in buying or developing land
- Banks ignored planning parameters in lending
- Bad design, overdevelopment, car dominated, poor residential environment, lack of social infrastructure
- Bad planning decisions
- ABP had to refuse or amend many poor quality developments on appeal



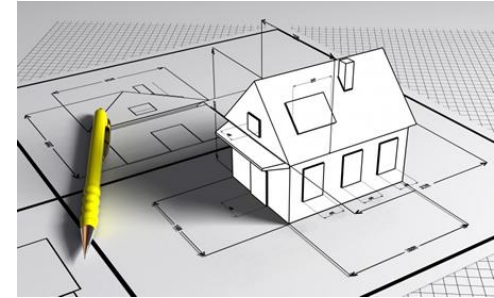
Where was Private Sector Planning?

■ Public Sector Clients:

- Making Development / Local Area Plans
- Sought proper planning & sustainable development
- Lost battle in the Council Chamber

■ Private Sector Clients:

- Planning & appointing Planners was an after thought
- Brought in when problem
- Job to get 'the planning' in record fast time
- Concerned with producing volume, rather than quality, to justify development
- Limited reflection / thought



The Legacy

- Collapsed economy & development sector
- Surplus partially completed or completed development:
 - ❑ 2846 Unfinished estates
 - ❑ Zombie hotels & golf courses (15,000 excess bed spaces)
 - ❑ Struggling private hospitals
 - ❑ Vacant offices & retail
 - ❑ Derelict historic properties
- Abundance of Raw Land:
 - ❑ Permitted development
 - ❑ Zoned land - 41,000 ha (need 12,450 ha to 2016)
 - ❑ Unzoned land
- Infrastructure deficit (physical, social & recreational)
- Plethora of one off houses



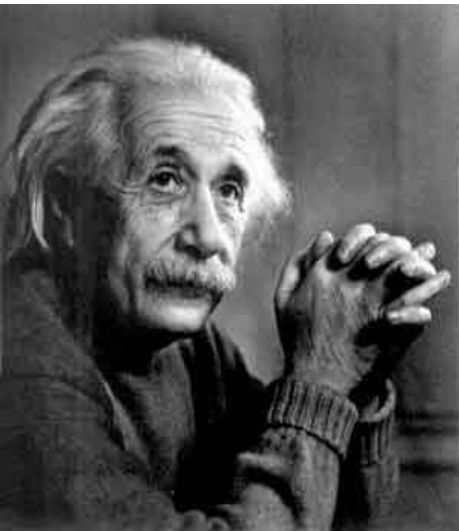
Solutions Employed – NAMA & Foreign Banks

- **NAMA established as mechanism to deal with riskiest loans on Irish banks balance sheets**
 - NAMA operates within confines of NAMA Act 2009
 - Asset management agency
 - Acquires good & bad loans at market value from banks
 - Requires borrowers to submit business plans for Approval
 - Can appoint receivers
 - c11,500 property related loans
 - c850 debtors
 - loan book value of €74.2 billion
 - Assets spread throughout Ireland, UK, US & wider world
 - Planning Advisory Committee established in 2010
- **Foreign Banks Major Global Re-structuring Teams**



The new shape of development & the role of the private sector

Einstein....



***“we cannot solve
a problem out of
the same
consciousness
that give it birth”***

Short Term Approach: Unfinished Estates, Zombie Hotels & Vacant Offices



Long Term Approach: Planning for Common Good

Revise NSS

Survey, Analysis & Plan

**Urban Capacity Analysis &
Plan for Infrastructure**

**Land Commission /
Regeneration Agency**

**Plan for shrinking /
consolidated cities**

Ensure Density

Discourage one-off housing

The Future role for private developer

- **State control land**
- **Respond to plan-led system**
- **Joint Venture Partnerships**
- **Masterplan led**
- **Consultative**
- **Incorporate / develop physical, social & recreational infrastructure**



Where will development be concentrated?

- Gateways
- Consolidated Cities
- Docklands



How Planning Profession should respond?

Education & Awareness

- **Courses to cover:**
 - Urban design
 - Architecture
 - Civil Engineering
 - Environment
 - Climate Change & Sustainability
 - Economics
 - Project Management
 - Communication

- **Understand role of Planner**

- **Need for Proper Planning & sustainable development**



Practice

- **Onus on Planner to Act in the interests of:**
 - **Client / employer**
 - **The common good**
 - **In accordance with IPI & RTPI Code of Conduct**
 - **Within the confines of legislation**

Thank you!

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