

Mission

To play our part as an independent national body in an impartial, efficient and open manner, to ensure that physical development and major infrastructure projects in Ireland respect the principles of sustainable development, including the protection of the environment.

Mandate

An Bord Pleanála was established in 1977 under the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act 1976 and is responsible for the determination of appeals and certain other matters under the Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2019 and determination of direct applications for Strategic Infrastructure and Housing Developments.

It is also responsible for dealing with proposals for the compulsory acquisition of land by local authorities and others under various enactments. An Bord Pleanála also determines appeals under the Water Pollution and Building Control Acts.

Annual Report and Accounts 2019

To the Minister for Housing, Planning
and Local Government.

In accordance with the Planning and
Development Acts (as amended),
An Bord Pleanála herewith presents
its Annual Report and Accounts for
the year ending 31st December 2019.



Dave Walsh
Chairperson



Bríd Hill
Chief Officer

30th June 2020

Summary 2019

Operations	2019		2018	
Planning Cases Received	2,938		2,734	
Planning Cases Disposed	2,971		2,848	
Operations	Received	Disposed	Received	Disposed
Normal Planning Appeals	2,076	2,115	2,028	2,159
Strategic Infrastructure Development (Private Entities / Statutory Undertakers) : All cases	55	60	78	55
Strategic Infrastructure Development (Local Authority)	20	28	13	16
Other Local Authority Projects ¹	100	111	132	115
Strategic Housing Development Applications	128	91	44	44
Vacant Site Levy	90	112	99	87
Other Case Types	469	454	340	372
Finance	2019		2018	
Income	€		€	
Oireachtas Grant	18,623,812		17,487,581	
Fees / Recoupment	6,388,160		4,054,751	
Other ²	3,002,460		2,870,372	
Total Income	28,014,432		24,412,704	
Expenditure	24,996,149		24,050,972	
Surplus / (Deficit) for year before appropriations	3,018,283		361,732	
Transfer from / (to) the Capital Account	241,543		190,080	
Surplus / (Deficit) for year after appropriations	2,776,740		551,812	

¹ Includes Appropriate Assessment

² Includes Net Deferred Pension Funding, Deposit Interest and Miscellaneous Income.

At A Glance 2019

Planning
Cases
Received:

2938



Planning
Cases
Disposed:

2971

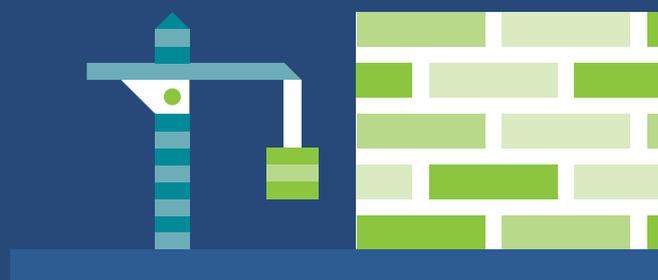


Normal Planning
Appeals
Received:

2076

Normal Planning
Appeals
Disposed:

2115

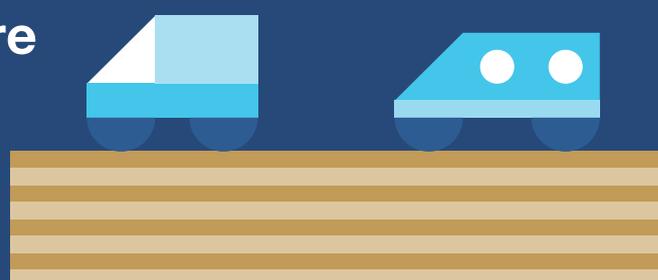


Strategic Housing
Developments
Disposed:

91

Strategic Infrastructure
Developments
Disposed:

88



Contents

Summary 2019	4
At A Glance 2019	5
Chairperson's Statement	9
01. Planning Casework and Performance	12
All Planning Cases	13
Planning Appeals	15
Strategic Infrastructure Development	20
Strategic Housing Development	24
Other Significant Case Types	26
Oral Hearings	28
Reports and Recommendations	29
02. Corporate Matters	30
Legal Proceedings	31
Human Resources	32
Implementation of ICT Strategy	33
Communications	34
Energy Efficiency	37
03. Governance Matters	38
Members of the Board	39
Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies	40
Risk Management	40
Procurement	40
Prompt Payments	41
Data Protection and GDPR	42
Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty	42
Ethics in Public Office	42

04. Governance Report & Financial Statements	44
Governance Statement and Board Members' Report	45
Statement of Compliance	50
Statement on Internal Control	51
Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves	54
Statement of Comprehensive Income	55
Statement of Financial Position	56
Statement Of Cash Flows	57
Notes to the Financial Statements	58
Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General	78
Appendices	80
Appendix 1	81
Appendix 2	82
Appendix 3	84



Chairperson's Statement

2019 was another busy year for An Bord Pleanála but a lot has been achieved and progressed, both in terms of tackling and clearing the backlog of cases on hands and delivering timely decisions on critical housing and infrastructure cases, as well as delivering on a number of key reforms and actions under our five-year Strategic Plan.

Performance

In 2019, in line with general trends arising from the economic recovery, the Board saw an upward trend in the overall number of planning cases, with a total of 2,938 cases received, up 7% on 2018 figures. Similarly, the 2,971 cases decided by the Board in 2019 marked a 4% increase on the previous year's total.

Planning appeals accounted for over 71% of all cases received in 2019, with almost two-thirds of all appeals relating to residential developments, ranging in scale from home extensions and improvements to single house and multi-unit development proposals.

A key measure of how An Bord Pleanála is performing and meeting its statutory requirements is assessing compliance with the statutory objective period (SOP) of 18 weeks to decide normal planning appeals, and examining the average time it takes to dispose of appeal cases.

Taking account of the concerted efforts by An Bord Pleanála staff and Board members to clear the case backlog in late 2018 and early 2019, we were able to achieve 69% compliance for the year, up from the 39% compliance rate recorded in 2018. This compliance figure takes into account that, in some cases, parties to the appeal can present new information that needs to be circulated in the interests of fairness and transparency, or further information is required from parties before a decision can be made. This achievement was a phenomenal performance and demonstrates the commitment, capacity and expertise across the entire organisation to enable us to return to acceptable compliance levels.

It should also be noted that the average number of weeks for dealing with normal planning appeals was 18.4 weeks, on average just 3 days over the SOP target, again a remarkable achievement, having worked through and cleared the majority of the case backlog during the first half of the year. Our challenge now is to maintain this strong performance, while also exploring how we can further streamline processes.

Strategic Housing and Infrastructure

2019 also saw a substantial increase in the number of large-scale strategic housing applications made directly to the Board, with 119 valid applications received by the Board, more than three times the numbers of applications received in the previous year. While 14 applications out of the total 82 applications decided in 2019 were refused permission, the remaining 68 approved by the Board permitted over 16,600 new residential units, across houses, apartments, shared accommodation and student accommodation.

This has made a significant contribution to meeting the overall increasing demands for new homes under the Government's *Rebuilding Ireland Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness*. What is also worth noting is the significant increase in the number of apartment and multi-unit developments applied for and granted permission in our cities and larger towns, helping to realise the compact growth and sustainable building objectives set down in the National Planning Framework.

Despite the tripling of SHD applications during 2019, the Board have been able to maintain 100% compliance with the statutory timelines set down in legislation (16 weeks generally, or 24 weeks for cases where an oral hearing is held). With the completion in Autumn 2019 of an independent review of the SHD process and the decision by the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government to extend the SHD provisions for a further two years to end-December 2021, we expect SHD applications to continue at this level during 2020. The Board will continue to prioritise these cases and deal with any large-scale housing appeals as swiftly and efficiently as possible.

2019 also saw a significant increase in strategic infrastructure development (SID) applications, with 26 applications received, an increase of 30% on 2018 numbers. Decisions were made on 21 strategic infrastructure proposals during 2019. Among the major projects approved were new and expanded wastewater treatment plants at Arklow, Clonshaugh and Ringsend, Foynes Port expansion, new windfarms in Galway and Donegal, along with many local authority-led community and infrastructure projects.

The Board also completed a review of the operation of the strategic infrastructure development process during 2019, focussing in particular on streamlining the pre-application consultation process and the conducting of oral hearings. Arising from this work and having regard to the likely increase in major proposed infrastructure projects under the National Development Plan over the coming years, the Board is looking to improve how these critical aspects of the SID process operate and ensure that we are operating as efficiently as possible to facilitate robust and swift decisions.

Strategic Plan 2018 – 2023

We also progressed a number of key actions and reforms to deliver on some of the key objectives within our five-year Strategic Plan. In addition to improving compliance with caseload targets, to advancing our ICT project and addressing several aspects relating to the Strategic Infrastructure review process, the Board also began a phased review of model conditions and reasons and considerations to ensure that they remain clear and fit for purpose. We also implemented our approved work force plan to properly resource and upskill the organisation to meet the current and future work demands, in line with our overall objectives and priorities.

ICT Transformation

The development and roll-out of our major IT transformation project - Plean-IT - remains a significant initiative and is moving into its next phase of development, aiming to facilitate applications and appeals to be made on-line and linking in with the planning authorities' own e-Planning initiative. A more user-friendly and informative website is also under development and is expected to be up and running later in 2020, which will further help to improve our communications and interaction with everyone who engages with us.

Acknowledgements

All of what we achieved could not have happened without a committed, expert, energetic and collegiate team of staff and Board. Each have played their part in maintaining the Board's well-earned reputation by maintaining the highest standards of impartiality, transparency and trust, and driving us to innovate, improve and engage more effectively with the public and other stakeholders.

Among the staff who left us over the course of the year, we said farewell to our outgoing Chief Officer, Loretta Lambkin, after over six years with the Board. We wish her, and all our former colleagues, well in their new positions.

While there are many sections of the organisation critical to the decision-making process, I would like to acknowledge the hard work, often unrecognised, that goes on behind the scenes across the organisation to support staff, to ensure that we can meet our deadlines and provide clear and timely information to all our customers in person, over the phone or via our website.

Thanks are due also to our Audit and Risk Committee and, in particular, to Martin Higgins, our external Committee Chairperson, to Patricia Byron, an external member on the Committee, and to Terry Ó Niadh and Michelle Fagan, the Board members who participated on the Committee during 2019, for guiding the work of the Committee during the year and for assisting the Board with their important corporate governance work.

As ever, An Bord Pleanála relies on the support of its parent Department and I would like to thank Minister Eoghan Murphy TD and his officials in the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government for all their support during the year. For our part and drawing on our extensive experience and exposure to all types of planning cases, we will continue to support the Department, planning authorities and the Office of the Planning Regulator to ensure that planning policies are practical, consistent and communicated clearly and effectively to all.

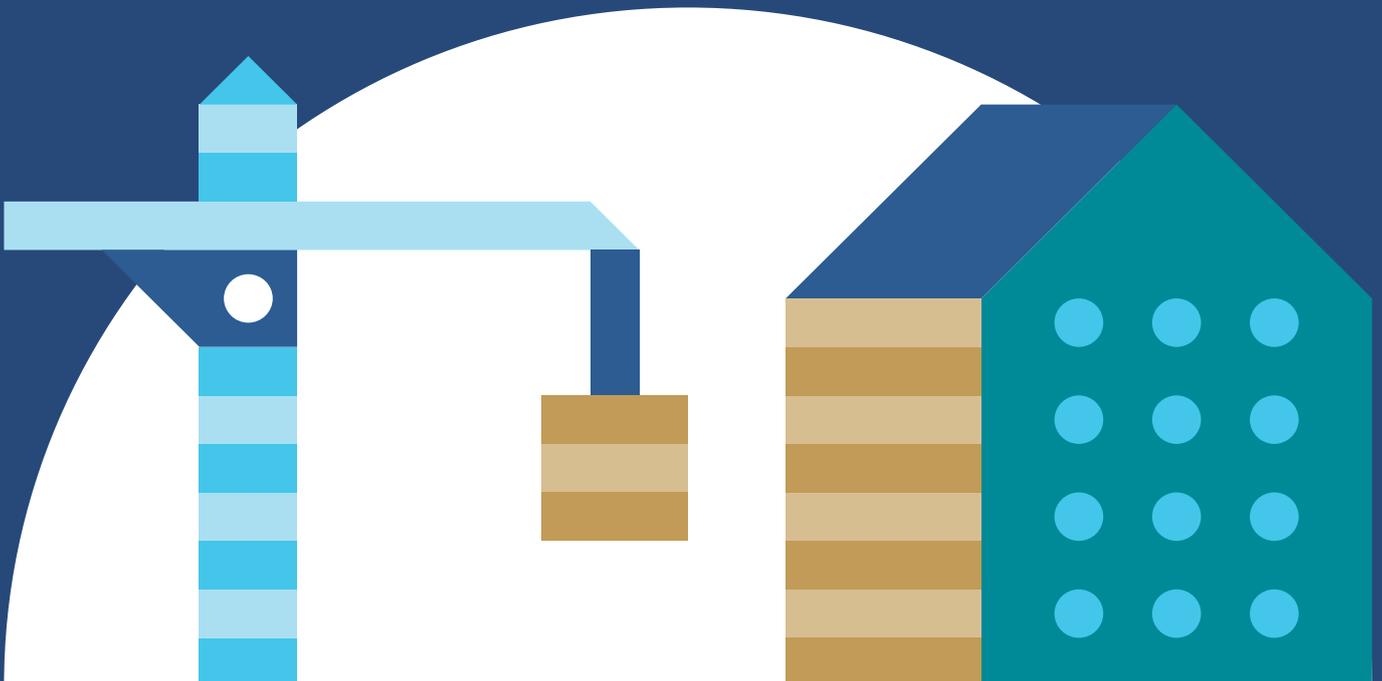


Mr Dave Walsh,
Chairperson

Date: 30th June 2020

01. Planning Casework and Performance

- All Planning Cases
- Planning Appeals
- Strategic Infrastructure Development
- Strategic Housing Development
- Other Significant Case Types
- Oral Hearings
- Reports and Recommendations



All Planning Cases

In 2019, there continued to be an upward trend in the number of planning cases received with total case intake up 7% to 2,938 from 2,734 in 2018 (Figure 1). The total number of cases decided in 2019 was 2,971 a 4% increase on the previous year (2,848). By year end, the total number of cases on hands was 1,039 down from 1,072 in 2018.

Figure 1: Intake and Disposal of Cases 2010 - 2019

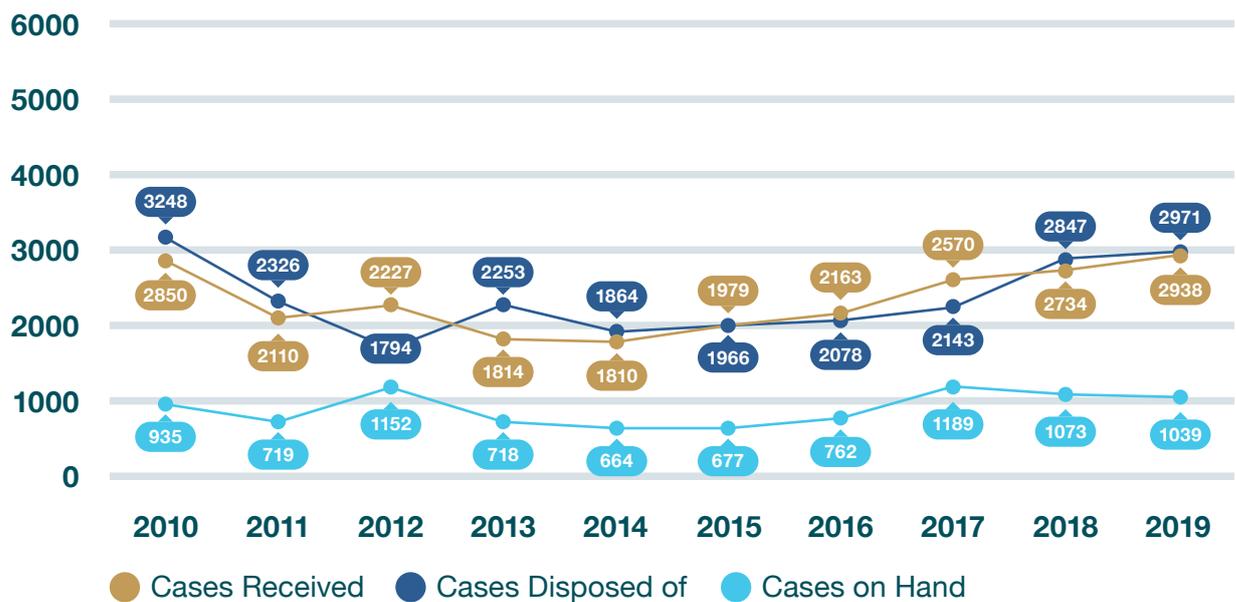
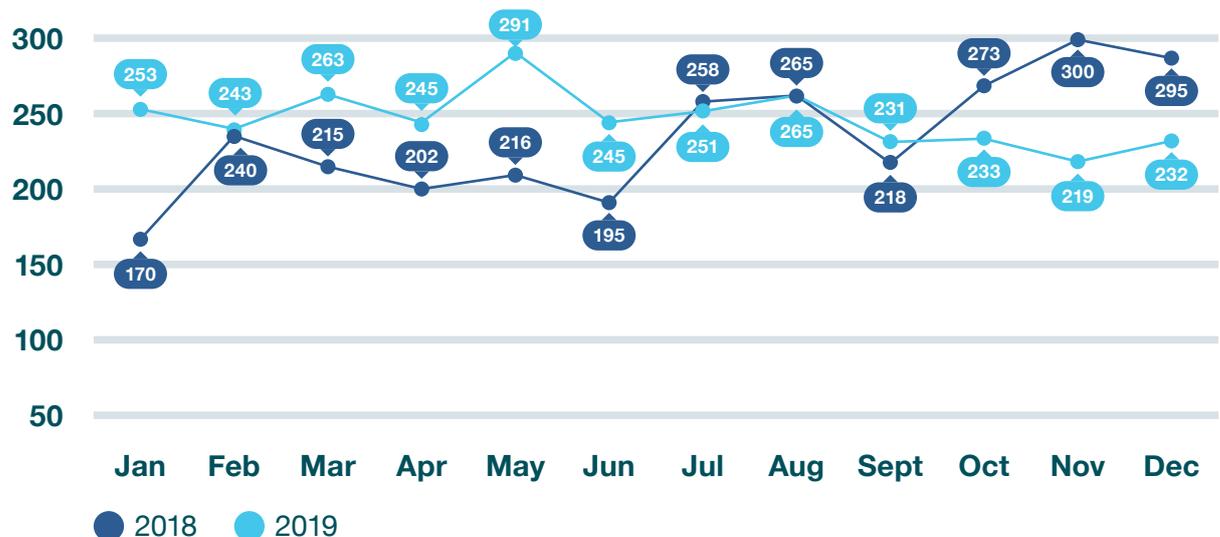


Figure 2: All Planning Cases – Disposed per month 2018 v 2019

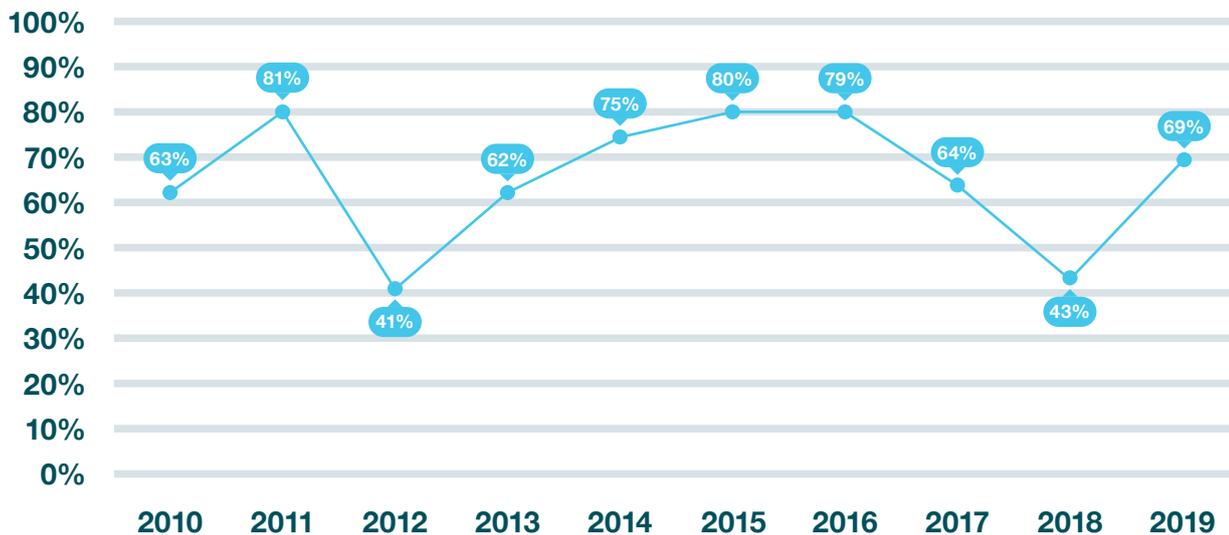


Statutory Objective Periods for Determining Cases

Provisions in the Planning, Building Control and Water Pollution Acts and Regulations made under these Acts set down as an objective of An Bord Pleanála a requirement to ensure that appeals and certain other matters are determined within specified periods of time. In most cases, this is 18 weeks; 4 months applies to some cases while in others no statutory objective time period applies.

In 2019, 69% of all planning cases were decided within the statutory objective period compared to 43% in 2018 (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Compliance with statutory objective period 2010 – 2019



Disposal of cases in weeks

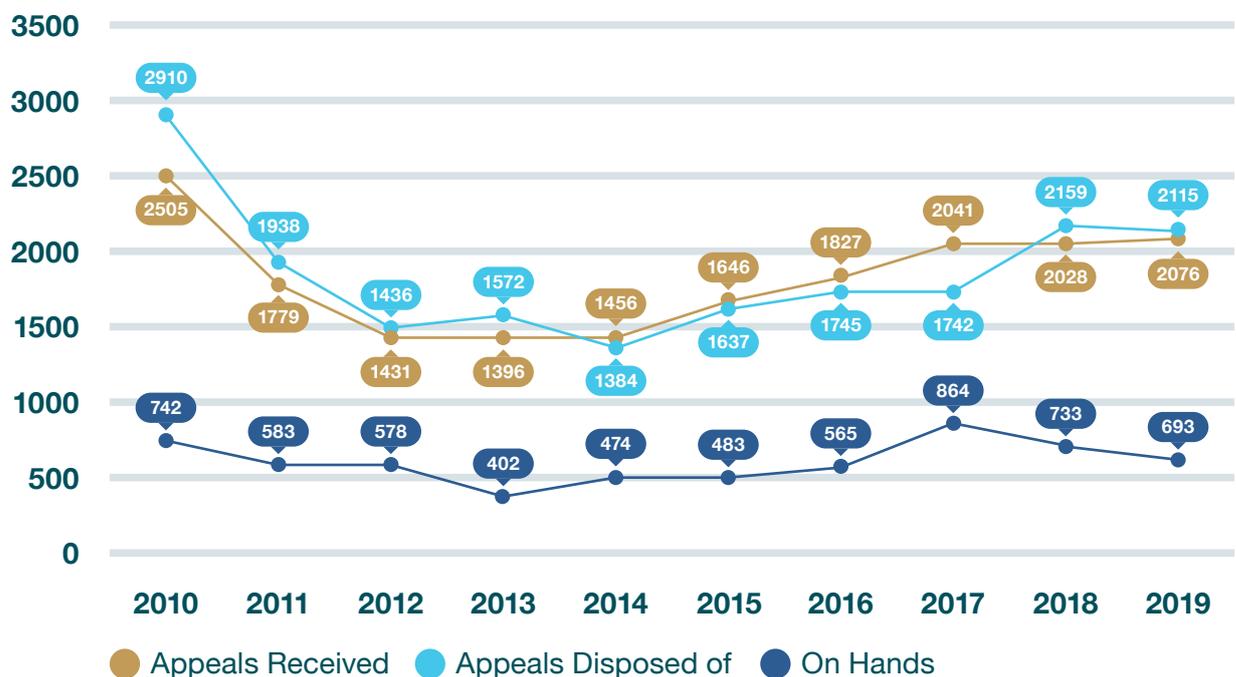
The total average number of weeks that it took to decide all planning cases in 2019 was 19 weeks, down from 23 weeks in 2018.

Planning Appeals

Planning appeals arise from decisions by planning authorities on applications for permission for the development of land.

The number of planning appeals received in 2019 was 2,076 making up 71% of all cases submitted to the Board, substantially unchanged from the number received in 2018 (2,028).

Figure 4: Planning Appeals – Intake and Disposal



The number of appeals disposed in 2019 was down on the previous year at 2,115 (2,159 in 2018).

The category ‘disposed of otherwise’ which includes withdrawals, dismissals and invalids accounted for 13% of all appeals received in 2019. Of the 263 cases in this category, 179 were invalid appeals. These are appeals which have been declared invalid where compliance with certain statutory criteria has not been achieved, for example, late appeals, incorrect fees, or other reasons.

Statutory Objective Periods

At the start of 2019 a target was set to decide 60-70% of planning appeals in 18 weeks within the statutory objective period.

By year end, the compliance rate for appeals was up to 69% (Table 1). The average number of weeks to decide planning appeals was just over 18 in 2019 (22 weeks in 2018).

Table 1: Normal Planning Appeals

Year	Average No. of Weeks	Compliance Rate (18 weeks)
2015	15	83%
2016	16	82%
2017	17	64%
2018	22	39%
2019	18	69%

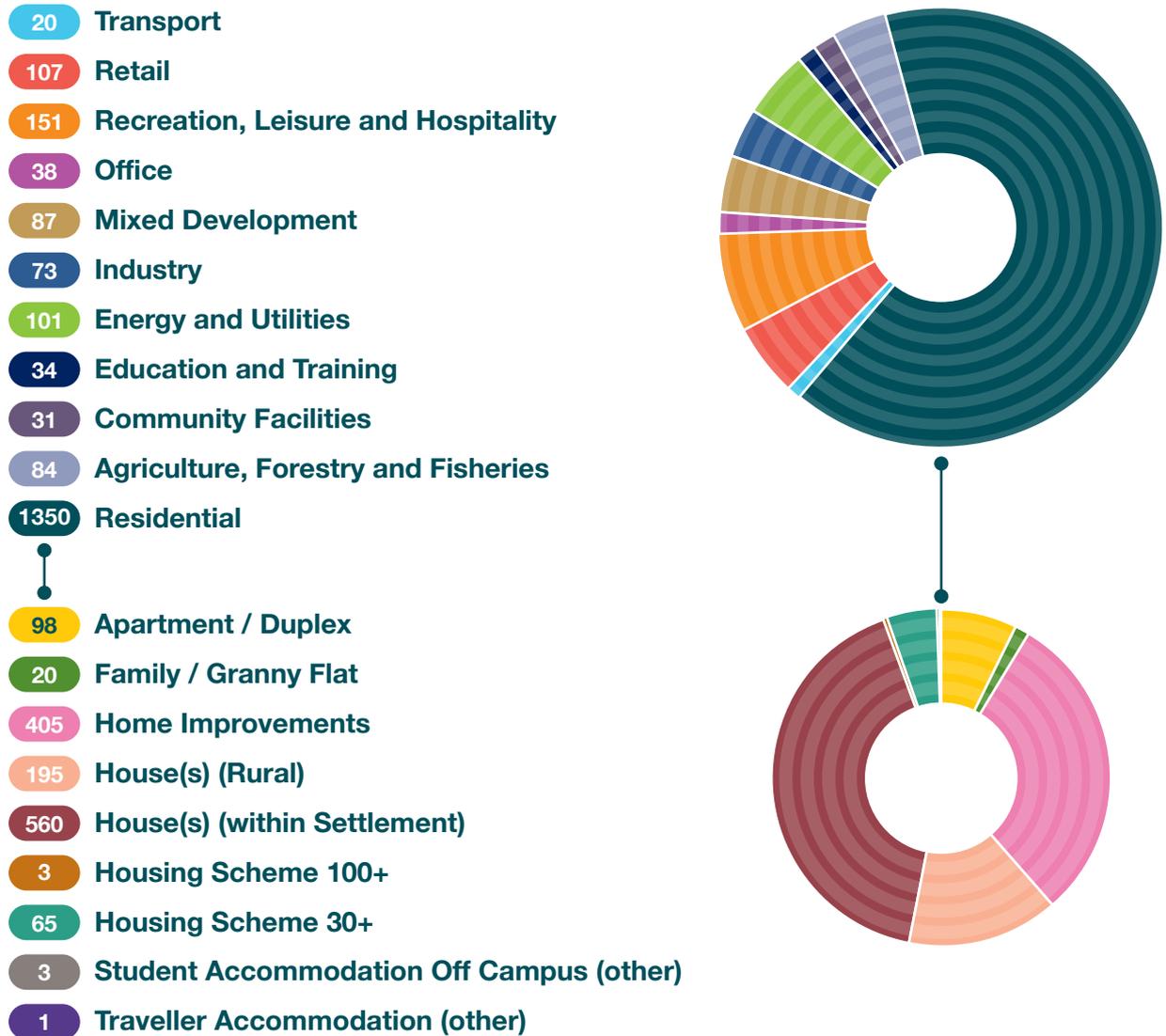
For 2020 a target was set to decide 65% - 75% of appeals cases within the statutory objective period, and has already returned the compliance rate to 76% by end of May 2020.



Development Types

65% (1,350) of all appeals received in 2019 related to residential development which range in scale from home improvements to single and multiple unit accommodation (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Planning Appeals by Development Type Received 2019



Priority Appeals

Certain categories of planning appeals are classified as 'Priority Appeals' and are given priority status in order to expedite them through the system.

Priority appeals include large-scale commercial, housing, educational and healthcare developments as well as significant infrastructural or other projects prioritised in line with government policy at any particular time. Appeals relating to Strategic Development Zones are also included in this category.

In 2019 examples of priority cases decided included; large retail and commercial developments in Dublin (including the 22 storey Tara Street tower in the city centre and a major expansion to the Carrickmines retail park in Dublin 18), a data centre in Co. Wicklow, a large residential development at Mahon, Cork, an advanced technology building at Plassey, Co. Limerick; an upgrade to a water treatment plant in Kilkenny, a major extension to Intel, Co. Kildare and the development of a whiskey warehouse in Co. Louth.

Housing Appeals

The number of appeals received related to multi-unit (30+) residential developments increased from 65 in 2018 to 68 in 2019. During 2019, 67 appeals for developments of 30+ housing units were disposed of (4 for 100+ units). This category included developments of more than 100 residential units which are now generally submitted as applications for Strategic Housing Development.

Figure 6: Housing Appeals Received (30+ units)



Strategic Development Zones

A Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) is an area of land that is proposed to contain developments of economic or social importance to the State. Once designated as such by Government, a draft planning scheme for the SDZ is proposed by the relevant development agency and made by the Planning Authority for the area concerned. Draft SDZ planning schemes (and amendments) can be appealed to An Bord Pleanála.

In 2019 approval was granted for Balgaddy/Clonburris and Poolbeg, both in Dublin, which will deliver in excess of 11,000 new housing units between them. Amendments to the North Lotts and Grand Canal and the Cherrywood schemes, also in Dublin, were under consideration.

Appeals by Area

In 2019, 29,117 decisions were made by planning authorities of which 2,076 (or 5.6%) were appealed to An Bord Pleanála (7% in 2018).

Dublin City Council, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, and Fingal County Council had the highest levels of decisions appealed respectively at 13.4%, 11.9% and 11.2%. Leitrim County Council had the lowest level of decisions appealed at 1.5%.

Table 2: Planning Appeals Received by Area

Planning Authority	Number of planning authority decisions appealed	Percentage of planning authority decisions appealed
All planning authorities	2,076	5.6%
Dublin City Council	396	13.4%
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council	185	11.9%
Fingal County Council	136	11.6%
Galway City Council	40	11.2%

A table of planning appeals received and decided by area is available in Appendix 2.



Strategic Infrastructure Development

Under the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, applications for public and private Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) are made directly to An Bord Pleanála.

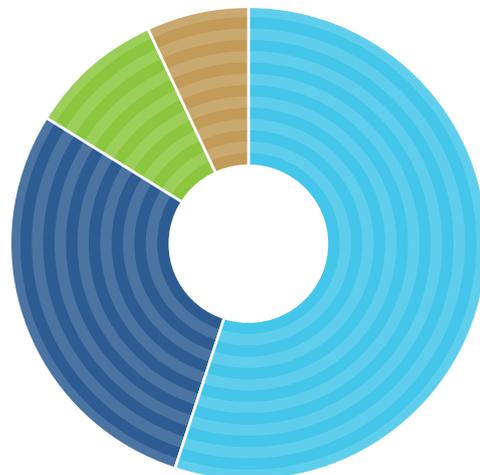
Private Entities / Statutory Undertakers (Private Applications)

The Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Act 2006 provided for the making of direct applications for public and private strategic infrastructure development to An Bord Pleanála.

Applications for strategic infrastructure developments are made directly to An Bord Pleanála from private entities and statutory undertakers and from local authorities. These applications relate to large scale developments comprising energy, transport, environmental and health infrastructure. These are known as 7th schedule development applications. Thirteen private applications were submitted in 2019 bringing the total number received to 118 since the legislative provisions became operative in 2007.

Figure 7: Breakdown of Strategic Infrastructure Development application cases received to end 2019

- 65 7th Schedule Development
- 34 Electricity Transmission
- 11 Strategic Gas Infrastructure
- 8 Railway Infrastructure



Compliance with the relevant statutory objective period for making decisions for this category of cases was at 31% in 2019 which reflects the level of complexity and the fact that additional time is often required to conduct hearings and to consider further information.

During 2019, 7 private strategic infrastructure development applications and six electricity cases were concluded as follows:

Table 3: Strategic Infrastructure Development Applications Concluded 2019

Ringsend wastewater treatment plant upgrade project including a regional biosolids storage facility, Dublin	Grant Permission with Conditions
Greater Dublin Drainage Project, Co. Dublin	Grant Permission with Conditions
Wastewater Treatment Plant, Arklow, Co. Wicklow	Grant Permission with Conditions
Permanent continuation of use of 6,122 long-term car parking spaces, Dublin Airport, Co. Dublin	Grant Permission with Conditions
Proposed electrical substation and associated infrastructure to connect ground-mounted solar PV generation to the electricity transmission system, Clongeen, Co. Wexford	Approve with Conditions
Wind farm of 25 number wind turbines, Ardderroo, Co. Galway	Grant Permission with Conditions
Continued operation of peat-fuelled power station to facilitate the phased transition to exclusive firing with biomass, Shannonbridge, Co. Offaly	Refuse Permission
Proposed electrical substation and associated infrastructure required to connect ground mounted solar PV generation to the electrical transmission system, Duleek, Co. Meath	Approve with Conditions
Double circuit 110kV underground transmission line between the Belcamp 220kV and 110kV substation and the Darndale 110kV substation, Dublin 17	Approve with Conditions
110kV substation and connection to facilitate the connection of a consented solar farm, Dunboyne, Co. Meath	Approve with Conditions
110kV electricity substation, Curraghduff, Co. Waterford	Approve with Conditions
220 kV Gas Insulated Switchgear substation with various 220 kV underground circuits and other associated works, Leixlip, Co. Kildare	Approve with Conditions
Construction of a cruise berth facility, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin	Withdrawn (Application)

Prior to submitting an application, it is mandatory to have a pre-application consultation with An Bord Pleanála (with the exception of local authorities). In 2019, 36 requests for pre-application consultations were received for strategic infrastructure development cases, 53 meetings were held and 39 requests were concluded.

Of the 39 requests concluded, 15 were deemed to be strategic infrastructure development, 15 were deemed not to be and 9 were otherwise disposed.

Local Authorities

Thirteen strategic infrastructure applications (including related compulsory acquisition requests) were received from local authorities. In 2019, 8 applications were concluded as follows:

Table 4: Strategic Infrastructure Development (Local Authorities) applications decided in 2019	
N5 Ballaghaderreen to Scramoge Road Development, Co. Roscommon	Approve with Conditions
N5 Ballaghaderreen to Scramoge Road Development CPO, Co. Roscommon	Confirm CPO with modifications
Proposed Parnell Square Cultural Quarter comprising of a new Dublin City Library and associated public realm, Dublin 1	Approve with Conditions
River Suir Sustainable Transport Bridge, Waterford	Approve with Conditions
N16 Lugatober (Drumkilsellagh to Lugnagall) Road Project, Co. Sligo	Approve with Conditions
N16 Lugatober (Drumkilsellagh to Lugnagall) Road Development CPO, Co. Sligo	Objections withdrawn
Glenamuck District Roads Scheme, Co. Dublin	Approve with Conditions
Glenamuck District Roads Scheme CPO 2019, Co. Dublin	Confirm CPO without modifications

Compulsory Acquisition

There were 111 compulsory acquisition cases concluded in 2019. There were 68 informal decisions, for instance, where no objections were received in Compulsory Purchase Order cases. Of the 43 formally decided cases, 58% were disposed of within the statutory objective period. The cases were concluded as follows:

Table 5: Compulsory acquisition	
Approved with modifications	6
Approved without modifications	21
Annulled	14
Refused	2
Informal decisions	68

Appropriate Assessment

Appropriate Assessment is an assessment of the potential of a plan or project to adversely affect the integrity of a site which is protected under the EU Habitats Directive. The Competent Authority for such assessment is An Bord Pleanála. Where a local authority project requires Appropriate Assessment or where it needs to be determined whether or not Appropriate Assessment is required, the Competent Authority is An Bord Pleanála.

In 2019, 15 Appropriate Assessment cases were received and 9 concluded. Of these 9 cases, 6 were approved, 1 refused and 2 were determined not to require a Natura Impact Statement (NIS).

Strategic Housing Development

The Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 (as amended by the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2018) allows for applications for strategic housing developments (100 or more houses, 200 or more bed spaces for student accommodation or 200 or more bed spaces for shared accommodation units) to be made directly to An Bord Pleanála.

During 2017, An Bord Pleanála established a dedicated Strategic Housing Development Unit and a new division of the Board (as required under legislation) to implement this new function and decide on these applications.

Applications

In 2019 An Bord Pleanála received 119 valid Strategic Housing Development (SHD) applications. This marks a significant increase on the 39 valid applications received in 2018. In all, 82 cases were formally decided by the Board in 2019, all of which were decided within the statutory period (16 weeks where no oral hearing was held and 24 weeks if an oral hearing was held). A further 10 cases were withdrawn or invalid which led to a total of 91 cases being disposed of during 2019. The Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016 allows for the holding of oral hearings into SHD applications where there is a compelling case for such hearings, An Bord Pleanála held 2 oral hearings into SHD applications in 2019.

Figure 8: Geographic Distribution of valid SHD Applications decided 2019



Of those 82 decisions, the Board granted permission with conditions in 68 cases (83%) and refused permission in 14 cases (17%). Under those 68 decisions, permission was granted for 16,607 residential units (made up of 4,334 houses and 12,273 apartments), 5,019 student bedspaces and 208 'shared accommodation' bedspaces.

Table 6: Strategic Housing Developments - Applications				
	Permissions Granted	Residential Units	Student Bed-Spaces	Shared accommodation Bed-Spaces
2019	68	16,607	5,019	208

Pre-Application Consultations

The SHD legislation also requires that a prospective applicant completes a pre-application consultation process with An Bord Pleanála before lodging an application for a strategic housing development.

This pre-application consultation is a 9-week process and culminates in the issuing of an 'Opinion'.

In 2019, An Bord Pleanála received 150 valid requests to enter into pre-application consultations and issued 148 Opinions. This again marks a significant increase in SHD activity on the previous year when 97 valid requests were received and 74 Opinions issued.

Other Significant Case Types

Vacant Site Levy

The Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 provides for appeals to An Bord Pleanála against entry on the vacant sites register, or against the vacant site levy, or both.

An in-house working group was set up to initiate the necessary operating procedures for Vacant Site Levy cases.

In 2019, 86 appeals were received, of which 74 were valid.

During the year, 112 cases were concluded with the Board making a formal decision on 94 cases with 18 otherwise disposed of.

Table 7: Vacant Site Levy Appeals Concluded

Confirm entry on register	36
Cancel entry from register	58
Otherwise disposed of	18
Total	112

Projects of Common Interest

An Bord Pleanála is the Competent Authority for Projects of Common Interest (PCI) under European Regulation 347/2013 on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure. This relates to European Union procedures to streamline the consenting process for trans-European energy projects which are contained in a Union list of projects adopted by the European Commission.

In May 2019, the project known as Greenlink (Ireland - United Kingdom interconnection between Wexford and Pembroke, Wales: 1.9 on the Union List) applied to enter the process under Article 10 of the Regulation. The project had previously been rejected on the basis that the project was not considered mature enough to enter the permit granting process. In July, An Bord Pleanála in its role as competent authority and including on behalf of other authorities concerned accepted the project into the process.

As part of the permit granting process, Greenlink submitted a concept for public participation in October. In December, An Bord Pleanála as competent authority, following consultation with the relevant authorities, modified the concept. The concept and the letter modifying the concept are available to the public on the project website.

In 2018, the project known as the Celtic Interconnector (France – Ireland interconnection between La Martyre and Great Island or Knockraha: 1.6 on the Union List) had applied to enter the process. In March 2019, An Bord Pleanála in its role as competent authority accepted the project into the process.

EirGrid submitted a concept for public participation in June. In September, An Bord Pleanála as competent authority modified the concept. The concept and the letter modifying the concept are available to the public on the project website.

EirGrid has since received confirmation that a consent will be required within the UK Exclusive Economic Zone which necessitated a separate notification to the UK competent authority.

Oral Hearings

Appeals and referrals are generally dealt with on the basis of written submissions from the parties, together with a site inspection by an Inspector appointed by An Bord Pleanála. Oral hearings are typically held in relation to CPO cases, Strategic Infrastructure Applications and other cases which are complex and / or large in scale. An Bord Pleanála often arrange oral hearings to be held in the local area to the proposed development to enable local interested parties, planning authorities and stakeholders to attend.

During 2019, there were 44 oral hearings held. Of these 30 related to compulsory purchase orders, and 8 related to strategic infrastructure development applications and other types of local authority projects, and 2 related to strategic housing developments.

In relation to planning appeal cases, there were a total of 4 oral hearings held in 2019.

Map 1: Location of Oral Hearings 2019



Reports and Recommendations

Decisions on all valid appeals and applications are made by the Board of An Bord Pleanála on foot of reports, including recommendations, prepared by inspectors. External inspectors are appointed in a small number of specialist work areas such as Fire Safety and Disability Access cases, or as specialists - for example: hydrologists – to assist in-house reporting inspectors with aspects of particular planning cases.

A total number of 2,212 inspector's reports were prepared for the Board in 2019 an increase on the 2,098 prepared in 2018. The majority 2,184 (2,078 in 2018) were prepared by in-house inspectors. External reporting inspectors prepared 28 reports for the Board in 2019 (16 reports in 2018).

Board Meetings

The Inspector's Report and Recommendation is provided to the Board with the full case file for decision. The cases are decided by Board members in a quorum at Board meetings and decisions are recorded in the minutes of that Board meeting. In 2019, the Board held more than 800 meetings to discuss and decide cases.



02. Corporate Matters

- Legal Proceedings
- Human Resources
- Implementation of ICT Strategy
- Communications
- Energy Efficiency



Legal Proceedings

In 2019, judicial review proceedings in relation to Board decisions and procedures were instituted in 55 cases (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Legal Cases and Cases Disposed of Comparison 2015 - 2019



There were 17 substantive court judgements given in 2019. 9 judgements upheld the legality of the relevant Board decision and 8 found against the Board. Proceedings against An Bord Pleanála were discontinued, dismissed or withdrawn in 11 cases.

During the year, the Board consented to the quashing of 7 of its decisions where it accepted that there was a legal defect in its decision process.

Figure 10: Outcome of Legal Proceedings 2019



Human Resources

Staffing and Recruitment

The Board places great value and reliance on the professional expertise, integrity, dedication and public service ethos of its members and staff. It recognizes their commitment and dedication to the Board's pursuit of providing its stakeholders with a high quality and sufficient services.

There were challenges in 2019 in relation to staff turnover with 29 new staff joining the Board and 17 staff leaving reflecting the general economic situation in relation to employment. A specialist post was filled for an in-house Ecologist. Temporary positions are included in these figures relating to staff working over the summer months. Transition year students were also facilitated from local schools and internships for planning students from TU Dublin and UCD.

The highest number of staff employed during 2019 was 168.2 whole time equivalent. The average number of staff employed over 2019 was 162.2 whole time equivalent (151.3 in 2018).

Learning and Development

A key goal in the Strategic Plan 2018-2023 is to foster a motivated resilient and responsive organisation. The dedicated Learning and Development section is critical in supporting the delivery of this goal by building capacity and skills through an increased range of learning and development opportunities. In 2019 a Leadership Development Programme was rolled out to Senior and Line Managers. A similar programme is to be further developed and rolled out across the organisation. Continued professional development support is provided through payment of Professional Memberships and support for associated CPD training, attending courses, conferences etc.

A number of 3rd level courses were supported by the Board during 2019 in a range of subjects including, Environmental and Planning Law, ICT, Public Administration, Human Resources, Irish Language and Business Analysis. The total amount of training days in 2019 was 640.75 which equated to 3.62 days per staff / Board member.



Implementation of ICT Strategy

Plean-IT project

The vision for the Plean-IT project is to achieve an integrated solution which will:

- Deliver a case management solution to manage workflow, documents and records for the processing and deciding of planning applications / appeals
- Develop a website and a digital service that enables online submission of planning applications / appeals and access to all other services offered by us
- Provide an integrated interactive mapping functionality for planning cases handled by us for internal and external use

The plan aims to embed systems across the organisation to achieve the full benefit to staff and customers as set out in our ICT Strategy.

The new case management system (using Microsoft Dynamics) was developed by an external service provider and was deployed in October 2017 with new cases input on receipt to the Plean-IT system. The specification for the case management system was based on a Target Operating Model and To-Be Processes. A new Geographical Information System (GIS), developed by a separate external service provider, has also been deployed for internal use.

Work is currently underway which will deliver enhancements to the case management system. A requirements specification process is also in progress for a new website and portal to enable online submission of planning applications / appeals and access to all other services offered by us.

An Bord Pleanála wishes to optimise the case management solution through the implementation of architectural improvements and ensure its readiness for migration to the cloud.

Outstanding items related to the Plean-IT project now form part of Phase 2 of the ICT Strategy and include the following:

- Development of a web portal to facilitate on-line submission of applications, appeals and fee payments
- Integration of website and portal with the case management system and Geographical Information System (GIS)
- Document and Record Management solution (including work to migrate to a CRM Online cloud- based management system)
- Data Migration and delivery of final reports (monthly and annual) on Power Business Intelligence
- Completion of outstanding Customer Relationship Management (CRM) processes (for example: judicial review, oral hearing and customer support)
- Other non-priority elements, for example, related to additional security requirements, integration with other systems (Outlook, Access and others) and items which require further analysis to better understand current business needs

ICT Infrastructure and Operations

The ICT Operations team continue to support the Plean-IT case management system and other enterprise applications and are assisting with maximising the uptime of the infrastructure platform that are supporting these systems. Additional external resources have been employed to help the internal team gain the required knowledge and understanding of these new hardware and software technologies.

The internal ICT Operations team is ably assisted by a couple of external resources. A Geographical Information System (GIS) resource was contracted to assist the internal GIS team to deploy and support the infrastructure and system. This is a niche area of technology and the external resource has proven to be very beneficial to the in-house GIS team. The Dynamics CRM contractor's contract was renewed for a further year to provide the internal ICT team with the knowledge and skills to support the Plean-IT system. This resource is also mentoring an internal staff member on the skills required to support a Dynamics CRM case management application.

Communications

The Communications Unit has been continuing its work on the Plain English Project, the ongoing development of the website and portal and our regular communications activities. Significant effort was put into improving areas where information could be made available to improve the user experience.

Plain English Project

As an organisation who engages regularly with the public, we recognise the importance of presenting information concisely.

We are continuing to revise our general information and guidance to comply with Plain English standards.

In 2019, the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) awarded its Plain English Mark to eight of An Bord Pleanála's revised information leaflets and forms including:

- Making a Planning Appeal,
- Making an Observation on a Planning Appeal, and
- Requesting an Oral Hearing on a Planning Appeal.

Information leaflets were also published on Building Control Acts appeals.

Consultations with other Bodies

An Bord Pleanála is obliged to keep itself informed of the policies of certain bodies whose functions have a bearing on proper planning and sustainable development. These include Ministers of the Government and planning authorities. In 2019, An Bord Pleanála met with the Irish Planners Institute, Irish Business Employers Confederation, Irish Wind Energy Association and Irish Water.

Irish Language

An Bord Pleanála welcomes the use of the Irish language and the organisation is fully committed to fulfilling its obligations and commitments in relation to official language equality under the Official Languages Act 2003, the Planning and Development Acts and its Customer Action Plan and Language Scheme.

In 2019, we published seven new or revised information guides in Irish. These guides correspond to the English language versions which had been awarded the Plain English Mark. The Irish versions were published simultaneously with the English versions.

We continued to promote the use of the Irish language on an everyday basis. This included events throughout the year and the annual Seachtain na Gaeilge programme. Events included a tour of EPIC Museum, Tráth na gCeist, and Lae Cainte.

Freedom of Information (FOI) and Access to Information on the Environment (AIE)

The Planning and Development Acts, the Freedom of Information Act and Access to Information on the Environment Regulations provide for access to certain information on An Bord Pleanála's operations.

Details of activity in 2019 are provided below:

Table 8: FOI / AIE Requests 2019	FOI	AIE
On hands Start	2	1
Requests Received	64	14
Granted/Partially Granted	30	6
Withdrawn	0	0
Transferred	0	0
Refused	35	7
On hands End	1	2

The number of public access requests for casework files under the Planning and Development Acts was 1,538 for 2019 (1,824 in 2018).

Oireachtas Members Liaison

An Bord Pleanála has arrangements in place to provide information to members of the Oireachtas on request. In 2019, 19 queries were received from members of the Oireachtas. We issued a substantive reply to each query within the 15 working days’ response time. Responses to queries are published on a quarterly basis on our website.

Customer Service

The Customer Charter and Customer Action Plan, published on its website, sets out the organisation’s commitments and objectives in relation to maintaining high standards of customer service. The Customer Action Plan also contains information on how to make a complaint about the quality of customer service.

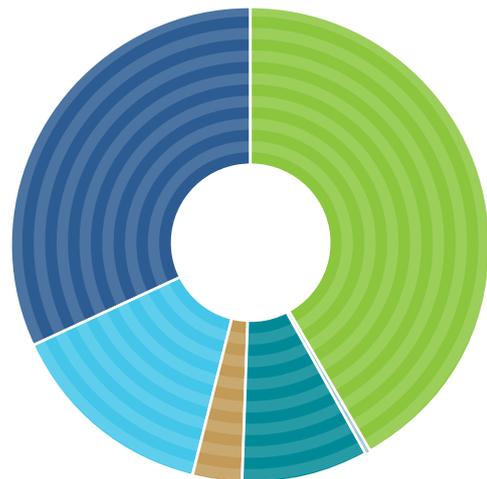
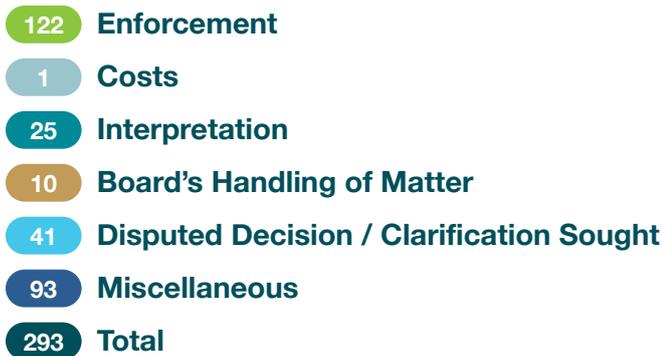
Customer Service dealt with ten queries in 2019. Nine queries were responded to and resolved by the relevant department. One query was resolved by the Customer Service Officer by phone.

In 2019, we responded to 293 communications regarding decided cases.

Sometimes a query will contain more than one topic, for example, the query may raise both interpretation and clarification matters.

The most common topic raised is enforcement (122 queries). Enforcement is where a person considers that the decision of the Board is not being correctly implemented. This is a matter for the planning authorities, as An Bord Pleanála has no role in enforcement matters.

Figure 11: Post-Decision Correspondence Replies



Energy Efficiency

As part of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) Public Sector Efficiency programme, An Bord Pleanála is committed to increasing energy efficiency by a factor of 33% by the year 2020.

Table 9: Energy Data 2019			
	2019	Baseline 2006-2008	% change
Energy Usage	482,651 kWh	742,877 kWh	(35.0%)
CO ₂ Emissions	185,807 kg	457,941 kg	(60.4%)

An Bord Pleanála is on target for the 2020 SEAI Public Sector Efficiency programme. The building lies in the D1 category of the building energy rating (BER) scheme.

We increased our energy usage by 1.6% in 2019 compared to 2018 and CO₂ emissions remain in excess of the required targets.

Actions undertaken to improve energy efficiency in 2019 include:

- Improving lighting efficiency by switching the basement to LED energy efficient lighting
- Installation of greener, more efficient air conditioning units completed on four floors of the building

Actions planned for 2020 include:

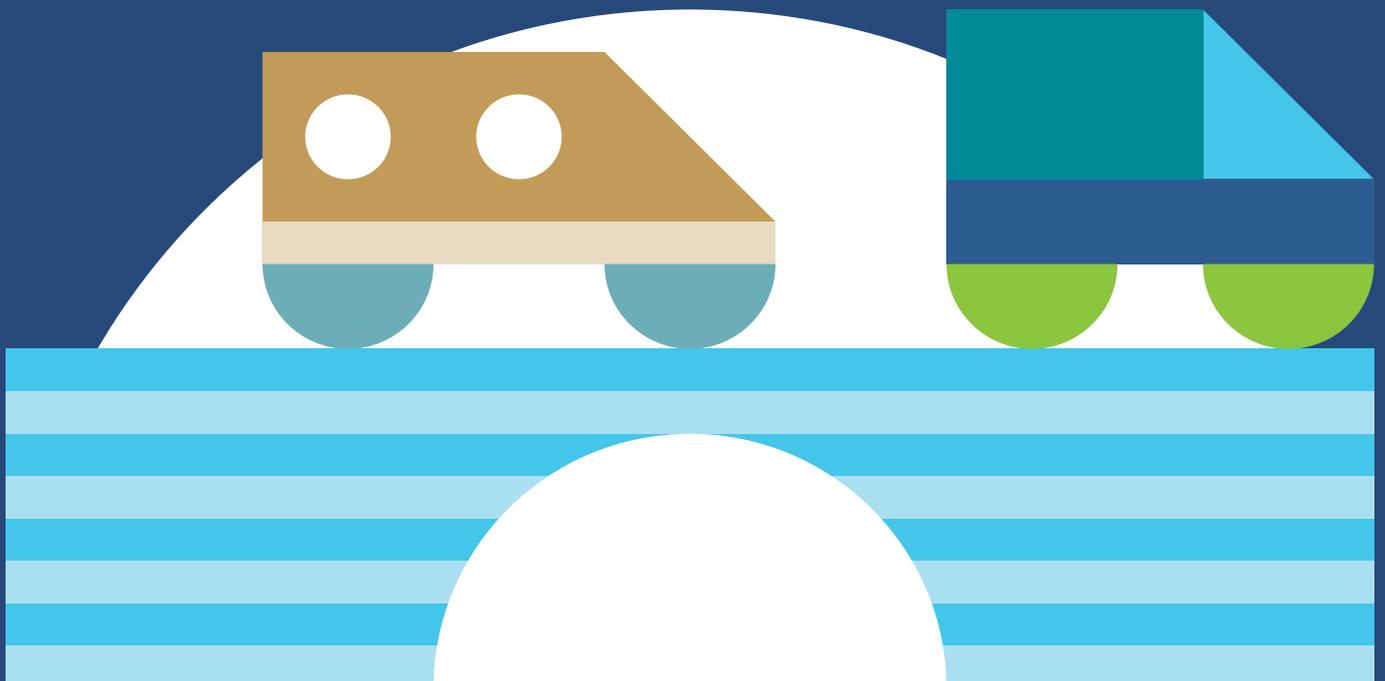
- Review of storage heaters and electrical device timers throughout the building
- Review and implement the actions set out in An Bord Pleanála's Resource Energy Action Plan (REAP)

Green Government Initiative

During 2019, Government introduced the Green Government Initiative to facilitate Departments and public bodies to lead the way in reducing the use of single use plastics and to improve and increase recycling. The Board adopted a Resource Efficiency Action Plan (REAP) and established a Green Team with participants from across the entire organisation, to identify and drive forward new green initiatives. No single-use plastics are in use since March 2019 and glassware is in use throughout the building. The REAP has a wide range of areas that are of national strategic importance including; waste management, resource and energy efficiency, this will continue to be implemented in 2020.

03. Governance Matters

- **Members of the Board**
- **Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies**
- **Risk Management**
- **Procurement**
- **Prompt Payments**
- **Data Protection and GDPR**
- **Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Dignity**
- **Ethics in Public Office**



Members of the Board



Dave Walsh²

Chairperson:
30 October 2018



Paul Hyde¹

Ordinary Member: 1 May 2014
Reappointed: 1 May 2019
Deputy Chairperson:
29 January 2019



Chris McGarry

Ordinary Member:
1 February 2019



Michelle Fagan

Ordinary Member:
12 February 2018



Terry Prendergast¹

Ordinary Member:
2 August 2017



Terry Ó Niadh¹

Ordinary Member:
4 September 2017



Dr Maria Fitzgerald²

Ordinary Member:
10 July 2017



John Connolly²

Ordinary Member:
18 September 2017



Philip Jones¹

Ordinary Member:
1 May 2014



Stephen Bohan²

Ordinary Member:
12 June 2018

¹ Strategic Housing Division

² Strategic Infrastructure Division

Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies

Corporate Governance in An Bord Pleanála follows the relevant requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2016. An Bord Pleanála is committed to reviewing its governance policies and procedures on an on-going basis and obtaining up to date refresher training and guidance to assure continued compliance with best practice in this area.

An Bord Pleanála has conducted a review of governance arrangements and procedures to ensure appropriate alignment with all relevant provisions of the 2016 Code. An Bord Pleanála is satisfied that it is in full compliance with all code requirements.

Risk Management

Risk Management and related governance structures and procedures are key priorities. The Board has responsibility for overseeing risk management within the organisation determining the organisation's risk appetite and the Corporate Risk Register (and amendments to) during the year.

Procurement

As a public body, An Bord Pleanála utilises central contracts put in place by the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) when procuring a range of commonly acquired goods and services.

Where no central contract is available, An Bord Pleanála operates in accordance with European Union (EU) Procurement Directives.

In 2019, 3 contracts for services (over €25,000) were procured under frameworks operated by the OGP.

In November, An Bord Pleanála issued a pre-qualification questionnaire for the provision of website development services under the restricted procedure.

Prompt Payments

An Bord Pleanála comes within the scope of the Prompt Payment of Accounts Act 1997, as amended by the European Communities (Late Payment in Commercial Transactions) Regulations 2002. The payment practices are reported on below for the year ended 31st December 2019 in accordance with section 12 of the Act.

- 1.** It is An Bord Pleanála's policy to comply with the relevant provisions of the Act and, in particular, to ensure that all invoices are paid promptly. Specific procedures are in place that enable it to track all invoices and ensure that payments are made before the due date. Invoices are registered daily and payments are made as required to ensure timely payments. In 2019, An Bord Pleanála did not set or agree payment periods outside the terms of the Act.
- 2.** The system of internal control incorporates such controls and procedures as are considered necessary to ensure compliance with the Act. This system includes accounting and computer controls designed to ensure the identification of invoices and contracts for payment within the payment periods required by the Act. Reports are produced that identify unpaid outstanding invoices and these reports are reviewed regularly at a senior management level.
- 3.** The procedures referred to at 1 and 2 above are designed to provide reasonable but not absolute assurance against material non-compliance with the Act. An Bord Pleanála is satisfied that its procedures have operated adequately in the main and that no remedial action is required.
- 4.** The average delay in making payments, after the statutory period of 30 days, was 8.5 days.

There were two late payments in 2019. The total value of all payments was €7.02 million.

Since 1st January 2020, there have been no material developments insofar as An Bord Pleanála's compliance with the Act is concerned.

Data Protection and GDPR

Data Protection legislation is in place to protect the natural person with regard to processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data. All staff and Board members are briefed on their obligations and the procedures in place in the Board.

During 2019, we received 4 data protection requests and we issued responses on 6 requests.

Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty

Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 imposes a statutory obligation on public bodies in performing their functions to have regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination;
- Promote equality of opportunity and treatment for staff and persons to whom it provides services; and
- Protect the human rights of staff and service users.

An Bord Pleanála has appointed an Access Officer to facilitate access to our services for all members of the public in as far as it is reasonable and practicable.

Training

Disability awareness training took place during 2019. Diversity and inclusion training will be rolled out in 2020.

An internal staff equality survey was carried out in 2019 with a response rate of 70% approximately. Initial findings indicate that the majority of staff view their working environment as positive with people treating each other fairly.

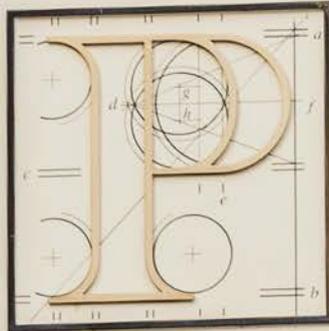
Recruitment

Open recruitment competitions for generalist posts are notified to the following bodies Solas, NDA, Rehab.

Ethics in Public Office

An Bord Pleanála comes within the scope of the Ethics in Public Office Act 1995 and has adopted procedures to comply with the Act. Where required, Board members and staff have completed statements of interest in compliance with the provisions of the Act.

An Bord Pleanála



04. Governance Report & Financial Statements

- **Governance Statement and Board Members' Report**
- **Statement of Compliance**
- **Statement on Internal Control**
- **Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves**
- **Statement of Comprehensive Income**
- **Statement of Financial Position**
- **Statement Of Cash Flows**
- **Notes to the Financial Statements**
- **Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General**



Governance Statement and Board Members' Report

Governance

An Bord Pleanála was established under the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 1976. An Bord Pleanála is responsible for the determination of appeals and certain other matters under the Planning and Development Acts, 2000 to 2019 and determination of direct applications for Strategic Housing Development and for Strategic Infrastructure Development including major road and railway cases. It is also responsible for dealing with proposals for the compulsory acquisition of land by local authorities and others under various enactments. The Board also has functions to determine appeals under Water Pollution and Building Control Acts.

The Board is accountable to the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government and for ensuring good corporate governance. The regular day-to-day management, control and direction of An Bord Pleanála are the responsibility of the Chairperson, Chief Officer and the senior management team.

The Chairperson, Chief Officer and senior management team must follow the broad strategic direction set by the Board, and must ensure that all Board members have a clear understanding of the key activities and decisions related to the organisation, and of any significant risks likely to arise. The Chairperson acts as a direct liaison between the Board and management of An Bord Pleanála.

Board Responsibilities

The work and responsibilities of the Board are set out in the statutory provisions in the Planning and Development Acts 2000 – 2019 and associated legislation.

The Chairperson and Ordinary Board members are appointed in a whole time capacity and are specifically excluded from holding any other office or employment in respect of which emoluments are payable. Remuneration levels for the Chairperson and other Board members are set by the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

Board Members have responsibility for delivery of high quality decisions on planning appeals and applications in a timely manner and for oversight of the overall corporate governance of the organisation. In addition to regular meetings to adjudicate on planning casework, the Board also meets generally on a monthly basis or as required in relation to oversight and governance of An Bord Pleanála. These General Board Meetings have standing items which include:

- Financial reports/management accounts
- Performance Reports
- Risk Management reports and analysis
- Approval and review of corporate policies
- Approval and monitoring of annual budget
- Approval and monitoring of annual delivery plan

- Reports from the Audit and Risk Committee and Internal Audit
- Management reports on Legal Affairs
- Any other matters reserved to the Board for decision

Section 150 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, requires An Bord Pleanála to adopt a Code of Conduct for dealing with conflicts of interest and promoting public confidence in the integrity of the conduct of its business. The Code of Conduct adopted by the Board is available on its website. The provisions of the Code of Conduct also align with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.

The policy of An Bord Pleanála is to provide best value for money when purchasing goods and services for the organisation. An Bord Pleanála is encouraged to utilise central contracts put in place by the Office of Government Procurement when procuring a range of commonly acquired goods and services. Where no central contract is available, An Bord Pleanála operates in accordance with EU Procurement Rules and Guidelines and its own internal procurement policy and protocols. An Bord Pleanála also complies with the appropriate requirements of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Public Spending Code in relation to its expenditure.

Section 117(1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 requires the Board of An Bord Pleanála to keep, in such form as may be approved by the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government with consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, all proper and usual accounts of money received and expended by it.

In preparing its financial statements, An Bord Pleanála is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently.
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that it will continue in operation.
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in financial statements.

The Board is responsible for keeping adequate accounting records which disclose, with reasonable accuracy at any time, its financial position which enables it to ensure that the financial statements comply with section 117(1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000. The maintenance and integrity of the information on the An Bord Pleanála website in relation to any corporate or financial matters is the responsibility of the Board.

The Board is responsible for approving the annual delivery plan and budget. An evaluation of the performance of An Bord Pleanála by reference to the annual delivery plan and budget for 2019 was carried out by the Board at the General Board Meeting of the 21st May 2020.

The Board is also responsible for safeguarding its assets and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Board considers that the financial statements of An Bord Pleanála give a true and fair view of the financial performance and the financial position of An Bord Pleanála at 31 December 2019.

Board Structure

The Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended provides that the Board shall consist of a Chairperson and nine ordinary members, one of whom is appointed as Deputy Chairperson. The Chairperson's term of office is seven years and the Chairperson can be re-appointed for a second or subsequent term of office provided he or she is Chairperson at the time of the re-appointment. The ordinary Board members (including the Deputy Chairperson) term of office is five years and these members may be re-appointed for a second or subsequent term provided that the person concerned is an outgoing member at the time of the re-appointment. Membership of the Board is whole-time. The table below details the appointment period/s for current members:

Board Member	Role	Date Appointed
Dave Walsh	Chairperson	30 October 2018
Paul Hyde	Ordinary Member	1 May 2014
	Reappointment approved to apply	1 May 2019
	Appointed Deputy Chairperson	29 January 2019
Philip Jones	Ordinary Member	1 May 2014
	Re-appointed	1 May 2019
Dr Maria Fitzgerald	Ordinary Member	10 July 2017
Terry Prendergast	Ordinary Member	2 August 2017
Terry Ó Niadh	Ordinary Member	4 September 2017
John Connolly	Ordinary Member	18 September 2017
Michelle Fagan	Ordinary Member	12 February 2018
	Re-appointed	1 January 2020
Stephen Bohan	Ordinary Member	12 June 2018
	Re-appointed	1 January 2020
Chris McGarry	Ordinary Member	1 February 2019

The Board completed a self-assessment evaluation of its own performance on 21st May, 2020.

The Board has established an Audit and Risk Committee which comprises two Board members and two external persons, one of whom is the Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee. The role of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) is to support the Board in relation to its responsibilities for issues of risk, control and governance and associated assurance. The ARC is independent from the financial management of the organisation. In particular, the Committee ensures that the internal control systems including audit activities are monitored actively and independently. The minutes of the ARC's meetings are circulated to the Board after each meeting and an annual report is delivered to the Board by the Chairperson of the ARC on activities throughout the year.

The members of the Audit and Risk Committee in 2019 were: Martin Higgins (External Chairperson), Patricia Byron (external member) and Board members, Michelle Fagan and Terry Ó Niadh. There were five meetings in 2019.

Schedule of Attendance, Fees and Expenses

A schedule of attendance at the General Board and Audit and Risk Committee meetings for 2019 is set out below:

	General Board Meetings		Audit and Risk Committee	
	A	B	A	B
Dave Walsh	12	12		
Paul Hyde	12	10		
Philip Jones	12	11		
Dr Maria Fitzgerald	12	11		
Terry Prendergast	12	12		
Terry Ó Niadh ¹	12	10	5	5
John Connolly	12	8		
Michelle Fagan ¹	12	9	5	5
Stephen Bohan	12	11		
Chris McGarry ²	11	11		

A Number of meetings held during the tenure of each Board member in 2019 (includes 2 EGBM)

B Number of meetings attended

¹ Board member who sat on the Audit and Risk Committee during 2019.

² Appointed 1st February 2019.

Key Personnel Changes

The Minister appointed one of the existing ordinary Board members (Mr. Paul Hyde) to be the new Deputy Chairperson in 2019. The Minister subsequently appointed one new ordinary Board member in 2019 (Mr Chris McGarry).

Disclosures Required by Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016)

The Board is responsible for ensuring An Bord Pleanála has complied with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (“the Code”), as published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in August 2016. The following disclosures are required by the Code:

Employee benefits breakdown (includes Board Members)

The employee benefits breakdown is disclosed in Note 6 (e) to the Financial Statements.

Consultancy Costs

Consultancy costs include the cost of external advice to management and exclude outsourced 'business-as-usual' functions.

	2019	2018
	€	€
Legal advice	57,673	29,199
Actuarial advice	3,321	5,070
ICT Consultancy	20,775	31,634
ICT Consultancy Plean IT Project	568,346	456,581
Human Resources	8,399	9,530
Business Improvement	7,089	1,007
Other	45,881	70,026
Total consultancy costs	711,484	603,047
Consultancy costs capitalised	139,826	134,153
Consultancy costs charged to the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves	571,658	468,894
Total	711,484	603,047

Legal Costs and Settlements

The table below provides a breakdown of amounts recognised as expenditure in the reporting period in relation to legal costs, settlements and conciliation and arbitration proceedings relating to contracts with third parties. This does not include expenditure incurred in relation to general legal advice received by an Bord Pleanála which is disclosed in Consultancy costs above. The expenditure on legal costs relates to legal services engaged on behalf of An Bord Pleanála or payments made to others where a liability for their costs has arisen in relation to applications for judicial review of An Bord Pleanála planning decisions as provided for in section 50 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended.

	2019	2018
	€	€
Legal fees – legal proceedings	1,607,353	2,049,126
Conciliation and arbitration payments	0	0
Settlements	1,783,218	1,208,067
Total	3,390,571	3,257,193

Travel and Subsistence Expenditure

Travel and subsistence expenditure is categorised as follows:

	2019	2018
Domestic	€	€
Board*	3,447	2,163
Employees	202,754	174,392
Planning Consultants	1,639	2,899
International		
Board	576	32
Employees	689	985
Total	209,105	180,471

* includes travel and subsistence of €1,002 paid directly to Board members in 2019 (2018: €1,076).
The balance of €2,445 (2018: €1,087) relates to expenditure paid on behalf of Board members for accommodation and meals on a Board study tour.

Hospitality Expenditure

The Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves includes the following hospitality expenditure:

	2019	2018
	€	€
Staff hospitality	723	3,727
Client hospitality	0	0
Total	723	3,727

Statement of Compliance

The Board has adopted the 2016 Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.

An Bord Pleanála commenced and completed a full gap analysis on all Code requirements in 2017/2018 and has since progressed closing gaps identified in that analysis.

An Bord Pleanála is satisfied that it is now in full compliance with all applicable requirements of the Code.

On behalf of the Board of An Bord Pleanála:



Mr Dave Walsh,
Chairperson
Date: 11th June 2020



Mr Paul Hyde,
Deputy Chairperson
Date: 11th June 2020

Statement on Internal Control

Scope of Responsibility

On behalf of An Bord Pleanála I acknowledge the Board's responsibility for ensuring that an effective system of internal control is maintained and operated. This responsibility takes account of the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies (2016).

Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a tolerable level rather than to eliminate it. The system can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded and that material errors or irregularities are prevented or detected in a timely way.

The system of internal control, which accords with guidance issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has been in place in An Bord Pleanála for the year ended 31 December 2019 and up to the date of approval of the financial statements.

Capacity to Handle Risk

An Bord Pleanála has an Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) comprising two Board members and two external members, with financial and audit expertise, one of whom is the Chairperson. The ARC met five times in 2019.

An Bord Pleanála has also established an internal audit function by engaging external consultants who conduct a programme of work agreed with the ARC.

An Bord Pleanála has developed a risk management policy which sets out its risk appetite, the risk management process in place and details the roles and responsibilities of staff in relation to risk. The policy has been issued to all staff who are expected to work within An Bord Pleanála's risk management policies, to alert management on emerging risks and control weaknesses and assume responsibility for risks and controls within their own area of work.

Risk and Control Framework

An Bord Pleanála has implemented a risk management system which identifies and reports key risks and the management actions being taken to address and, to the extent possible, to mitigate those risks.

A risk register is in place which identifies the key risks facing An Bord Pleanála and these have been identified, evaluated and graded according to their significance. The register is reviewed and updated by the Board on an annual and mid-year basis.

The outcome of these assessments is used to plan and allocate resources to ensure risks are managed to an acceptable level.

The risk register details the controls and actions needed to mitigate risks and responsibility for the operation of controls assigned to specific staff. I confirm that a control environment containing the following elements is in place:

- procedures for all key business processes have been documented,
- financial responsibilities have been assigned at management level with corresponding accountability,
- there is an appropriate budgeting system with an annual budget which is kept under review by senior management,
- there are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the information and communication technology systems,
- there are systems in place to safeguard assets.

Ongoing Monitoring and Review

Formal procedures have been established for monitoring control processes and control deficiencies are communicated to those responsible for taking corrective action and to management and the Board, where relevant, in a timely way. I confirm that the following ongoing monitoring systems are in place:

- key risks and related controls have been identified and processes have been put in place to monitor the operation of those key controls and report any identified deficiencies,
- reporting arrangements have been established at all levels where responsibility for financial management has been assigned, and
- there are regular reviews by senior management of periodic and annual performances and financial reports which indicate performance against budgets/forecasts.

Procurement

I confirm that An Bord Pleanála has procedures in place to ensure general compliance with current procurement rules and guidelines. During 2019 An Bord Pleanála generally complied with those procedures.

There were three areas where it is acknowledged that there was not full compliance with procurement requirements. These were related to archive facilities, recording of oral hearing services and purchase of stationery.

In relation to archive, re-tendering of this service has been delayed due to the need to satisfactorily resolve issues over exit charges for changing service providers for this service.

The oral hearing recording service is being further analysed in 2020 to determine if the service required by the organisation is fully covered by an existing Office of Government Procurement central procurement framework.

The Board has undertaken to resolve both of the above issues in 2020.

Expenditure on the purchase of stationery from a particular supplier was ceased in 2019 after it was established that the expenditure had exceeded the relevant procurement threshold of €25K.

The total expenditure on these three items in 2019 was €206K.

An Bord Pleanála will establish an additional central register of contracts for contracts between €10K and €25K and monitor contracts below €25K as an additional control measure to mitigate against non-compliance with procurement procedures in relation to expenditure limits.

Review of Effectiveness

I confirm that An Bord Pleanála has procedures to monitor the effectiveness of its risk management and control procedures. An Bord Pleanála's monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the internal and external auditors, the Audit and Risk Committee which oversees their work, and the senior management within An Bord Pleanála responsible for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework.

I confirm that the Board conducted an annual review of the effectiveness of the internal controls for 2019 on 21st May 2020.

Internal Control Issues

No weaknesses in internal control were identified in relation to 2019 that require disclosure in the financial statements.



Mr Dave Walsh,
Chairperson

Date: 11th June 2020



Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves

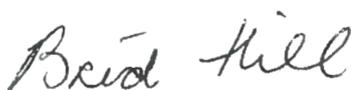
For the year ended 31 December 2019

	Note	2019 €	2018 €
Income			
Oireachtas Grants	2	18,623,812	17,487,581
Fees	3(a)	1,457,219	1,308,422
Strategic Housing Fees	3(b)	3,108,528	931,761
Strategic Infrastructure Fees & Cost Recoupment	4	1,822,413	1,814,568
Net Deferred Pension Funding	7(c)	2,989,445	2,866,334
Miscellaneous Income	5	11,911	3,995
Deposit Interest	5	123	13
Profit/(loss) on disposal of Fixed Assets		981	30
Total Income		28,014,432	24,412,704
Expenditure			
Salaries, Allowances and Superannuation	6	16,180,398	16,046,151
Establishment Expenses	8	2,480,211	2,081,903
Operating Expenses	9	6,335,540	5,922,918
Total Expenditure		24,996,149	24,050,972
Surplus for the Year before Appropriations		3,018,283	361,732
Transfer from/(to) the Capital Account	11	(241,543)	190,080
Surplus for the Year after Appropriations		2,776,740	551,812
Balance Brought Forward at 1 January		(918,818)	(1,470,630)
Balance Carried Forward at 31 December		1,857,922	(918,818)

The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 21 form part of these financial statements.
On behalf of the Board of An Bord Pleanála:



Mr Dave Walsh,
Chairperson
Date: 11th June 2020



Bríd Hill
Chief Officer
Date: 11th June 2020

Statement of Comprehensive Income

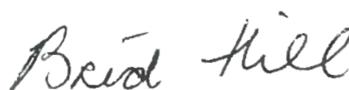
For the year ended 31 December 2019

	Note	2019 €	2018 €
Surplus after appropriations		2,776,740	551,812
Experience gains/(losses) on retirement benefit obligations	7(d)	(2,464,000)	(4,568,000)
Change in assumptions underlying the present value of retirement benefit obligations		(14,023,000)	2,950,000
Total actuarial loss in the year		(16,487,000)	(1,618,000)
Adjustment to deferred retirement benefits funding		16,487,000	1,618,000
Total Comprehensive Income for the year		2,776,740	551,812

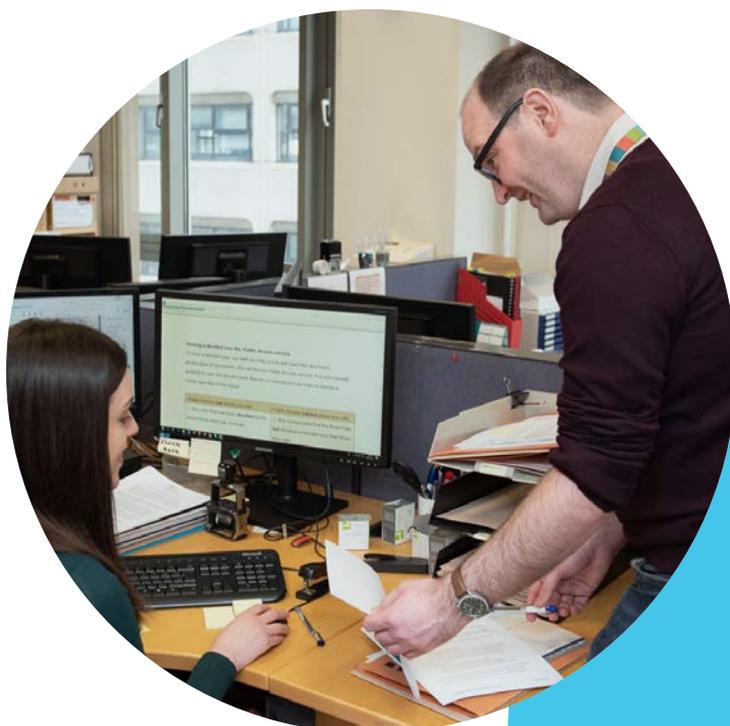
The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 21 form part of these financial statements.
On behalf of the Board of An Bord Pleanála:



Mr Dave Walsh,
Chairperson
Date: 11th June 2020



Bríd Hill
Chief Officer
Date: 11th June 2020



Statement of Financial Position

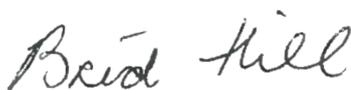
as of 31 December 2019

	Note	2019 €	2018 €
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant & equipment	12	545,595	205,587
Intangible Assets- Plean IT Project	12	518,090	616,555
Total Non-Current Assets		1,063,685	822,142
Current Assets			
Receivables	13	850,238	663,665
Cash and cash equivalents		8,306,012	3,471,990
		9,156,250	4,135,655
Current Liabilities (amounts falling due within one year)			
Payables	14	(7,298,328)	(5,054,473)
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)		1,857,922	(918,818)
Retirement Benefits			
Retirement benefit obligations	7(b)	(149,419,000)	(129,548,000)
Deferred retirement benefit funding asset		149,419,000	129,548,000
Total Net Assets/(Liabilities)		2,921,607	(96,676)
Representing			
Capital account	11	1,063,685	822,142
Retained revenue reserves		1,857,922	(918,818)
		2,921,607	(96,676)

The Statement of Cash Flows and notes 1 to 21 form part of these financial statements.
On behalf of the Board of An Bord Pleanála:



Mr Dave Walsh,
Chairperson
Date: 11th June 2020



Bríd Hill
Chief Officer
Date: 11th June 2020

Statement Of Cash Flows

For the year ended 31 December 2019

	2019	2018
	€	€
Net Cash Flows from Operating Activities		
Excess Income over expenditure	2,776,740	551,812
Movement on Capital Account	241,543	(190,080)
Depreciation and impairment of fixed assets	503,825	398,948
(Increase)/decrease in receivables	(186,573)	(26,213)
Increase/(decrease) in payables	2,243,855	1,311,079
Bank interest received	(123)	(13)
Net Cash Inflow from Operating Activities	5,579,267	2,045,533
Cash Flows from Investing Activities		
Payments to acquire property, plant & equipment	(745,368)	(208,868)
Net Cash Flows from Investing Activities	(745,368)	(208,868)
Cash Flows from Financing Activities		
Bank interest received	123	13
Net Cash Flows from Financing Activities	123	13
Net Increase in Cash and Cash Equivalents	4,834,022	1,836,678
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January	3,471,990	1,635,312
Cash and Cash Equivalents at 31 December	8,306,012	3,471,990

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2019

1. Accounting Policies

The basis of accounting and significant accounting policies adopted by An Bord Pleanála are set out below. They have all been applied consistently throughout the year and for the preceding year.

a) General Information

An Bord Pleanála was established in 1977 under the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 1976, and has an office at 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1.

An Bord Pleanála is responsible for the determination of appeals and certain other matters under the Planning and Development Acts, 2000 to 2019 and determination of applications for strategic infrastructure development including major road and railway cases. It is also responsible for dealing with proposals for the compulsory acquisition of land by local authorities and others under various enactments. The Board also has functions to determine appeals under Water Pollution and Building Control Acts.

b) Statement of Compliance

The financial statements of An Bord Pleanála for the year ended 31 December 2019 have been prepared in accordance with FRS 102, the financial reporting standard applicable in the UK and Ireland issued by the Financial Reporting Council (FRC), as promulgated by Chartered Accountants Ireland.

c) Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, except for certain assets and liabilities that are measured at fair values as explained in the accounting policies below. The financial statements are in the form approved by the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government with the concurrence of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform under section 117(1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000. The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to An Bord Pleanála's financial statements.

d) Oireachtas Grant

Oireachtas grants from Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (Vote 34, Subhead D3) are accounted for on a cash receipt basis except for grants specifically for ICT Strategy Plean-IT project which are accounted for as expended (Note 2).

e) Interest income

Interest income is recognised on a cash receipt basis.

f) Fees

These represent fees paid to the Board in respect of appeals, applications and other matters referred to the Board for determination under various enactments. The actual fees payable are either set by Ministerial regulation or are as determined by the Board and approved by the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government in accordance with the following statutory provisions:

- Section 144 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended.
- Section 177M of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended.
- Sections 7 and 7A of the Building Control Act, 1990, as amended.
- Sections 6 and 19 of the Local Government (Water Pollution) Act, 1977, as amended and section 103 of the Water Services Act, 2007.

Fee income is shown net of refunds which are made in respect of invalid appeals, referrals and other cases.

g) Strategic Infrastructural Development

Fees in respect of strategic infrastructure development applications are as determined by the Board and approved by the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government in accordance with section 144 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended.

The Board charges an initial fee ranging from €30,000 to €100,000 in relation to Strategic Infrastructure applications. These fees are accounted for on a cash receipts basis. The Board assesses the cost of assessing individual cases and may seek to recoup additional costs or refund a portion of the fee as appropriate. Recoupment of additional costs and refund of fees are accounted for as they fall due.

h) Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, plant and equipment are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation, adjusted for any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided on all property, plant and equipment at rates estimated to write off the cost less the estimated residual value of each asset on a straight line basis over their estimated useful lives, as follows:

(i) Leasehold buildings	10% per annum
(ii) Refurbishment to Existing Buildings	10% per annum
(iii) Fixtures and Fittings	20% per annum
(iv) Computers and Technical Equipment	range from 20% to 33.33% per annum

Residual value represents the estimated amount which would currently be obtained from disposal of an asset, after deducting estimated costs of disposal, if the asset were already of an age and in the condition expected at the end of its useful life.

If there is objective evidence of impairment of the value of an asset, an impairment loss is recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves in the year.

i) Intangible Assets

An Bord Pleanála's policy is to account for intangible assets under section 18 of FRS102. The amortisation of assets commences once the asset is developed and in use:

Plean IT Project	20% per annum straight line
------------------	-----------------------------

j) Capital Account

The Capital Account represents the unamortised amount of income used to purchase fixed assets.

k) Employee Benefits

Short-term Benefits

Short term benefits such as holiday pay are recognised as an expense in the year, and benefits that are accrued at year-end are included in the Payables figure in the Statement of Financial Position.

l) Retirement Benefits

(a) The Board operates defined benefit superannuation schemes through the medium of four different independent schemes namely:

- An Bord Pleanála Staff Superannuation Scheme 1986 to 2006,
- An Bord Pleanála Staff Spouses' and Children's Contributory Pension Scheme 1986,
- An Bord Pleanála (Chairman and Members) Superannuation Scheme 1986 to 2009, and
- An Bord Pleanála (Chairman and Members) Spouses' and Children's Contributory Pension Scheme 1986 to 2002.

The payment of superannuation benefits to and in respect of employees and members of the Board is provided for in these defined benefit superannuation schemes approved by the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government and with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform under section 119 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000.

The schemes are funded annually on a pay-as-you-go basis from monies available to the Board, including monies from exchequer funds provided by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government and from contributions deducted from staff and members' salaries.

Superannuation costs reflect superannuation benefits earned by members and employees in the period and are shown net of staff superannuation contributions, which are retained by the Board. An amount corresponding to the superannuation charge is recognised as income to the extent that it is recoverable, and offset by grants received in the year to discharge superannuation payments.

Actuarial gains or losses arising on scheme liabilities are reflected in the Statement of Comprehensive Income and a corresponding adjustment is recognised in the amount recoverable from exchequer funds provided by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

Superannuation liabilities represent the present value of future superannuation payments earned by staff to date. Deferred superannuation funding represents the corresponding asset to be recovered in future periods from exchequer funds provided by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

(b) The Board also operates the Single Public Service Pension Scheme ("Single Scheme"), which is also a defined benefit superannuation scheme for all pensionable public servants appointed on or after 1 January 2013. The rules of the Single Scheme are set down in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act, 2012. Single Scheme members' contributions are paid over to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

m) Legal Costs

It is the policy of An Bord Pleanála to discharge its own legal costs associated with applications for judicial review of Board decisions following the conclusion of such cases in the relevant Superior Courts.

It is also the policy of An Bord Pleanála to discharge any legal costs awarded against it following conclusion of cases in accordance with the outcome of either settlement discussions/negotiations or formal taxation of costs by the Office of the Legal Costs Adjudicators.

The Board, where practicable, seeks recovery of its legal costs arising out of legal actions where such costs are awarded by the Courts (see Note 16(a)). Legal costs recovered are accounted for on a cash receipt basis and netted to legal expenditure fees in the current year. Legal recoverable amounts, therefore, are not recorded in the Statement of Financial Position.

The Board makes an estimate of the legal fees on cases that have been decided by the Courts within the financial year. These estimated legal costs are provided for in the Board's financial statements.

Legal fees in respect of cases yet to be decided by the Courts which have been

- Invoiced by the Board's solicitors during the financial year are charged to legal expenditure fees in the year.
- Incurred by the Board but not invoiced by the Board's solicitors within the financial year are estimated and provided for in the Board's financial statements.

In addition, outstanding costs are reviewed and written off when they are deemed to be unrecoverable.

n) Operating Leases

Rental expenditure under operating leases is recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves over the life of the lease. Expenditure is recognised on a straight-line basis over the lease period.

o) Receivables

Short term debtors are measured at transaction price, less any impairment. There are no loans receivable to measure.

p) Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 30 days.

q) Payables

Short term creditors are measured at transaction price. There are no other financial liabilities, including bank loans, to measure.

r) Currency in use policy

The financial statements are presented in euro, which is the currency of the primary economic environment in which An Bord Pleanála operates.

s) Critical judgements and estimates

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported for revenues and expenses during the year. However the nature of estimation means that actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. The following estimates have had the most significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements.

(a) Provisions

An Bord Pleanála makes an estimate of the legal provision required at the financial reporting date. The amount in respect of this provision has been estimated at €2,879,877 at the statement of financial position date (Note 16 (c)).

(b) Retirement Benefits Obligation

The assumptions underlying the actuarial valuations for which the amounts recognised in the financial statements are determined (including discount rates, rates of increase in future compensation levels, mortality rates and healthcare cost trend rates) are updated annually based on current economic conditions, and for any relevant changes to the terms and conditions of the pension and post-retirement plans.

Assumptions can be affected by:

- (i) The discount rate, changes in the rate of return on high-quality corporate bonds
- (ii) Future compensation levels, future labour market conditions

2. Oireachtas Grants

The Oireachtas Grants voted to An Bord Pleanála from Vote 34 - Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government as shown in the financial statements consist of:

	Sub-head	2019	2018
		€	€
Grant for current expenditure	D.3	18,088,000	17,031,000
Grant for capital expenditure –Plean-IT Project *	D.3	535,812	456,581
		18,623,812	17,487,581

* No Deferred Grant in 2019 (Note 14)

3 (a). Fee Income

	2019	2018
	€	€
Fees received in respect of appeal, referrals cases	1,524,052	1,387,417
Refunds in respect of appeals	(116,581)	(109,151)
	1,407,471	1,278,266

	2019	2018
	€	€
Fees received in respect of substitute consent Cases *	48,050	18,456
Cost recoupment from applicants in respect of substitute consent cases	1,698	11,700
	49,748	30,156
	1,457,219	1,308,422

* Substitute consent application fees received in accordance with section 177M of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended.

3 (b). Strategic Housing Fees

	2019	2018
	€	€
Fees received in respect of Strategic Housing *	6,918,799	2,063,278
Refunds in respect of Strategic Housing *	(1,686,171)	(280,161)
Refund Liability in respect of Strategic Housing *	(2,124,100)	(851,356)
	3,108,528	931,761

* The Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act, 2016, and the Planning and Development (Strategic Housing Development) Regulations, 2017, under S.I. No. 270 of 2017 and S.I. No. 271 of 2017, came into operation on the 3rd day of July 2017.

Strategic Housing fees are received in accordance with sections 4 and 5 of the Planning and Development (Housing) and Residential Tenancies Act, 2016.

Under Article 305 of the Planning Development Regulations 2001 as amended An Bord Pleanála is required to pay 50% of the application fees received for these cases to the relevant Planning Authority.

4. Strategic Infrastructure Fees and Cost Recoupment

	2019	2018
	€	€
Fees received in respect of strategic infrastructure development *	1,825,810	1,882,740
Cost Recoupment from applicants in respect of strategic infrastructure development	825,501	262,302
Refunds paid to applicants in respect of strategic infrastructure	(658,275)	(146,943)
Refund Liability in respect of strategic infrastructure	(170,623)	(183,531)
	1,822,413	1,814,568

* Deferred Fees €204,500 within Creditors due within one year figure (Note 14)

5. Other Revenue

	2019	2018
	€	€
Miscellaneous income	11,911	3,995
Deposit Interest	123	13
	12,034	4,008

6. Salaries and Allowances

At 31 December 2019, the Board consisted of a chairperson and 9 ordinary members, one of whom is also a deputy Chairperson (eight members at the end of 2018). Membership of the Board is wholetime.

In addition to Board members at 31 December 2019, there were:

Whole time equivalent employees	163.7 (156.9 in 2018)
Management	14.7 (14.7 in 2018)
Technical	55.3 (50.4 in 2018)
Administrative	93.7 (91.8 in 2018)

The average number of wholetime equivalent employees during the year was 162.2 (151 in 2018). Staffing levels are approved by the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

(a) Remuneration and Other Pay Costs

	2019	2018
	€	€
Staff short-term benefits	10,367,462	10,002,627
Annual leave accrual adjustment	(29,819)	48,408
Termination benefits	0	0
Retirement benefit costs (see Note 7(a))	4,948,249	5,173,640
Employer's contribution to social welfare	894,506	821,476
	16,180,398	16,046,151

From 1 January 2019 onwards, members of the public service defined benefit pension schemes pay an additional superannuation contribution (ASC) arising from the Public Service Stability Agreement (2018-2020) and the Public Service Pay and Pensions Act 2017. ASC has replaced the pension-related deduction (PRD) which ceased at the end of 2018. While PRD was a temporary emergency measure, ASC is a permanent contribution in respect of pensionable remuneration.

An amount of €447,998 (2018 PRD : €522,482) was paid to the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in respect of additional superannuation contributions.

(b) Staff Short Term Benefits

	2019	2018
	€	€
Basic Pay	10,302,853	9,888,033
Overtime	30,337	77,602
Incentivised Scheme payments	34,272	36,992
	10,367,462	10,002,627

(c) Chairperson's Remuneration

The total remuneration paid to the Chairperson position in 2019 comprised of:

	2019	2018
	€	€
Salary (Former Chairperson – finish 28/8/2018)	0	123,093
Salary (Chairperson – start 30/10/2018)	192,558	31,109
Benefit-in-Kind* (Former Chairperson – finish 28/8/2018)	0	2,158
Benefit-in-Kind (Chairperson – start 30/10/2018)	2,158	0
	194,716	156,360

The Board and staff of An Bord Pleanála are paid on a fortnightly basis. In 2019, the calendar year fell in such a way that there were 26 pay dates. The Chairperson's pension entitlements do not extend beyond the standard entitlements in the model public sector defined benefit superannuation scheme.

* This relates to the Chairperson's membership of the Association of Chief Executives of State Agencies. The actual cost of this membership was €900 in 2019. Revenue rules require that such membership fees be treated as benefit in kind and be accordingly processed as part of remuneration. As the Chairperson's membership of this body was subscribed in his capacity as Chairperson of the organisation, An Bord Pleanála absorbed any taxes and levies due on this notional income so that net pay would not be affected.

(d) Board Members' Emoluments

Board Member	BIK Professional Membership	Vouched Expenses	Total Expenses
	€	€	€
Dave Walsh, Chairperson	2,158	429	2,587
Paul Hyde, Deputy Chairperson	810	990	1,800
Philip Jones	270	539	809
Dr Maria Fitzgerald	0	259	259
Terry Prendergast	270	485	755
Terry Ó Niadh	325	218	543
John Connolly	390	208	598
Michelle Fagan	540	414	954
Stephen Bohan	265	209	474
Chris McGarry (started 01/02/2019)	0	272	272
	5,028	4,023	9,051

(e) Disclosure of key management

Key management includes the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Board Members, Chief Officer, Director of Planning and Director of Corporate Affairs. The compensation paid or payable to key management for employee services is shown below:

	2019	2018
	€	€
Salaries and other short-term benefits	1,549,165	1,581,608

(f) Employee benefits breakdown (includes Board Members)

Board Members and Employees' short-term benefits in excess of €60,000 are categorised into the following bands:

Range of total employee benefits			No. of Employees	
From		To	2019	2018
€60,000	-	€69,999	13	14
€70,000	-	€79,999	31	25
€80,000	-	€89,999	23	24
€90,000	-	€99,999	0	1
€100,000	-	€109,999	2	1
€110,000	-	€119,999	2	9
€120,000	-	€129,999	6	0
€130,000	-	€139,999	1	1
€140,000	-	€149,999	0	0
€150,000	-	€159,999	0	0
€160,000	-	€169,999	0	0
€170,000	-	€179,999	0	0
€180,000	-	€189,999	0	1
€190,000	-	€199,999	1	0
			79	76

Note: For the purpose of this disclosure, short-term employee benefits in relation to services rendered during the reporting period include salary, overtime allowances and other payments made on behalf of the employee, but exclude employer's PRSI.

7. Retirement Benefit Costs

(a) Analysis of total retirement benefit costs charged to the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves

	2019	2018
	€'000	€'000
Current service costs	3,389	3,221
Interest on retirement benefit scheme liabilities	2,365	2,370
Employee Contributions	(395)	(417)
	5,359	5,174

(b) Movement in net retirement benefit obligations during the financial year

	2019	2018
	€'000	€'000
Net retirement benefit obligation at 1 January	(129,548)	(125,064)
Current service costs	(3,389)	(3,221)
Interest costs	(2,365)	(2,370)
Actuarial gain/(loss)	(16,487)	(1,618)
Pensions paid in the year	2,370	2,725
Net retirement benefit obligation at 31 December	(149,419)	(129,548)

(c) Deferred funding for retirement benefits

The Board recognises these amounts as an asset corresponding to the unfunded deferred liability for retirement benefits on the basis of the set of assumptions described above and a number of past events. These events include the statutory basis for the establishment of the retirement benefit schemes, and the policy and practice currently in place in relation to funding public service pensions including contributions by employees and the annual estimates process. The Board has no evidence that this funding policy will not continue to meet such sums in accordance with current practice.

The net deferred funding for retirement benefits recognised in the Statement of Income and Expenditure and Retained Revenue Reserves was as follows:

	2019	2018
	€'000	€'000
Funding recoverable in respect of current year retirement benefit costs	5,359	5,591
State grant applied to pay retirement benefits	(2,370)	(2,725)
	2,989	2,866

The deferred funding asset for retirement benefits at 31st December 2019 amounts to €149.4m (2017: €129.5m).

(d) History of defined benefit obligations

	2019	2018	2017	2016
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Defined benefit obligations (see Note 7(f))	149,419	129,548	125,064	126,898
Experience losses/(gains) on defined benefit scheme liabilities	2,464	4,568	(5,173)	(4,134)
Percentage of scheme liabilities	1.65%	3.53%	4.14%	3.25%

(e) General description of the schemes

The retirement benefit schemes currently administered in the Board are disclosed in Accounting Policy 1(l)

The four An Bord Pleanála schemes are defined benefit final salary pension arrangements with benefits and contributions defined by reference to the schemes and general pension regulations. Normal retirement age on the above schemes is 65, with entitlement to retire without actuarial reduction at age 60 and a maximum of age 70 in line with the Public Service Superannuation (Age of Retirement) Act, 2018. Post-April (New Entrants) 2004 members do not have a maximum retirement age.

Single Public Service Pension Scheme (SPSPS) Note 7(f)

Since 2013, the Board have administered the SPSPS, it is a CPI-linked defined-benefit pensions based on career-average pay. Normal pension age set, initially, at 66 years; this will rise in step with statutory changes in the State Pension age to 67 years in 2021 and 68 years in 2028. It has a compulsory retirement age of 70.

All the above schemes provide an annual pension, lump sum payment and are subject to spouses and children's pensions entitlements.

The valuation used for FRS102 disclosures has been based on a full actuarial valuation performed on 17th February 2020 by a qualified independent actuary, taking account of the requirements of the FRS in order to assess the scheme liabilities at 31st December 2019.

The principal actuarial assumptions were as follows:

	2019	2018
Rate of increase in salaries	2.65%	2.90%
Rate of increase in retirement benefits in payment- Main Scheme	2.15%	2.40%
Rate of increase in retirement benefits in - Single Scheme	1.45%	2.40%
Discount rate	1.14%	1.86%
Inflation rate	1.45%	1.70%

Mortality

58% of PNML00 for males with improvements (see below).

62% of PNFL00 for females with improvements (see below).

Annuity factors increase by 0.36% p.a. (Males not in Spouses and Children’s Scheme) to 0.30% p.a. (Females not in Spouses and Children’s Scheme and Members of Spouses and Children’s Scheme) for each year between 2014 and the year of retirement.

The mortality basis explicitly allows for improvements in life expectancy over time, so that life expectancy at retirement will depend on the year in which a member attains retirement age. The table below shows the life expectancy for members attaining age 65 in 2019 and 2039.

Year of attaining age 65	2019	2039
Life expectancy – male	21.5	23.9
Life expectancy – female	24.0	26.0

(f) Single Public Service Pension Scheme (Single Scheme)

The Board operates the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (“Single Scheme”), which is also a defined benefit superannuation scheme for all pensionable public servants appointed on or after 1 January 2013. The rules of the Single Scheme are set down in the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act, 2012. Single Scheme members’ contributions are paid over to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

An amount of €113,798 (2018: €108,887) was paid to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in respect of the Single Scheme employee contributions.

The Single Scheme provides for a pension and retirement lump sum based on career-average pensionable remuneration, and spouse’s and children’s pensions. The minimum pension age is 66 years (rising in line with State pension age changes). It includes an actuarially-reduced early retirement facility from age 55. Pensions in payment increase in line with the consumer price index.

The defined benefit obligation figure relating to the Single Scheme is recognised as €1,461,000 (2018: €600,000) This figure is included the total defined benefit obligations figure of €149,419,000 (2018: €129,548,000) in Note 7 (d).

8. Establishment Expenses

	Note	2019	2018
		€	€
Rent and service charges **	18	1,769,060	1,538,891
Repairs and maintenance		93,719	25,897
Insurance		31,774	30,686
Light and Heat		81,833	87,481
Depreciation		503,825	398,948
		2,480,211	2,081,903

* €1,769,060 figure includes €723 hospitality expenses

€4,535 monies collected from staff in relation to the provision of beverages/snacks are off-set against Rent and service charges

9. Operating Expenses

	Note	2019	2018
		€	€
Travel and subsistence *		209,105	180,471
Legal fees	16	3,448,244	3,286,392
Office equipment and stationery		229,776	242,627
Information and communications technology		1,477,425	1,244,624
ICT Plean IT Project		428,520	322,428
Printing and books		22,220	20,600
Statutory notices		22,703	65,678
Recruitment, staff training and development and conferences		152,796	147,365
Telephone and postage		127,819	151,730
Consultants' fees and services	17	188,317	229,844
Audit fees		20,000	18,000
Provision for Doubtful Debt		0	4,571
Sundries		8,615	8,588
		6,335,540	5,922,918

* €209,105 figure includes €1,265 foreign travel expenses

10. Reduction in Value of Fixed Assets

	Note	2019	2018
		€	€
Depreciation of property, plant and equipment	12	503,825	398,948
		503,825	398,948

11. Capital Account

	2019	2018
	€	€
Opening balance	822,142	1,012,222
Income allocated for capital purposes (gross of asset disposals)	745,859	208,868
Amount released on disposal of fixed assets	(491)	(0)
Amortisation in line with asset depreciation	(503,825)	(398,948)
Closing balance	1,063,685	822,142

12. Non-Current Assets-Fixed Assets¹ and Intangible Assets²

	Leasehold Premises ¹	Furniture & Fittings ¹	IT & Office Equipment ¹	PleanIT Project ³	Total
Cost	€	€	€	€	€
At 1 January	6,683,225	484,459	1,813,206	1,080,516	10,061,406
Additions	0	377,641	228,392	139,826	745,859
Disposals	0	0	(1,472)	0	(1,472)
At 31 December	6,683,225	862,100	2,040,126	1,220,342	10,805,793
Depreciation					
At 1 January	6,683,225	402,783	1,689,294	463,962	9,239,264
Charge for the year	0	139,205	126,330	238,290	503,825
Disposals ²	0	0	(981)	0	(981)
At 31 December	6,683,225	541,988	1,814,643	702,252	9,742,108
Net Book Value					
At 1 January	0	81,676	123,912	616,554	822,142
Net movement for the year	0	238,436	101,571	(98,464)	241,543
At 31 December	0	320,112	225,483	518,090	1,063,685

¹ Non-Current Assets-Fixed Assets ² Amount released on disposal of asset €492

³ PleanIT Project- Non Physical Assets in the course of development which include knowledge, software and other intangible computer based assets

The new case management system was deployed in October 2017 with new cases input on receipt to the Plean-IT system. The specification for the case management system was based on a Target Operating Model and To-Be Processes. A new Geographical Information System (GIS), has also been deployed for internal use. The ICT Strategy has now moved to a second phase (currently underway) which will deliver enhancements to the case management system. An Bord Pleanála wishes to optimise the case management solution through the implementation of architectural improvements and ensure its readiness for migration to the cloud. Also in progress is a requirements specification process for a website and portal to enable online submission of planning applications / appeals and access to all other services offered by An Bord Pleanála.

13. Receivables

	2019	2018
	€	€
Debtors	152,605	17,898
Less Provision for Doubtful Debt	(2,265)	(7,681)
Net Debtors	150,340	10,217
Prepayments	699,898	653,448
	850,238	663,665

14. Payables

Amounts falling due within one year

	2019	2018
	€	€
Trade Creditors	47,626	28,748
Taxation and Social Welfare due to Revenue	350,917	441,258
Legal Provisions (Note 16c)	2,879,877	2,599,877
Deferred Grant Income (Note 2)	0	75,812
Deferred Fee Income (Note 4)	204,500	200,000
Accruals	3,815,408	1,708,778
	7,298,328	5,054,473

15. Contingencies with Regard To Legal Actions

There is a contingent liability of an undetermined amount as a result of legal actions against the Board in relation to its decisions on planning appeals and other cases. It is the Board's policy to contest such actions, where appropriate.

16. Legal Costs

As indicated at note 1(m) in the Statement of Accounting Policies, certain legal costs are initially borne by the Board and recovery is pursued. The situation in 2019 regarding these recoverable costs was as follows:-

(a) Recoverable Legal Costs (memorandum):

	2019	2018
	€	€
Outstanding at 1 January	1,880,782	1,803,455
Recovered during year ¹	(241,141)	(535,563)
Recoverable costs arising during year	367,995	726,996
Costs written off during year	0	(114,931)
Costs re-designated during year ²	0	825
	2,007,636	1,880,782

The Board continually reviews the recoverability of the above costs. It is anticipated that a substantial amount thereof will not be recovered.

¹ The amount recovered was netted to legal fees in the current year.

² Costs which were initially deemed recoverable prior to the completion of legal actions and are now being re-designated on foot of court decisions.

(b) Legal Fees:

	2019	2018
	€	€
Recoverable costs arising during year	367,995	726,996
Recovered during year	(241,141)	(535,563)
Net recoverable costs	126,854	191,433
Non-recoverable costs	1,538,172	1,886,892
Non-recoverable payment of other side costs	1,783,218	1,208,067
	3,448,244	3,286,392

(c) Reconciliation of movement in Legal Provisions for the year ended 31st December 2019:

	2019	2018
	€	€
Legal provision as at 1 January	2,599,877	2,040,502
Legal payments made in year	(1,405,484)	(1,041,897)
Change in provisions from previous year	(285,516)	126,272
Provision for decided cases in year	1,970,000	975,000
Provisions relating to un-decided cases to date	0	500,000
Legal provision as at 31 December (Note 14)	2,879,877	2,599,877

17. Consultants' Fees and Services

The Board engages part-time consultant inspectors on a fee-per-case basis in accordance with rates approved by the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. In addition, the Board engages, in accordance with section 124 of the Act, other consultants and advisors, as it is necessary for the performance of its functions. In 2019, 1.26% (2018:0.77%) of all inspectors' reports came from consultant inspectors and their fees, along with associated costs relating to recording of oral hearings, accounted for 65% (2018:58%) of all consultancy fees and services costs.

Fee amounts totalling €4,496 (Nil:2018) were paid to two external members of the audit committee and expenses of €304 (€253:2018) were paid to two external members of the audit committee. These amounts are included in the heading "Consultants' fees and services" in Note 9.

18. Lease Commitments

The Board occupies and pays rent on premises at 64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1 which is held on a 25 year lease from January 2002.

Following a rent review in 2018 An Bord Pleanála estimates the following lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases for each of the following periods:

	2019
	€'000
Payable within one year	1,296
Payable within two to five years	5,183
Payable after five years	2,592
	9,071

Operating lease amounts recognised as an expense total €1,295,820 (2018: €1,103,673).

The costs in relation to the fit-out and certain other matters, other than normal establishment and operating costs, were allocated for capital purposes and included under Leasehold Premises in Fixed Assets. Ongoing improvements to the premises are treated in a similar manner.

19. Board Members & Staff Interests

The Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies requires a written code of conduct for Board members and employees. A Code in compliance with the guidelines is in operation and is available on the Board's website (see 5.1 of the revised Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies).

In addition, members and certain staff are subject to the requirements of the Ethics in Public Office Acts, 1995 and 2001, and yearly statements of registrable interests are made under the Acts. In 2019, nine (9) existing members made statements in accordance with the Acts.

Board members and certain staff are required to make declarations/disclosures of interests in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000.

Section 147 of the 2000 Act provides for statutory declarations by members and certain staff in

relation to certain interests. A register of interests is maintained by the Secretary in accordance with section 147 of the Act and is available for public inspection during office hours.

Section 148 of the 2000 Act relates to disclosures regarding a pecuniary or other beneficial interest in, or which is material to, any appeal or other matter to be determined by the Board. In 2019, Board members made five (5) disclosures, staff made thirteen (13) disclosures and consultants made one (1) disclosure.

Under section 150 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, the Board has adopted a code of conduct for dealing with conflicts of interest and promoting public confidence in the integrity of the conduct of its business. The code applies to members, certain staff and other persons whose services are availed of by the Board. In 2019, zero (0) members made disclosures, zero (0) staff made disclosures and zero (0) consultants made disclosures under the Code.

20. Events after the reporting date

Since compilation of the 2019 financial statements there has been a global COVID-19 pandemic which has disrupted many normal business operations. The office of An Bord Pleanála remained open throughout the COVID-19 national restrictions with restricted hours of business. All government health and safety guidelines were adhered to and on the 25th May 2020 full public opening hours resumed with reduced numbers of staff physically on site combined with increased working from home.

The Board assesses this event to be a non-adjusting post balance sheet event in relation to its 2019 financial statements and has factored the Covid-19 pandemic into its overall risk management processes and operations in 2020 and for estimates into 2021.

An Bord Pleanála is satisfied that it can continue to discharge its statutory functions and that it will continue to have the necessary funding to enable that.

Having regard to the foregoing the Board is of the view that its operations can continue on a going concern basis covering the twelve-month period from the date of signing of the 2019 financial statements.

21. Approval of the financial statements

The financial statements were approved by the Board of An Bord Pleanála on 21st May 2020.





Ard Reachtaire Cuntas agus Ciste Comptroller and Auditor General

Report for presentation to the Houses of the Oireachtas An Bord Pleanála

Opinion on the financial statements

I have audited the financial statements of An Bord Pleanála for the year ended 31 December 2019 as required under the provisions of section 117 of the Planning and Development Act 2000. The financial statements comprise

- the statement of income and expenditure and retained revenue reserves
- the statement of comprehensive income
- the statement of financial position
- the statement of cash flows and
- the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In my opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of An Bord Pleanála at 31 December 2019 and of its income and expenditure for 2019 in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 102 — *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland*.

Basis of opinion

I conducted my audit of the financial statements in accordance with the International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) as promulgated by the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions. My responsibilities under those standards are described in the appendix to this report. I am independent of An Bord Pleanála and have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the standards.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Report on information other than the financial statements, and on other matters

An Bord Pleanála has presented certain other information together with the financial statements. This comprises the annual report, the governance statement and Board members' report and the statement on internal control. My responsibilities to report in relation to such information, and on certain other matters upon which I report by exception, are described in the appendix to this report.

I have nothing to report in that regard.

Andrew Harkness
For and on behalf of the
Comptroller and Auditor General

12 June 2020

Appendix to the report

Responsibilities of Board members

As detailed in the governance statement and Board members' report, the Board members are responsible for

- the preparation of financial statements in the form prescribed under section 117 of the Planning and Development Act 2000
- ensuring that the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with FRS 102
- ensuring the regularity of transactions
- assessing whether the use of the going concern basis of accounting is appropriate, and
- such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Responsibilities of the Comptroller and Auditor General

I am required under section 117 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to audit the financial statements of An Bord Pleanála and to report thereon to the Houses of the Oireachtas.

My objective in carrying out the audit is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement due to fraud or error. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the ISAs, I exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. In doing so,

- I identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements whether due to fraud or error; design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks; and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- I obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal controls.
- I evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures.

- I conclude on the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, on whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on An Bord Pleanála's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my report. However, future events or conditions may cause An Bord Pleanála to cease to continue as a going concern.

- I evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

Information other than the financial statements

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information presented with those statements, and I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, I am required under the ISAs to read the other information presented and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or with knowledge obtained during the audit, or if it otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

Reporting on other matters

My audit is conducted by reference to the special considerations which attach to State bodies in relation to their management and operation. I report if I identify material matters relating to the manner in which public business has been conducted.

I seek to obtain evidence about the regularity of financial transactions in the course of audit. I report if I identify any material instance where public money has not been applied for the purposes intended or where transactions did not conform to the authorities governing them.

I also report by exception if, in my opinion,

- I have not received all the information and explanations I required for my audit, or
- the accounting records were not sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited, or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Statistics Available
- Appendix 2: Planning appeals received and decided by area
- Appendix 3: Staff, external consultants and legal agents 2019



Appendix 1

Statistics Available

The following tables of statistics are available at www.pleanala.ie

1. Summary of All Planning Cases
2. Average Time Taken to Dispose of Cases (weeks)
3. Planning Appeals Received / Disposed / On Hands Cases
4. Strategic Infrastructure Development Cases (Private Entities and Statutory Undertakers)
5. Strategic Infrastructure Applications (Private Entities and Statutory Undertakers Received in 2019)
6. Strategic Infrastructure Development Cases (Local Authorities)
7. Strategic Infrastructure Development Applications (Local Authorities) Received in 2019
8. Local Authority Projects
9. Appropriate Assessment Cases
10. Strategic Housing Development Cases 2019
11. Vacant Site Levy
12. Other Planning Case Types
13. Summary of Other Non-Planning Cases
14. Analysis of planning appeal decisions
15. Planning appeals received by development category / area
16. Summary of all cases disposed of by reference to statutory objective period

Appendix 2

Planning appeals received and decided by area

Received 2019

	No. of decisions made by planning authority ²	No. of decisions appealed	% of decisions appealed	Decisions appealed as a % of all appeals ³
County Area ¹				
Carlow	370	18	4.9%	0.9%
Cavan	515	14	2.7%	0.7%
Clare	939	54	5.8%	2.6%
Cork	3,063	168	5.5%	8.1%
Donegal	1,582	39	2.5%	1.9%
Dun Laoghaire / Rathdown	1,560	185	11.9%	8.9%
Fingal	1,175	136	11.6%	6.7%
Galway	1,795	94	5.2%	4.5%
Kerry	1,331	67	5.0%	3.2%
Kildare	1,237	87	7.0%	4.2%
Kilkenny	865	55	6.4%	2.7%
Laois	718	21	2.9%	1.0%
Leitrim	204	3	1.5%	0.1%
Longford	293	11	3.8%	0.5%
Louth	894	65	7.3%	3.1%
Mayo	928	40	4.3%	1.9%
Meath	1,428	64	4.5%	3.1%
Monaghan	584	14	2.4%	0.7%
Offaly	629	11	1.7%	0.5%
Roscommon	513	16	3.1%	0.8%
Sligo	418	19	4.5%	0.9%
South Dublin	912	86	9.4%	4.1%
Tipperary	1,036	38	3.7%	1.8%
Westmeath	568	22	3.9%	1.1%
Wexford	1,374	61	4.4%	2.9%
Wicklow	1,062	97	9.1%	4.7%
City				
Cork	820	44	5.4%	2.1%
Dublin	2,942	396	13.4%	19.1%
Galway	357	40	11.2%	1.9%
City and County				
Limerick	1,345	67	5.0%	3.2%
Waterford	857	44	5.1%	2.1%
Total	32,314	2,076	5.6%	100.0%

¹ 'Area' is a county planning authority and all other planning authorities in that area except city councils.

² Figures of decisions made by planning authorities courtesy of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

³ Decisions do not include 297 otherwise disposed cases.

Appendix 2

Planning appeals received and decided by area

Decided 2019

	No. of formal decisions *	% of planning authority decisions confirmed	% of planning authority decisions varied	% of planning authority decisions reversed
County Area ¹				
Carlow	11	55%	36%	9%
Cavan	9	0%	89%	11%
Clare	42	28%	36%	36%
Cork	161	20%	60%	20%
Donegal	41	17%	37%	46%
Dun Laoghaire / Rathdown	195	24%	50%	26%
Fingal	116	34%	46%	20%
Galway	72	32%	36%	32%
Kerry	66	17%	47%	36%
Kildare	75	37%	41%	22%
Kilkenny	30	17%	47%	36%
Laois	19	21%	47%	32%
Leitrim	3	33%	33%	33%
Longford	13	23%	23%	54%
Louth	54	26%	46%	28%
Mayo	32	22%	38%	40%
Meath	54	13%	59%	28%
Monaghan	13	15%	70%	15%
Offaly	8	38%	38%	24%
Roscommon	14	21%	36%	43%
Sligo	24	42%	50%	8%
South Dublin	66	27%	58%	15%
Tipperary	29	24%	52%	24%
Westmeath	19	21%	42%	37%
Wexford	55	16%	47%	37%
Wicklow	95	38%	35%	27%
City				
Cork	34	15%	74%	11%
Dublin	336	22%	60%	18%
Galway	34	17%	62%	21%
City and County				
Limerick	59	19%	47%	34%
Waterford	39	28%	44%	28%
Total	1,818	24%	50%	26%

* Decisions include all formal Decisions including Financial Contribution Only Decisions.

¹ 'Area' is a county planning authority and all other planning authorities in that area except city councils.

² Figures of decisions made by planning authorities courtesy of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

³ Decisions do not include 297 otherwise disposed cases.

Appendix 3

Staff, external consultants and legal agents 2019

Staff, External Consultants and Legal Agents as at 31st December 2019

The following staff were employed as of 31st December 2019:

Chief officer

Vacant

Director of Planning

Rachel Kenny

Director of Corporate Affairs

Gerard Egan

Assistant Directors of Planning

Brendan Wyse, Philip Green, Anne Marie O'Connor, Tom Rabbette

Senior Administrative Officers

Anne Killian, Bríd Hill, Carol Moloney, Chris Clarke, Mary Kelly, Paddy Tallon, Ellen Morrin, Mary Holohan, Diarmuid Collins

Senior Planning Inspectors

Pauline Fitzpatrick, Suzanne Kehely, Stephen Kay, Breda Gannon, Mairead Kenny, Paul Caprani, Karla McBride, Kevin Moore, Mary Kennelly, Dolores McCague, Conor McGrath, Stephen O'Sullivan, Philip Davis, Jane Dennehy, Una Crosse, Sarah Moran, Mary Crowley, Patricia Calleary, Ciara Kellett, Susan McHugh, Joanna Kelly, Hugh Mannion, Karen Kenny, Lorraine Dockery, Erika Casey, Gillian Kane, Una O'Neill, Karen Hamilton, Donal Donnelly, Stephen Rhys Thomas, Niall Haverty

Senior Executive Officers

Josephine Hayes, Kieran Doherty, Bronwyn Byrne, Muiríosa Cassells, Nora Ryan, Marcella Doyle, Pierce Dillon, Siobhan White, Gavin Duffy, Philip Canny, Grainne Kelly, Jane Gilvarry, Barry Devine, Colm Walsh, Eimear Mangan

Planning Inspectors

Fiona Fair, Siobhan Carroll, Auriol Considine, Hugh Morrison, Robert Speer, Patricia Young, Brid Maxwell, Colin McBride, Caryn Coogan, Emer Doyle, Angela Brereton, Daire Mac Devitt, Ronan O'Connor, Colm McLoughlin, Leslie Howard, Sarah Lynch, Paddy Keogh, Elaine Power, Irené McCormack, Deirdre MacGabhann, Brendan Coyne, Paul O'Brien, Louise Treacy, Anthony Kelly, Fergal O'Bric

Executive Officers

Kieran Somers, Rob MacGiollarnáth, Maeve Williams, Cora Cunningham, Hannah Cullen, Ciaran Hand, Anna Howard, Stephen Deighan, Mark Kielty, Lita Clarke, Garry Dorgan, Mary Tucker, Aisling Reilly, Jennifer Sherry, Nichola Meehan, Sorcha Skelly, Lisa Quinn, Brid Tiernan, Niamh Thornton, Karen Byrne, Carmel Morgan, Sue Morel, Miriam Baxter, Brid McManus, Violet Kennedy, Erica Kearns, Rita Donnelly, Caitríona Holland, Regina Fitzgerald, Frances Barrett, Sarah Byrne, Roslyn Collins, Edel Ennis, Patricia Leggett, Laura Perry, Patricia Wall, Wayne Moss, Sean Ryan, Stewart Browne, Mark Masterson, Darina Boyle, Ciaran Murray, Síle Bannon, Neil Doherty, Susan Maxwell, Aisling Matthews, Petar Jankovic, Audrey Boyle, Aoife Duffy

Administrative Assistants

Shaun McGee, Christine Brennan, Eimear Reilly, Helen Keane, Christina Noctor, Yvonne McCormack, Stephen Sutton, Oisín Kerr, Doina Chiforescu, Eoin O'Sullivan, John Cannon, Mary Ledwith, Mark Lawlor, Tara Doyle, Jennifer Carleton, Kevin McGettigan, Sarah Graham, Justin Fleming, Josephine Halpin, Emer Keane, Bill Coleman, Shannen Daly, Leanne Hobbs, Ellen Moss, Lydia Mullen, Emma Haughan, Anna Rychlinska, Aine Loughran, Ellen McKittrick, Aoife Whelan, Lorraine Lee, Anthony Byrne, David O'Hara, Siobhan Gavin, Wendy Sullivan

The following were engaged during 2019

External Consultants

Abate Counselling, Claymon, Cundall, FRS - Dr. Raymond Connolly, Derek Daly, JGA Engineering - Martin Davidson, esri Ireland, Evros, Luke Fegan, Des Fortune, Denise Germaine, Stefan Hyde, GES (Geotechnical & Environmental System) – Jerome Keohane, Hydro-G – Dr Pamela Bartley, Institute of Public Administration, Des Johnson, Maurice Johnson, Dermot Kelly, Kilgallen, Marine Planning Matters, Mazars, MHOC Consult - Design Build Matters, Rory McShane, Michael Mohan, NALA, Eamon O'Boyle, Eoin O Cofaigh, Daniel O'Connor, O'Herlihy Access - Eoin O'Herlihy, Michael O'Rourke, Brendan O'Sullivan, OpenSky Data Systems, PwC, Retirement Planning, Clare Rowland, Savilles, Michael Slattery, Pádraic Thornton, Colm Traynor, Wonder Works, Willis.

Legal Agents

Philip Lee, Fieldfisher

An Bord Pleanála

64 Marlborough Street, Dublin 1, D01 V902

t: +353 1 858 8100

e: bord@pleanala.ie

w: www.pleanala.ie

design by: wonder works

