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USING THE KENNY REPORT TO END LAND HOARDING

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Citation:

O'Brien, Alexia, Martina Madden, Kevin Hargaden & Keith Adams. Using the Kenny Report to End Land Hoarding (Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice, 2025).

1. INTRODUCTION

The current housing and homelessness crisis has been decades in the making and will not be solved quickly. While there is no simple answer to this complex problem, it is without question that we need more housing. Specifically, we need more housing that people can afford to rent or buy. We are told that the costs of construction are rising—materials and labour cost more in 2025 than they did a few years ago—and this is why social and affordable housing are slow to market. Perhaps rising costs like these are unavoidable. But one cost that is rising and that could be drastically reduced if the State intervened is the cost of land for housing. The mechanism by which land zoned for residential development (which already has planning permission) is valued is perpetuating a situation where hoarding and speculation is often a safer financial bet than using that land to build homes. Taxation and contributory mechanisms are not enough to affect this in any significant way. It is an issue that requires a more radical solution.

*The Committee on the Price of Building Land Report*¹—informally known as the Kenny Report—was published in 1973 and contains a recommendation that was relevant then, over 50 years ago, but is even more so today. The report recommended the use of compulsory purchase orders (CPOs) in Designated Areas which would enable local authorities to buy land for housing at its agricultural value, plus 25%. The committee compiling the report estimated that this premium for the acquisition balanced the rights of the landowner to a fair price with that of the “common good.” Although the idea of using CPOs may seem to be too radical to be useful today, it is already regularly—and legally—called upon for the construction of critical infrastructure and services. Article 43 of the Irish Constitution, discussed further throughout, is often quoted as an impediment to any State intervention that interferes with the right of the individual to own private property, including land, but this right was always contingent on private ownership not impeding the public interest, or common good.

This paper explores how implementing the most significant aspect of the Kenny Report’s recommendations in today’s political and policy environment could significantly help to reduce land prices, limit speculation, and solve the problems limiting supply of housing that is affordable.

1. Committee on the Price of Building Land, "Committee on the Price of Building Land Report" (Dublin, 1973), <https://www.jcfj.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Report-to-the-Minister-for-Local-Government-Committee-on-the-Price-of-Building-Land.pdf>.

2. THE COMMITTEE FOR THE PRICE OF BUILDING LAND REPORT, 1973

Since the formation of the State, the economy—and housing’s place in it—has always been at the forefront of Irish politics. We can think of that period in the 1960s and 1970s when alleviating substandard housing conditions was a main target of policy.² The introduction of the *Housing Act 1966* was aimed at addressing the living conditions of residents who were living in tenements, including widespread overcrowding and the lack of in-home sanitation facilities (to name a few). However, improving conditions does not happen overnight, and with an overall weak economy and large economic inequality, progress was slow. In 1972, economist Patrick Lyons estimated that slightly over 5% of the adult population owned as much as 63 per cent of total personal wealth, while 62 per cent possessed no personal wealth at all.³ Despite housing being considered affordable for people who could get access to mortgages (at least in comparison to today), inequality in access was rife.

This led to the Minister for Local Government in 1971, Fianna Fáil TD Robert (Bobby) Molloy, to call for an inquiry report on the increasing cost of land zoned for development to determine how the State could increase housing output. A team of six men from the High Courts, Department of Local Government, Department of the Taoiseach, Office of the Revenue Commissioners, and the Valuation Office were placed on the Committee for the Price of Building Land, tasked with researching the increasing costs and making suggestions on how to bring cost levels back down. Their report, later known as the Kenny Report after Mr Justice John Kenny—a High Court judge appointed by the Fianna Fáil Government as chairman of the committee—was published in 1973.

2.1 THE KENNY REPORT OF 1973 AND ITS RECOMMENDATIONS

This report had several recommendations, but the key proposal involved the designating of land areas for housing development and allowing for local authorities to use CPOs to procure these resources to serve the common good.

The “designated area scheme” recommendation is a proposal that suggests the High Court be given the power to approve designated areas of land identified by local authorities which are likely to be used for development within the next 10 years. The recommendation is that local authorities could compulsorily acquire land in these areas for the existing (non-zoned) price plus a premium. The committee stated that “[p]ayment to landowners of existing use value at the date of acquisition plus 25% of it is in our opinion a reasonable compromise between the rights of the community and those of the

2. Of course, even before the founding of the State, housing initiatives were a major component of political life on the island. See, for example: Padraic Kenna, ‘100 Years of Irish Housing’. Working Notes 35, no. 89 (2021): 4–18.

3. Patrick M. Lyons, “The Distribution of Personal Wealth by County in Ireland, 1966”, *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland*, 22(5), 1972:189.

of the landowners,” meaning that the CPO payment to the landlord would be the price of the current agricultural value of the land plus an additional 25% of the overall value.

However, none of the recommendations in the Report were ever implemented. The first barrier to their implementation was that there were objections to the recommendations even within the Report. Included in the original document is a Minority Report, authored by Michael J. Murphy and J.T. O’Meara from the Department of Local Government, which opens with the assertion:

“We regret that we are unable to agree with the principal recommendation in the majority report, which is that local authorities should be empowered to acquire compulsorily land required for housing [...] and that the compensation paid for such lands should be based on existing use value.”

The authors conceded that they otherwise agreed with the findings and recommendations of the Majority Report. This lack of unanimity within the committee could be seen as a contributing factor to the hesitation to implement the findings.⁴ The second barrier was that there was a change of government after the February 1973 General Election, happening just days prior to the publishing of the report. Fianna Fáil left government and were replaced by a Fine Gael-Labour coalition. Notably, former Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald said in later years that, despite receiving the report while a T.D, he is unsure why it was never implemented.⁵ In the 2021-2025 housing plan, *Housing for All*, mention of the Kenny Report is made, stating how it should be taken into consideration when planning urban development objectives. However, the plan did not go much beyond recognising the existence of the Kenny Report, and it was not mentioned in the newest housing plan, *Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025-2030*, suggesting that there may be other political factors at play hindering its implementation.

4. The Minority Report is a tightly argued dissent which presents the recommendations in the Kenny Report as "a fundamental change in the State's attitude towards private property" which the authors conclude "at present" assumes the right of a land owner "to use it in the most profitable way possible." Committee on the Price of Building Land, 84. What the authors notably do not do is engage in any serious way with the place of the common good in the logic of the constitution. It may be the desire of many people to propose Irish law grants property owners freedom to seek the "most profitable" path, but Article 43 of the constitution is clear that the "exercise of rights" around private property must "be regulated by the principles of social justice", which means that "the State, accordingly, may as occasion requires, delimit by law the exercise of the said rights with a view to reconciling their exercise with the exigencies of the common good." Republic of Ireland. Bunreacht Na hÉireann, Article 43.1.1-2°.

5. Frank McDonald, 'If Only They'd Heeded Kenny Report', The Irish Times (Dublin), 8 April 2004, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/if-only-they-d-heeded-kenny-report-1.1307290>.

3. THE HOUSING CRISIS AND LAND

3.1 HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS IN IRELAND

As of October 2025, there are currently 16,766 people, including 5,274 children, officially homeless in Ireland.⁶ As shocking as these figures are, they do not reveal the true extent of the crisis. They are a tally of the number of people who are in emergency homeless accommodation at a given time, and do not include the hidden homeless, i.e. people who are rough sleeping and the many thousands of others in precarious or temporary living situations. The number of people in emergency shelters continues to increase each month, despite Ireland's commitment to end homelessness by 2030.⁷ People become homeless for many reasons. It is likely that the most common reason is simply being evicted from private rental accommodation or not being able to afford to rent at all. Once an individual (or a family) becomes homeless, it is difficult for them to escape from it; some families have been reported to have been stuck in emergency accommodation for over five years.⁸ Despite the dedication of staff in homelessness organisations who work hard to move people into permanent housing, there are simply not enough homes available.⁹

The causes of this issue began decades ago, when successive governments decided to turn away from building social housing and to instead rely on the market to provide homes for citizens. All the missed opportunities, mistakes, and misdeeds have been well documented elsewhere.¹⁰ But now we are in a situation where even though the current Government is beginning to build social housing again, the speed and scale of its construction is inadequate. Social housing targets had been missed every year of the last published housing plan, *Housing for All*, from 2021-2025. The plan outlined a target of 9,500 new build social housing homes a year, with a total of 90,000 by 2030. However, we did not see that yearly goal hit once (see Table 1 below), and that which had been built has largely been achieved through out-sourcing to approved housing bodies.¹¹

6. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, "Monthly Homelessness Report October 2025" (Dublin, 28 November 2025), https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/d585a64a/Homeless_Report_October_2025.pdf

7. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, "Housing for All: A New Housing Plan for Ireland" (Dublin, 2021), <https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/housing-for-all-a-new-housing-plan-for-ireland.pdf>

8. Laoise Neylon, "73% of Homeless Households in Emergency Accommodation in Dublin Have Been There for More Than Six Months", *Dublin Inquirer*, September 28 2022, <https://www.dublininquirer.com/73-of-homeless-households-in-emergency-accommodation-in-dublin-have-been-there-for-more-than-six-months/>

9. The Housing Commission, "Report of The Housing Commission", (Dublin, May 2024), <https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/housing-commission-report.pdf>

10. For example: Margret Burns, P.J Drudy, Rory Hearne & Peter McVerry SJ, "Working Notes 80: Rebuilding Ireland—A Flawed Philosophy", Oct 17 2017, <https://www.jcfj.ie/article/rebuilding-ireland-a-flawed-philosophy-analysis-of-the-action-plan-for-housing-and-homelessness/>

11. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, "Social Housing Activity by Local Authority 2024" (Dublin, June 2025), <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-housing-local-government-and-heritage/collections/overall-social-and-affordable-housing-provision/>

New-build Social Housing Delivery During Housing for All, 2021-2024

Year	Units
2024	7,871
2023	8,110
2022	7,433
2021	5,202

Table: Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice · Source: Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage · Created with Datawrapper

Table 1: New-build Social Housing During Housing for All, 2021-2024

The newest housing plan, *Delivering Homes, Building Communities 2025-2030*,¹² was released at the beginning of November of 2025, and therefore it is too soon to say whether or not the strategies included to deliver 72,000 more social housing homes in the next five years will prevail.¹³ However, when looking at the production over the last four years, the ambitious goal of 12,000 new homes per year seems unattainable with the current systems in place.¹³ This is why a new approach to delivering housing is needed, one that already works within the remit of the government and county councils.

3.2 RISING CONSTRUCTION COSTS AND RISING HOUSE PRICES

One issue that keeps coming up in discussions about the housing shortage and the homelessness crisis is the rising cost of construction, particularly increases in the cost of labour and materials since the Covid-19 pandemic and the second-stage of the invasion of Ukraine.¹⁴ Rising construction costs have had a predictable effect on a property market already inflated by the shortage of housing. The price of newly built residential properties is so unaffordable to most people that the Government implemented a Help-to-Buy scheme for first-time buyers,¹⁵ something which critics say has only further increased market prices.¹⁶

12. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, *Delivering Homes, Building Communities* (Dublin, 2025), 1–108.

13. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, *Delivering Homes, Building Communities*, 71.

14. Filippo Arigoni, Gerard Kennedy, and Neill Killeen, 'Rising Construction Costs and the Residential Real Estate Market in Ireland' (Central Bank of Ireland, 1 October 2022), <https://www.centralbank.ie/docs/default-source/publications/financial-stability-notes/rising-construction-costs-and-the-residential-real-estate-market-in-ireland.pdf>.

15. Revenue Commissioners, "Help to Buy (HTB) Scheme", (Dublin, 01 January 2025), <https://www.revenue.ie/en/property/help-to-buy-incentive/index.aspx>.

16. Charlie Weston, "Help-to-Buy and First Home Schemes 'Fuelling Rising Prices' of New Houses", *Irish Independent*, 26 February 2023, <https://www.independent.ie/business/personal-finance/help-to-buy-and-first-home-schemes-fuelling-rising-prices-of-new-houses/42344517.html>.

Rising construction costs not only affect the private property market but also the delivery of social and affordable housing. Dublin City Council has cited the increase in construction costs as a reason why it has not yet successfully delivered cost-rental housing in the capital.¹⁷ In June 2025, it was reported that the delivery of 3,000 social homes nationally had to be paused due to costs, with two-thirds of those meant to be built in Dublin.¹⁸

If costs are affecting the property market and the delivery of social housing, while in the middle of a housing and homelessness crisis, it is logical that we explore every possible option for bringing costs down. An increase in expenditure caused by supply and staffing issues may be unavoidable given the current situation across Europe. Nonetheless, with one of the most significant costs in construction being the price of land, there is an opportunity for the State to demonstrate its commitment to resolving this crisis through visionary action.

3.3 PUBLICLY OWNED LAND

One option to address the issue of land costs in building not-for-profit housing is to build it on public land. This is an obvious way to both reduce the total cost of construction and to utilise land that the State already owns, which may be lying idle. However, according to the *Land Development Agency Land Use Review*, just 8% of all land in Ireland is publicly owned.¹⁹ However, because of location, availability of services etc., not all of this land is suitable for residential development. While this approach makes sense, it alone may not be adequate to make a long-term difference to our ability to deliver affordable housing at scale.

3.4 LAND SPECULATION AND HOARDING

It is difficult to discern how much land is being hoarded for profit in Ireland today, but it is accepted that speculation is adding “an unwelcome premium” to the price of housing.²⁰ The last comprehensive survey of zoned land for housing by the Department of Housing was the Residential Land Availability Survey in 2014. It was estimated at that time that up to 27,300 hectares of land with the potential for 611,000 new homes was available.²¹ By considering the quantity of land revealed by this survey (which is over a decade old) and subtracting the housing output of large developers since then, a massive discrepancy is revealed between the potential space for new homes and the

17. Olivia Kelly, "Construction Costs a 'Significant Worry' for Delivery of Cost-Rental Homes in Dublin City", *The Irish Times*, 15 March 2023, <https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/housing-planning/2023/03/15/construction-costs-a-significant-worry-for-delivery-of-cost-rental-homes-in-dublin-city/>.

18. Samantha Libreri, "Minister would 'be before PAC' over cost of delayed social homes – Taoiseach", *RTE News*, 28 June 2025, <https://www.rte.ie/news/2025/0628/1520774-social-housing-dublin/>

19. Fiona O'Rourke et al., *Land Use Evidence Review Phase 1 Synthesis Review* (Government of Ireland, 2023), <https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/land-use-evidence-review-synthesis-report.pdf>.

20. Cantillon, "Land Hoarding Adding Unwelcome Premium to the Price of Housing", *The Irish Times*, 22 December 2022, <https://www.irishtimes.com/business/2022/12/22/land-hoarding-adding-unwelcome-premium-to-the-price-of-housing/>.

21. Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, "Residential Land Availability Survey" (, Dublin, February 2015), <https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/residential-land-availability-survey-2014.pdf>

number of homes built. Two of the largest developers in the State have outsized landbanks compared to their annual output of new homes. In 2024, Cairn Homes sold 2,953 new homes but maintained a landbank for 16,150 units by the end of the same year.²² This means that their landbank is over 5 times the number of units they produced. Similarly, Glenveagh Properties built and sold 2,415 homes with a landbank of 20,000 units going into 2025,²³ making their landbank over 8 times the number of units created.

A 2022 report on planning and housing by the Department of Public Expenditure identified land banking and land speculation as likely issues affecting housing development.²⁴ Their report highlighted that in Dublin alone, there were more than 42,000 apartment units which had received planning permission on which building had not commenced.²⁵ While this report is from 2022, these trends are still present today. Tables 2 and 3 below show the status of apartments and houses granted planning permission in each of the Dublin local authorities in Q4 of 2024.²⁶

Despite new planning regulations intended to improve the system and lead to better and faster residential development, we are still seeing massive amounts of unconstructed units that hold approved planning permission status. We do not know why the residential developments for which planning permission was granted have not been built, but it is reasonable to infer from the figures that land speculation may be one of the most significant factors in the developers' decisions to hold off on starting construction.

22. Cairn Homes PLC, "Built For Good: 2024 Preliminary Results Presentation", 26 Feb 2025,

<https://www.cairnhomes.com/media/4zqk0ok0/cairn-homes-2024-preliminary-results-presentation.pdf>

23. Glenveagh Properties, "Innovation & Collaboration: Annual Report and Accounts 2024", 10 April 2025,

<https://glenveagh.ie/download/2024-AR-interactive-pdf>

24. Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, "Analytical Note: Planning Permissions and Housing Supply" (Dublin, December 2022), <https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/planning-permissions-and-housing-supply-analytical-note-62a64a74-78e1-4f3a-b2c4-141227.pdf>

25. Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, "Analytical Note: Planning Permissions and Housing Supply" (Dublin, December 2022), p.2.

26. Data taken from Dept of Housing, Local Government & Heritage, Dublin Housing Supply Pipeline (formerly Housing Supply Coordination Task Force for Dublin), July 2025, <https://www.housingagency.ie/node/463>

Status of Apartments Granted Planning Permission by Dublin Local Authority in 2024Q4

Local Authority	With Permission	Under Construction	Built	Not Started
Dublin City Council	26,932	8,160	885	17,887
Fingal County Council	12,015	2,109	767	9,139
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council	14,741	2,435	2,103	10,202
South Dublin County Council	10,026	3,556	1,172	5,298

Table: Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice • Source: Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage • Created with Datawrapper

Table 2: Status of Apartments Granted Planning Permission by Dublin Local Authorities in 2024Q4

Status of Houses Granted Planning Permission by Dublin Local Authority in 2024Q4

Local Authority	With Permission	Under Construction	Built	Not Started
Dublin City Council	400	0	66	66
Fingal County Council	6,097	1,285	2,055	2,757
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council	1,907	484	856	567
South Dublin County Council	4,570	1,148	1,986	1,436

Table: Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice • Source: Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage • Created with Datawrapper

Table 3: Status of Houses Granted Planning Permission by Dublin Local Authority in Q42024

THE REAL COST OF LAND SPECULATION



Limited Supply and High Demand

Land hoarding involves keeping plots of land unused or undeveloped for extended periods, to inflate their value. In the current housing crisis, there is high demand for homes, and restricting the supply of available land for housing development has economic and social implications.

Increased Development Costs

Speculators who hoard land expect a high return on their investment when they finally decide to sell. This pushes up the cost for developers who purchase the land. These costs are passed on to the consumer and push up the price of homes built on that land.

Reduction in New Affordable Housing

As the price of land increases due to speculation, it becomes less financially viable for developers to build housing that is affordable. The emphasis shifts towards luxury or higher-end housing projects that can guarantee higher returns, further widening the gap between housing demand and the supply of affordable homes.

Increased Social Inequality

The lack of affordable housing due to land hoarding and speculation can lead to increased social inequality. As housing prices rise, lower and middle-income groups are unable to buy a home, leaving them at the mercy of an overpriced rental market. This disparity in living conditions is exacerbating social tension and causing a two-tier society which is profoundly unjust.

3.5 RESIDENTIAL ZONED LAND TAX VS RESIDUAL MODELLING LAND VALUATION

As part of its *Housing for All* strategy, and continued through *Delivering Homes, Building Communities*, the State introduced an annual 3% Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT)²⁷ which aims to increase housing by encouraging development on zoned land and simultaneously decreasing land hoarding and speculation. It is applied to land that has been zoned for residential development and is serviced but has not been developed in three or more years beyond its initial zoning approval. It is not necessary to be well-versed in the vagaries of land taxation to identify a fundamental problem with this approach. Taxing zoned land that is being hoarded to maximise profit is allowing developers to continue playing the game, and the State merely asking for a small share of the winnings. At the end of the day, it's a win-win for both the landowners and the State, as the owners can pay a small fee to keep their speculation and land hoarding going while the State can claim they are trying to make a change. The losers are the hundreds of thousands of citizens—including vast numbers of children—left homeless or at risk of homelessness by the priorities of the status quo.

To identify land to be taxed under the RZLT, local authorities publish a yearly revised map marking eligible landowners that fall under the bracket of this tax scheme. However, the tax is actually collected on a self-assessed and self-registered basis by the landowner, meaning that despite the government being able to identify who needs to pay the tax, there is no automatic tax applied.²⁸ Instead, what is hoped for is honesty from the landowners. While it is unlikely that landowners would be able to evade the tax in perpetuity, the trust that the State has in the tax being filed and paid for correctly goes to show the little effort that is actually being made on the issue. The tax was implemented by the Office of Revenue Commissioners in 2024, and in the one year since its implementation, the department has stated that approximately 1,800 RZLT returns had been filed, generating almost €40 million in liabilities.²⁹

So, what is leading to developers to (apparently) hoard land instead of developing it? The answer seems to lie in the way in which land is valued for residential development.

At present, this is achieved through a residual modelling system. This model is calculated using a guide provided by the Royal Irish Chartered Surveyors (RICS), which shows how the value of a site is calculated from the sale price of a property, minus the costs, i.e. the hard costs of construction (materials, labour), the soft costs of the project

27. The RZLT was introduced by the Department of Housing, but as it is a financial matter, it was implemented and regulated through the Department of Finance in the *Finance Act 2021*. No modifications have been made to it in its continuation to *Delivering Homes, Building Communities*. Department of Finance, *Finance Act 2021* (Government of Ireland, 2021), 1–236; Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, *Housing for All: A New Housing Plan for Ireland* (Government of Ireland, 2021), 1–160; Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, *Delivering Homes, Building Communities*, 34.

28. Landowners are able to apply for exemption and/or deferrals for the tax, usually due to the land commencing development after the maps are released or because of judicial reviews/appeals Revenue, *Guidance on Residential Zoned Land Tax* (Government of Ireland, 2025). As of September 2025, 583 landowners have applied for a deferral. Revenue, *Residential Zoned Land Tax Statistics* (Government of Ireland, 2025).

29. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, “Update on Residential Zoned Land Tax”, (Dublin, June 9 2025), <https://www.revenue.ie/en/corporate/press-office/press-releases/2025/pr-060925-rzlt.aspx>

(finance, professional fees etc.), VAT at 13.5%,³⁰ and the developer's profit margin. The value of the land is therefore the amount that is left over, or 'residual'. The recommendations after valuation takes place are to "develop, develop in phases, sell, or defer and wait."³¹

To break this down more simply, let us imagine the total cost of a development being built is €10 million. The costs of the development (after construction costs, marketing, etc.) are estimated to be €6 million. This means the residual land value is €4 million.

Formula:

$$\text{Residual Land Value} = \text{Revenue} - \text{Costs}$$

Where this gets interesting, and sheds light on the practice of speculation, is when we see what happens to land prices when property prices rise. Reynolds argues, "Using the RICS residual model, an increase of 10% on the sales price of a house translates to an increase in site value of 46%" and, in relation to apartments, as the land value is multiplied by the number of units in a scheme, an increase of 10% in sales prices can result in an increase in site value of 68%.³²

In a property market where prices are rising, it is not difficult to see why speculators are hoarding assets that are increasing by up to two-thirds of their value without having to take any action or incur any risk. Building a housing scheme or apartment block on the land comes with risks that things could change before the project is completed. For example, construction costs could rise, the property market might become unstable, there could be political and legislative changes which would affect sale prices. Even the RICS guide advises waiting under certain conditions. The 3% RZLT remains stable at just 3%, no matter how much the land value increases. This is such a small percentage when compared to the chance for speculators to make a 46% or even 68% return on investment, it is highly unlikely to act as a real deterrent to hoarding. The continued delays in seeing such land developed since the RZLT has been introduced further suggests that the current approach is insufficient.

It is worth noting that the RZLT replaces the Vacant Site Levy. That measure was so ineffective that Cian O'Callaghan, T.D. (former housing spokesperson and current Deputy Leader for the Social Democrats) accused land speculators of "treating this levy as if it is optional," a claim which is supported by the fact that just 2% of the total levy

30. Under the new Finance Bill 2025, VAT for apartment developments have been reduced from 13.5% to 9%. Department of Finance, Finance Bill 2025 (Government of Ireland, 2025), 1–144.

31. Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, "Valuation of development property", Oct 2019,

<https://www.rics.org/content/dam/ricsglobal/documents/to-be-sorted/valuation-of-development-property---first-edition.pdf>

32. Maoiliosa Reynolds, "Housing and the dynamics of Land", p.58-59, in *Housing in Ireland: Beyond the Markets* (edited by Lorcan Sirr), 2021, Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.

for 2022 had been collected by June 2023.³³ This was enabled, he argued, by a careless attitude to preventing land hoarding by the State and by local authorities who have little power to enforce the tax.

Why would the Residential Zoned Land Tax be any different?

3.6 HOW MUCH LAND HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED?

Land that meets the relevant criteria to be eligible for the RZLT have been identified by local authorities across the country and is annually reviewed. Supplemental maps have been published on their websites to allow landowners to review them and to raise any objections before final maps are published at the end of the year. Below are the statistics for the four Dublin local authorities and their RZLT findings.

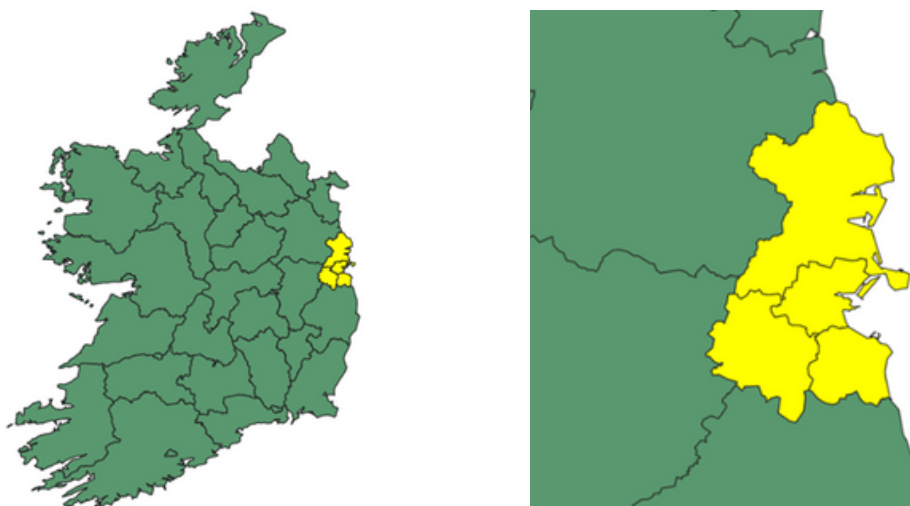


Image 1: Map of the Republic of Ireland, with the four Dublin Authorities highlighted
Image 2: A zoomed in version of Image 1, showing more clearly the four Dublin Authorities

Dublin City Council

Dublin City continues to have the largest population in the country with 588,233 people counted on the night of the most recent census in 2022.³⁴ Dublin City Council (DCC) has published the total area of land satisfying the taxation criteria on its eight supplemental maps as 4,511 hectares in 2026.³⁵

33. Wayne O'Connor, "Developers Owe Millions to County Councils in Unpaid Vacant Site Levies", Irish Independent, 23 July 2023, <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/developers-owe-millions-to-county-councils-in-unpaid-vacant-site-levies/a1677969933.html>.

34. Central Statistics Office (CSO), "Census 2022 Population Increase by Local Authority", (Dublin, January 2023), <https://www.lgma.ie/en/publications/local-authority-sector-reports/census-2022-population-increase-by-local-authority-review-of-preliminary-data.pdf>.

35. Dublin City Council, "Draft Residential Zoned Land Tax Map for 2026", (Dublin, 1 February 2025), <https://www.dublincity.ie/planning-and-land-use/active-land-management/residential-zoned-land-tax-rzlt/draft-residential-zoned-land-tax-map-2026>.

The planning guidelines laid out in DCC's *Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028* proposes housing densities in the range of 300 units per hectare.³⁶ Using their own guide for development, we can deduce that 1,353,300 housing units could be built in the city on land that is currently zoned for development but lying idle. Using zoned sites that are central could help to ease the housing shortage and also prevent suburban sprawl, which is contributing to longer commuting times and consequential higher emissions from traffic.

Fingal County Council

Fingal is an administrative region to the north of Dublin city, comprising an area of 448.1 km², which includes the towns of Balbriggan and Swords. Its proximity to the capital and to the airport makes it a major residential hub for people working in the city and abroad. Good transport networks and housing stock that is more affordable than the south-side have made it a popular place to live, making it one of the fastest growing populations in the country.³⁷

Fingal is the area with the second largest population of the Dublin local authorities, with 329,218 residents.³⁸ Fingal County Council published a draft map of land that is eligible in 2026 for the RZLT, which identifies a total of 3,687 hectares of eligible land. This is comprised of 3,511 hectares of land zoned for residential development and an additional 176 hectares of land zoned for mixed-use development.³⁹

When the *Fingal County Council Development Plan 2023-2029* was released, they had estimated that through the course of the Plan duration, there would be 1,250 hectares of developable land that would be able to accommodate 41,500 units.⁴⁰ We are only halfway through the lifetime of the Plan and already have more developable land zoned than was imagined. They do not include an exact number of how many residential units could be built in a hectare, like DCC does, as they believe this is better assessed on a case-by-case basis. However, if we divide 41,500 units by 1,250 hectares, we get 33.2 units per hectare. This means that using 33.2 units/hectare, 122,408 units could be built on available and eligible land. While the unit per hectare is substantially lower than DCC, this is to account for the fact that FCC is less densely populated overall than DCC.

36. Dublin City Council, "Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028", (Dublin, 14 December 2022),

<https://www.dublincity.ie/residential/planning/strategic-planning/dublin-city-development-plan/development-plan-2022-2028>

37. John Manning, "Fingal Identified as One of the Fastest Growing Regions in the Country in Early Census Results", Irish Independent, 29 June 2023, <https://www.independent.ie/regionals/dublin/fingal/fingal-identified-as-one-of-the-fastest-growing-regions-in-the-country-in-early-census-results/>.

38. Central Statistics Office (CSO), "Census 2022 Population Increase by Local Authority", (Dublin, January 2023), <https://www.lgma.ie/en/publications/local-authority-sector-reports/census-2022-population-increase-by-local-authority-review-of-preliminary-data.pdf>.

39. Fingal County Council, "Residential Zoned Land Tax", (2025), accessed 11 Aug 2025, <https://fingalcoco.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=5871c1ac8daa40e081292b978e1ee83a>.

40. Fingal County Council, Fingal Development Plan (2022).

South Dublin County Council

The administrative region of South Dublin County Council (SDCC) covers 222.74 km² and includes Tallaght, Lucan, Rathfarnham and Clondalkin. It has a population of 299,793, according to the 2022 census.⁴¹

While SDCC have published their maps of eligibility for the RZLT, it does not actually provide the numbers for how many hectares are available. They are transparent on the locations and provide 14 maps on land use as a whole, but do not have maps specific to residential use, unlike their counterparts in DCC and FCC. Additionally, the maps have no accompanying supporting figures, and therefore it is unknown exactly how many hectares are eligible. A final point to note is that SDCC sought tax exemption themselves, for their very own residential land that has been zoned and not developed for the year of 2026,⁴² showing it is not just private developers failing to deliver on their planning permissions.

Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council

The Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council (DLRCC) region comprises 126 km² south of Dublin city and includes the towns of Dundrum, Dún Laoghaire, and Cherrywood,⁴³ with a population of 233,457.⁴¹ The total amount of land identified on the DLRCC RZLT Supplemental Map for 2026 is 3304.97 hectares (see Table 4 below).⁴⁴

The *DLRCC Development Plan 2022-2028* states that its aim is to “[e]ncourage higher residential densities provided that proposals provide for high quality design and ensure a balance between the protection of existing residential amenities and the established character of the surrounding area, with the need to provide for high quality sustainable residential development.”⁴⁵ How this translates into housing density on available areas is open to interpretation, as, similar to FCC, it is more suburban. However, there is still strong potential for high production.

41. Central Statistics Office (CSO), "Census 2022 Population Increase by Local Authority", (Dublin, January 2023), <https://www.lgma.ie/en/publications/local-authority-sector-reports/census-2022-population-increase-by-local-authority-review-of-preliminary-data.pdf>.

42. Arthur Beesley, "South Dublin County Council seeks pass for itself for land taxable on its own map", The Irish Times, <https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/housing-planning/2025/04/03/south-dublin-county-council-seeks-pass-from-itself-for-land-deemed-taxable-on-its-own-map/>

43. Kenneth Pletcher, "Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown (Encyclopaedia Britannica)", accessed 13 June 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Dun-Laoghaire-Rathdown>.

44. Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, "Residential Zoned Land Tax", (Dublin, 2025), <https://www.dlrcoco.ie/active-land-management/RZLT>

45. Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, "County Development Plan 2022-2028", (2022), 82, <https://www.dlrcoco.ie/CDP2022-2028>.

Land Eligible for RZLT by Dublin Local Authority

County/City Council	Number of hectares
Dublin City Council	4511.00
Fingal County Council	3687.00
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council	3304.97
South Dublin County Council	Unknown

Table: Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice • Created with Datawrapper

Table 4: Land Eligible for RZLT by Dublin Local Authority

Urban Centres Outside Dublin

Dublin remains the most populous area of the country, with the highest concentration of jobs but the housing crisis and its impact is not limited to the capital. Outside of the Dublin metropolitan region, councils and local authorities in all of the administrative regions around the country have identified land eligible for the RZLT and published draft and supplemental maps which delineates this land. Obtaining the exact figures for the amount of land that has been identified in major urban centres like Cork, Galway, and Waterford, remains an issue due to a lack of response from the local authorities involved. While the maps—which have the areas of eligible land highlighted—can be viewed on their respective websites, some like Cork County Council, have the same data-wall as SDCC, where you can view the map but are unable to determine how much land it equates to. Viewing them makes it clear though that holding onto zoned land is a nationwide issue. There is land available for housing across the country that is not being used, for reasons that are likely to include financial speculation.

3.7 IRELAND IN 2025 AND WHY THE KENNY REPORT STILL MATTERS

The Ireland of 1973 seems distant not just temporally, but also culturally and socially. In the past half-century, Ireland has undergone significant economic and social transformations which would have been hard to imagine in those days. Since joining the European Economic Community as the poor man of Europe, we experienced a period of rapid economic growth, becoming one of the wealthiest nations in the European Union. But this rising tide did not lift all boats, and this growth has also resulted in increasing levels of inequality, especially in housing. Fifty years of progress has resulted in more than 16,000 people living in official homelessness, including over 5,000 children. In addition to these failings, today only a third of people under-40 own their own home because housing is unaffordable for most. These people are either

renting in the private sector for longer or are unable to leave the family home.⁴⁶ This is why the Kenny Report, with its recommendations for the purchase and use of land to benefit the common good, is still relevant today.

In July 2025, the Compulsory Purchase Order Bill 2025 was introduced to the Oireachtas following the report from the Law Reform Commission in 2023 to re-examine the CPO process in Ireland. The aim of this bill is to standardise CPOs, increasing transparency, timing, and improving cost effectiveness. While a positive step in the right direction towards understanding the need for CPOs and their use for increasing housing production, the one major drawback to the bill is how compensation is determined. As it currently stands, compensation will be made at the rate of current market value.⁴⁷ This will only feed into land speculation by landowners holding on to their land knowing that, even if they must sell to the local authorities, they will still make a profit by selling it higher than what they obtained it at.⁴⁸ This is where the Kenny Report can make an impact by minimising land hoarding and speculation through the compensation being capped at the agricultural land price with the addition of an extra 25% on top.

46. Central Statistics Office (CSO), "Characteristics of Residential Property Purchasers 2022-2024", (Dublin, September 2025), <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/FP/FP-CROPP/characteristicsofresidentialproperty purchasers2022-2024/ageofpurchasers/>

47. Dáil Éireann, "Compulsory Purchase Order Bill 2025" (2025), <https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/bill/2025/48/eng/initiated/b4825d.pdf>

48. There is an important economic principle at play that is outside the domain of this particular report but warrants mentioning, nonetheless. The present regime of taxation actively encourages Irish capitalists to invest their money in relatively passive opportunities. There is an argument to implement the Kenny Report not as a means to alleviate the dire consequences of homelessness, especially as it afflicts children, but from a purely economic rationale. The State should be incentivising capital-holding citizens to invest their assets in more intensive activity to foster indigenous innovation and to grow the economy more thoroughly than private property development can ever achieve.

4. EVIDENCE-BASED RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND: CROSS-EUROPEAN EXAMPLES OF EXECUTION AND RESULTS

The proposal to use compulsory acquisition powers to obtain land for public housing is not an idea that originated in Ireland. It has emerged in other countries many times, with varying degrees of success from which we can learn from. In the United Kingdom (UK), the *Lyons Housing Review* was a Labour Party-led proposal created in 2014 to deal with the shortage of housing in Britain, identifying the decline of social housing being built through the preceding decades and a lack of available land to purchase for residential development as significant factors in the State's housing crisis.⁴⁹

The report's recommendations included giving stronger compulsory purchase order powers to local authorities/councils to discourage land speculation.⁵⁰ It was envisaged that this would be a 'last resort' method, used only when landowners would not voluntarily cooperate by entering into a partnership with the developer wishing to build housing. Landowners who sold would be offered the land's current use value plus compensation. Historically, this was a successful model in the UK, with 1.8 million social housing homes built in the 11 years period, from 1948-1959, through the likes of compulsory purchase orders of land.⁵¹

This report contained similar recommendations to the Irish Kenny Report of decades earlier, bolstering the idea of the State using CPOs to claim land for the common good—i.e. housing for citizens. Unfortunately, the Lyons Review recommendations—like the Kenny Report recommendations—were shelved indefinitely and never taken up by the Conservative leadership in power at the time. Despite Labour regaining control of government in 2024 and setting housing as a top priority, it has failed to recommit itself to the Lyons Review.

The Netherlands has a long and impressive history of using active land management strategies to develop social and affordable housing, demonstrating a deep commitment to social justice. Since the early 20th century, the country has sought to address housing inequality through progressive policies and innovative planning methods. The Dutch *Housing Act 1901* was a transformative piece of legislation which stipulated that municipalities had a duty to ensure adequate housing for their residents. This Act spurred the creation of many housing cooperatives, with the majority of urban development in the 1920s and '30s being designated for working-class families—a

49. The Labour Party-United Kingdom, "The Lyons Housing Review" (London, 2014), https://www.policyforum.labour.org.uk/uploads/editor/files/The_Lyons_Housing_Review_2.pdf.

50. Mark Smulian, "Labour Offers Compulsory Purchase Power to Boost Housebuilding", *Local Government Chronicle*, 16 October 2014, <https://www.lgcplus.com/services/regeneration-and-planning/labour-offers-compulsory-purchase-power-to-boost-housebuilding-16-10-2014/>.

51. Michelle Norris, "Land Policy's Influence on the Resilience and Fragility of Social Housing Systems: comparing active and passive, targeted and generalist land management strategies in Austria, England and the Netherlands", Oct 17 2024, UCD Geary Institute for Public Policy Discussion Paper Series

decision reflective of the country's collective commitment to equitable housing distribution. Its local government municipalities have for decades bought private agricultural land using the equivalent of a CPO to be developed for housing.⁵² The most pressing lesson to learn from the Dutch system, however, is that the use of CPO is quite limited; instead of the government using the mechanism of CPO, land is often voluntarily given when approached with the purchase offer by the municipality because the landowner knows the power they have when it comes to CPOs.⁵² When there is consistent political will to address housing inequality, cultural norms replace legal threats and a more equitable arrangement can be regularly reached to satisfy all parties.

4.2 BALANCING PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS AND THE COMMON GOOD

Article 43 of the Irish Constitution,⁵³ is often used as the basis to argue that the right of a citizen to own private property is inviolable. Advocates for landlords or other vested interests will claim that this means that the State cannot legally interfere with the market or with wealth creation relating to housing or land. It is beyond the scope of this essay and the expertise of its authors to make a claim about the legitimacy of conflicting rights with reference to our Constitution. However, some of this has already been examined by others and their informed opinions on the matter are both relevant and convincing.

Prof. Pádraig Kenna, Director of the Centre for Housing Law, Rights and Policy at the University of Galway, has summarised Article 43 and its limitations as:

“Article 43 of Bunreacht na hÉireann (the Irish Constitution) provides that the exercise of property (and land) rights is to be regulated by the principles of social justice and the exigencies of the common good. However, applying these principles to development land has proven difficult, and despite many attempts, governments have failed to effectively control land prices.”⁵⁴

A section of the Kenny Report which discusses Article 43 also sums up the limitations of a citizen's rights in constitutional law, and in particular how this relates to the practice of profiteering from land ownership:

"Section 2 of the article recognises that the rights given by Section 1 ought to be regulated by the principles of social justice and that the State may delimit (teora do chur) the exercise of these rights so that their exercise will be regulated by the principles of social justice. It seems to us that it is contrary to the principles of social justice that the owners of land should make large profits from works carried out by local authorities when these are paid for partly by all the citizens and partly by ratepayers.

The Constitution does not give to each citizen the right to get the full market price for

52. E. van der Krabben, H. Ploegmakers, and D.A.A. Samsura, 'The Netherlands: The Public Development of Land', in *Land Management for Urban Dynamics: Innovative Methods and Practices in a Changing Europe* (Milan: Editori Maggioli, 2011), 269–82, <https://hdl.handle.net/2066/95448>.

53. Office of the Attorney General, "Constitution Of Ireland"(Dublin, 1937), 46, <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/cons/en/html#article43>.

54. Pádraig Kenna, "Ireland", in *Ways out of the European Housing Crisis* (Edited by Christoph U. Schmid), 1st ed. (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2022), 176.

any of his property which he decides to sell. If it did, then all price controls would be repugnant to the Constitution and we are convinced that this is not the law."⁵⁵

In a recent article on the common good clause in Article 43, James McGovern reviews judgements and finds much support for the kind of “communitarian” approaches advocated for in the Kenny Report.⁵⁶ The Supreme Court has already upheld the Part V arrangements that require developers to cede up to 20% of land at existing-use (i.e., below market) value as a condition for planning permission.⁵⁷ Case law has sustained that it is not an “unjust attack” on private property if the State—backed by legislation—compulsorily purchases land to serve the common good.⁵⁸

These examples and others like them make it clear that the common good is not being served when an individual or corporation is using land to make a profit and that there is no defence of the practice of land hoarding with recourse to the Constitution. Yet in the popular imagination and in the rhetoric of those who are keen to preserve the status quo, the fundamental law is often mentioned as a barrier to interference in the free market operation of house and land purchases.

Barrister Hilary Hogan draws important attention to how during the COVID-19 pandemic, the State stepped in and restricted private property rights in favour of the tenant due to understanding how the health crisis could negatively impact tenants. She states:

“This demonstrated that the Oireachtas could take drastic action to restrict private property rights in the public interest, even though there had been no change to the existing constitutional framework: there had been no new judgments on constitutional private property rights, and of course, there had been no constitutional referendum on housing. This demonstrated that the constitutional constraints on the Oireachtas were not as rigid as they might previously have been presented.”⁵⁹

There has been precedence set by the State to step in and act when there is a crisis that is affecting the many and not just the few. How is housing, something even the State will acknowledge is one of our largest issues to date, any different, and why is it not designated with the same kind of urgency?

55. ‘Kenny Report’, p.46. Emphasis added.

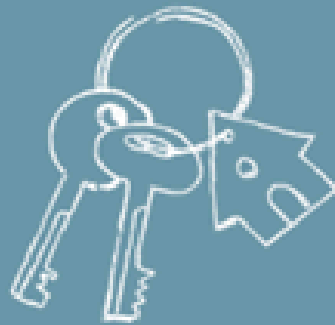
56. McGovern, James. ‘Irish Constitutional Property Rights and Normative Theories of Property’. *Irish Judicial Studies Journal* 7, no. 3 (2023): 25–46.

57. McGovern, p. 43.

58. McGovern, p. 40.

59. Hillary Hogan, “Right to Housing Amid a Housing Crisis”, *The Bar of Ireland: Law Library*, 28 May 2025, <https://www.lawlibrary.ie/viewpoints/right-to-housing-2/>

THE IRISH CONSTITUTION AND PRIVATE PROPERTY



ARTICLE 43

1 1° The State acknowledges that man, in virtue of his rational being, has the natural right, antecedent to positive law, to the private ownership of external goods.

2° The State accordingly guarantees to pass no law attempting to abolish the right of private ownership or the general right to transfer, bequeath, and inherit property.

2 1° The State recognises, however, that the exercise of the rights mentioned in the foregoing provisions of this Article ought, in civil society, to be regulated by the principles of social justice.

2° The State, accordingly, may as occasion requires delimit by law the exercise of the said rights with a view to reconciling their exercise with the exigencies of the common good.

4.3 COMPULSORY PURCHASE OF LAND WHICH IS DESIGNATED ELIGIBLE FOR THE RZLT

We propose that the State, via local authorities, compulsorily purchase land identified as being eligible for the RZLT using the approach laid out in the Kenny Report, and use it to build social and affordable housing. Taking the 4,511 hectares of land identified by Dublin City Council as an example, and per their calculations, there is a potential capacity of 1,353,300 units of housing which could be built at a lower cost (due to the reduced land acquisition costs). This would have an impact on its affordability as well as increasing the amount of housing that could be built for a certain budget. Adding the land that is available in the other three Greater Dublin local authorities, as well as land zoned for residential use in the urban centres around the country, would intensify this effect.

Using the compulsory purchase mechanism to purchase land eligible for the RZLT at a fair price ('fair' falling in line with the Kenny Report—agricultural land value plus 25%) would shake the faith of investors in land speculation. As hoarding is based on what Mel Reynolds calls the “so-called ‘hope value’” of land,⁶⁰ i.e., the price that it is predicted to get in the future, a significant threat to that hope—the fear that it could be acquired by local authorities for a price not based on market rates—could undermine the whole enterprise, offering a rationalising effect on the wider societal challenges on housing.

It is clear from the Kenny Report that the Committee believed the sale of land for public housing should primarily benefit the community rather than enrich the owner, and that the good of the community is not unequivocally allowing landowners to have full market price of the land when demand is high. This is supported by Kenna’s interpretations of Article 43 in the Constitution that no owner is owed the full market price.⁶¹

Using a compulsory purchase order is not unheard of in Ireland, and there is extensive precedent. The State has supported CPOs in relation to acquiring vacant properties in *Housing for All* and now in *Delivering Homes, Building Communities*, actively launching a programme specifically for such properties. In fact, its use has been emphasised in *Delivering Homes, Building Communities*. From its launch in April of 2023 until the end of 2024, 11,186 derelict and vacant properties were acquired through CPO.⁶² The State explicitly says that CPOs should be used for gaining more land for the intended purpose

60. Reynolds, "Housing and the Dynamics of Land", p.55.

61. There is extensive discussion in the academic literature, stretching back generations, which seeks to clarify the ways in which private property rights are directed towards the common good and social justice in BnähÉ. Examples include Donal Barrington’s “The Citizen’s Home and Property”, Rachel Walsh’s “Private Property Rights in the Drafting of the Irish Constitution: A Communitarian Compromise”, and even Daniel Mooney’s article on rent control entitled “Balancing Private Property and The Common Good: Is The Irish Constitution a Barrier to Rent Control?” There is also extensive case law which supports limits to the rights of the private property owner. All this is to say, while the constitution demands care and attention to the rights of those who own land, there is no constitutional opposition a priori to the kind of scheme envisioned in this paper.

62. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, “CPO Activation Programme Local authority compulsory purchase/acquisition of vacant and derelict property 2023 and 2024” (21 October 2025).

of social housing, and even if the land is not suitable for social housing, it may be used for affordable housing. Funding has been allocated through the Social Housing Investment Programme for vacant and derelict properties that have been obtained through CPOs for the purpose of creating social housing. This funding could be expanded and opened to qualifying RZLT-land obtained through CPOs.⁶³ Financing can also be sourced through the Housing Finance Agency, meaning local authorities will not have to worry about financial constraint.⁶³ The government recognises the impact that CPOs can make in relation to social and affordable housing production, so it is not out of the realm of possibility for them to expand beyond vacant properties and into land zoned for residential use that fails to uphold their zoning approval.

4.4 RETHINKING OUR BUILT (AND NATURAL) ENVIRONMENT

In the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice, we have previously analysed and critiqued the market-led approach of the State in relation to housing and to its citizens' flourishing. We have used the framework of integral ecology to propose that our housing system should be just one part of a jigsaw which, when completed, delivers harmonious low-carbon neighbourhoods where healthy inhabitants dwell in peaceful and biodiversity-rich spaces. In our *Manifesto for a Green New Deal*, there is a clear blueprint for how land that is obtained (or already owned) by the State could be maximised for the common good, i.e. optimal for both residents and for the environment. It states that when building public housing:

“These developments should be designed with the expressed purpose of adapting to life stages and generating communities where there is a real demographic mix. They should be populated by space orientated towards flourishing biodiversity and designed to a specification that minimises the carbon footprint of the family home.”⁶⁴

Another benefit of the State taking control of land zoned for housing is that it would be a step towards reversing the current situation where the State is in thrall to the market. In *Tenant State of Mind*, the Centre recommended significant expansion of cost-rental housing to break the market-based deadlock:

“The task of undermining neoliberalism involves stepping back from its cost benefit analyses and metrics of value, to instead find new, broader visions outside of its imaginative frame. The first step of “publicly owned housing” is a good starting point as the concept of common ownership is contrary to privatisation and profit.”⁶⁵

Overall, there needs to be a mindset shift amongst the government that stoking the fire of neoliberalism's fossil capitalism is doing more harm than good to our country and the people within it.⁶⁶

63. Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, *Delivering Homes, Building Communities*, 53.

64. Kevin Hargaden et al., "Manifesto for a Green New Deal" (Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice, 5 November 2020), p.12–13.

65. Keith Adams, "Tenant State of Mind" (Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice, 2022), p.18.

66. We recognize that there is nothing that will stop the local authorities from taking ownership of the land through CPOs only to sell it back to the private market. The constraints of the local authority's ability to produce housing has long been a consistent move by the State, meaning that authorities have had to optimize their resources and outsource where they can. These recommendations operate under the assumption that the State will empower their local authorities to develop housing and meet their own goals set through *Delivering Homes, Building Communities*.

5. CONCLUSION—RADICAL ACTION NEEDED

If the Irish State used its powers to execute compulsory purchase orders on land which is eligible for the RZLT and used that land to develop social and affordable housing, far more people would benefit than would be discomforted. Taking this action aligns with Article 43 of the Irish Constitution, which acknowledges the right to private property but emphasises that this right ought to be regulated by principles of social justice and serving the common good.

By taking action that is above and beyond the basics of just building houses to address the escalating housing crisis, the State would be acting in the interest of the common good by ensuring that all its citizens have access to a fundamental human need: shelter. Access to adequate, affordable housing promotes social cohesion by reducing wealth disparities and disenfranchisement among the population. It would help to alleviate the suffering and associated societal issues that homelessness and housing insecurity causes, including health issues and lack of access to education. It would help us to lower our carbon emissions, encourage real economic growth, and fulfil the founding promise of our nation—to cherish all children equally.



The Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice
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Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice
54-72 Gardiner Street Upper, Dublin 1

Phone: 083 806 8026

Email: info@jcfj.ie