

## Sunday Independent

# Architects say failure to plan now will lead to repeat of past mistakes

**Ronald Quinlan**

THE President of The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland (RIAI), Carole Pollard, has called for the creation of a National Infrastructure Delivery Agency to ensure that future investment is delivered in key areas of transport, education, healthcare and housing.

Addressing the RIAI's annual conference last Friday, Pollard said that with Ireland's population of over 65s expected to experience a near 200 percent increase within the next 30 years, the scale of de-

mographic changes were "so obvious to see" that it should serve as a "stark reminder" that a failure to plan now would see ill-informed and poor decisions of the past being replicated.

"We face a choice of being in control of our own destiny or at the mercy of boom and bust cycles that have been so damaging to creating sustained progress in this country," she said. "There is an imperative to act, and to act now. We have experience of lessons from misadventures in planning and we have the data to inform our future needs. We

owe it to ourselves and future generations to do so."

The RIAI's call for the creation of a National Infrastructure Delivery Agency comes on foot of recommendations made in the RIAI's report: "A national infrastructure strategy for Ireland" which was launched at the Institute's conference.

The report says such an agency would allow for the monitoring of data to inform changes to population density, economic growth and the stock of existing infrastructure, in a process which would facilitate an optimal level of,

and efficient delivery of investment in the appropriate areas. The report notes that a range of datasets are already available to model movements in the key demographic areas of education, housing and healthcare. In the area of education, it notes that by 2025 second level enrolments are expected to surpass 400,000 pupils for the first time in the history of the State. This, the RIAI says will trigger a greater need for third-level facilities from 2030 and resultant accommodation needs as this population cohort enters the house formation stage.

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A key part of Ireland's infrastructure, Dublin airport's Terminal 2 was seen as by some as a 'white elephant' when it opened