



CHAPTER 10

CULTURE &
HERITAGE





10 CULTURE AND HERITAGE

10.1 Introduction

The term 'heritage' refers to everything that we have inherited from previous generations. This inheritance can be either tangible or intangible, and it is reflected in both the natural and built environment.

Much of Dundalk's character derives from its geographical setting. Dundalk is a liminal place, where the land borders the sea. The town sits on a wide, flat, open plain but also benefits immensely from its backdrop of the picturesque Cooley and Ring of Gullion mountain ranges.

The Anglo-Norman port town of Dundalk was initially established, in the late 12th Century, on high ground to the west, at the ancient Irish 'fort' of Dún Dealgan, which (much later) became Castletown Motte. This location provided clear views of the surrounding lands, including the ford at Toberona, and was easily defended. It was however difficult to access by ship.

In the mid-13th Century, the town shifted eastward (downstream), near the harbour of Athlon, closer to the Irish settlement of Baile an Tráigh (now 'Seatown'). St. Nicholas' Church formed the heart of the 'Newtown', which was fortified and developed southwards, extending in a linear manner along a ridge of glacial sediments that stood above the surrounding marshy land. The Medieval town was full of castles and towerhouses and surrounded by a high town wall and moat. Dundalk's medieval character is evident today in its curved layout and underground remnants of the town wall. Key features include the reconstructed St. Nicholas' Church and the streetscape of Seatown, located to the east of the medieval core. This area contains notable landmarks such as the remains of St. Leonard's Hospital and the bell tower of the Franciscan Friary.

In the early 18th Century, Lord Limerick initiated the large-scale redevelopment of Dundalk. South Marsh was drained (800 acres) and the rubble from the demolition of the Medieval town was used to build a coastal defence embankment to the east.

Lord Limerick built a town house (across from St. Nicholas' Church) and established a demesne to the west of the town. A new market square was laid out, which shifted the town's commercial heart south.

A new harbour and a linen factory (now Aiken Barracks) were also constructed. Within the medieval core, numerous manufacturing and industrial buildings were erected, while residential expansion occurred primarily to the east and southwest, dominated by Georgian and later, Victorian red-brick architecture.

In the mid-20th Century housing was built on the landscaped demesne. The remnants of the original demesne landscape remain, including Ice House Hill Park, the Long Walk Avenue and the green area near the Demesne Shopping Centre.

The concentration of archaeological sites in the vicinity of Castletown Motte and Clanbrassil Street reflects the town's early origins.

The town has a rich array of built heritage assets including Zones of Archaeological Potential, Architectural Conservation Areas and a wide range of protected structures, many of which reflect the town's role in the industrial revolution.

This Plan recognises the unique character and importance of Dundalk's natural environment and built heritage.



It is acknowledged that these contribute significantly to Dundalk's attractiveness as a place in which to live, work and visit, by providing a strong sense of character and identity. Dundalk's natural and built heritage assets create a sense of place and local distinctiveness.

This Plan seeks to protect and strengthen Dundalk's heritage assets thereby ensuring that they continue to contribute positively to the overall quality of life, biodiversity, recreation and tourism.

This chapter is divided into three sections:

- Natural Heritage.
- Green Infrastructure; and
- Built Heritage.

The **Natural Heritage** section presents details in relation to European Sites, proposed Natural Heritage Areas; Landscape Character Assessment, Sites of Geological Interest;

Wetland Surveys; Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows, as well as Views and Prospects.

The **Green Infrastructure** section provides a Green Infrastructure Strategy for Dundalk, it identifies features of interest and their potential for Green Infrastructure Enhancement.

The **Built Heritage** section offers details in relation to the Zones of Archaeological Potential, Protected Structures, Architectural Conservation Areas, Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes, and Vernacular Heritage.

Additional details regarding the various sections and specific objectives in relation to Invasive Species and Protected Plant and Animal Species are available in the County Development Plan.

10.2 Sites of Natural Heritage Importance



10.2.1 European Sites

Two European sites; a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and a Special Protection Areas (SPA); which form part of the Natura 2000 Network, have been designated to conserve habitats and species of European

importance pursuant to the EU Habitats and Birds Directives in the Plan area. Details of these are set out in Tables 10.1 and 10.2 and illustrated on Maps 10.1 and 10.2.



10.2.2 Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Table 10.1: Special Area of Conservation in Dundalk

Site Code	Name	Synopsis
000455	Dundalk Bay SAC (Map 10.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site is selected for the following habitats/species listed in Annex I/II of the EU Habitats Directive: Estuaries, Tidal Mudflats and Sandflats, Perennial Vegetation of Stony Banks, Salicornia Mud as well as Atlantic and Mediterranean Salt Meadows. Saltmarshes occur in four areas and two types are presented. Shingle beaches are well represented and support a range of species. There are over 4000ha of sandflats and mudflats. The site is internationally important for waterfowl because it regularly holds over 20,000 birds.

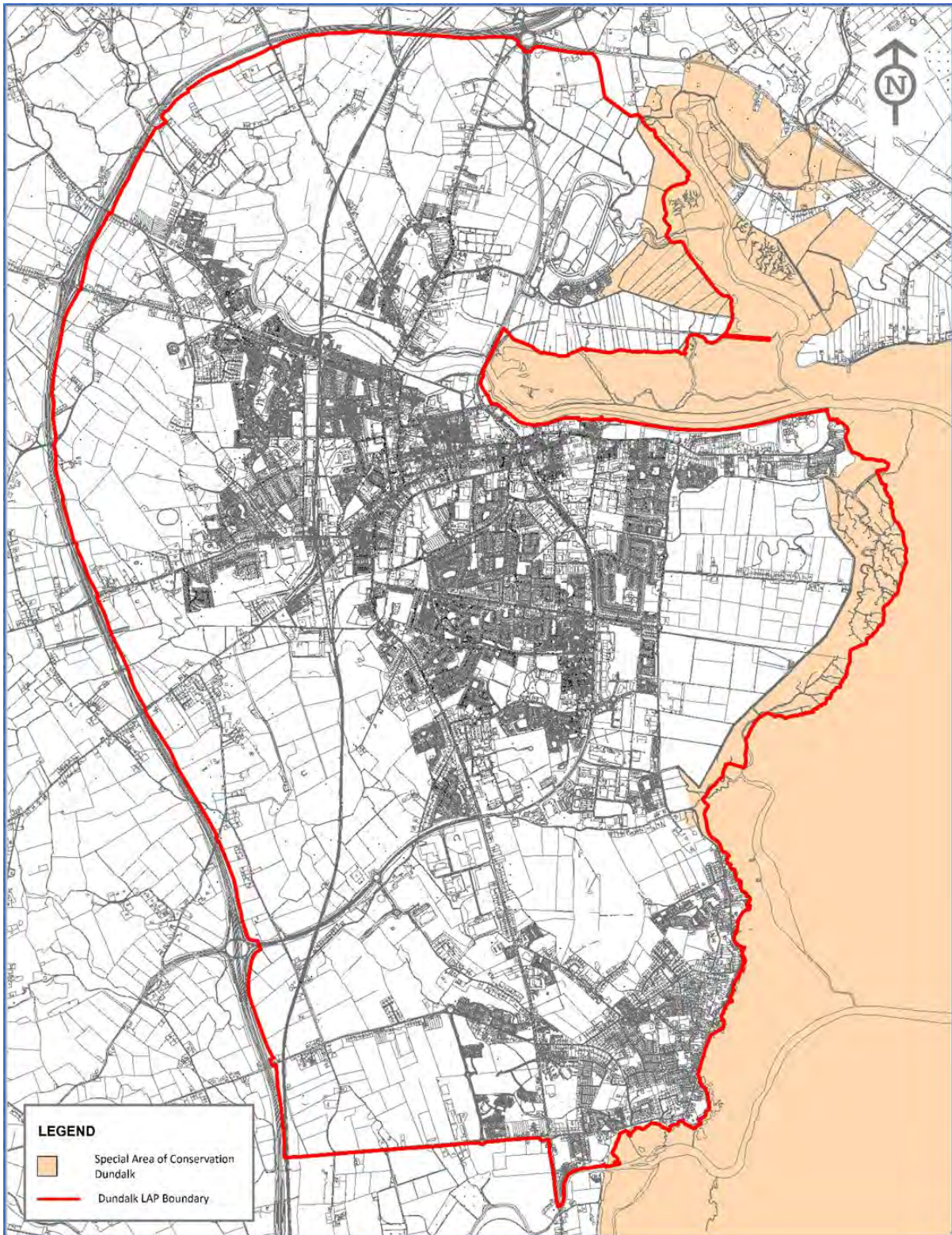
10.2.3 Special Protection Area

Table 10.2: Special Protection Area in Dundalk

Site Code	Site Name	Synopsis
004026	Dundalk Bay SPA (Map 10.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site is a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the E.U. Birds Directive, of special conservation interest for the following species: Great Crested Grebe, Greylag Goose, Light-bellied Brent Goose, Shelduck, Teal, Mallard, Pintail, Common Scoter, Red-breasted Merganser, Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Golden Plover, Grey Plover, Lapwing, Knot, Dunlin, Black-tailed Godwit, Bar-tailed Godwit, Curlew, Redshank, Black-headed Gull, Common Gull and Herring Gull. The site is of international importance because it regularly supports an assemblage of over 20,000 wintering waterbirds. It also qualifies as a site of international importance for supporting populations of Light-bellied Brent Goose (370), Knot (9,710), Black-tailed Godwit (1,100) and Bar-tailed Godwit (1,950) – all figures, unless stated otherwise, are five-year mean peaks for the period 1995/96 to 1999/2000. A variety of other species occur in numbers of national importance



Map 10.1: Dundalk SAC:



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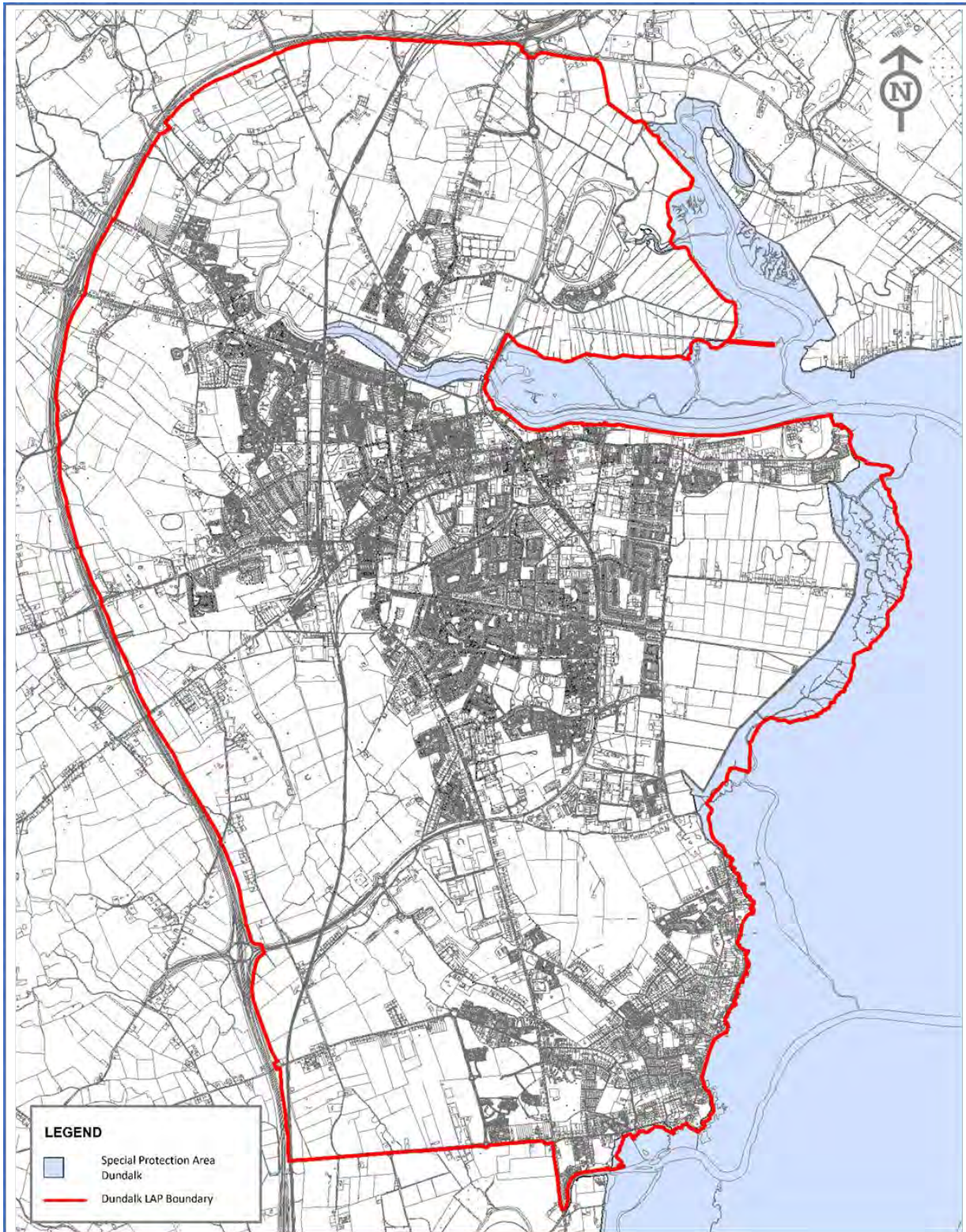
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Drawing Name / Ref.
Special Area of Conservation



Map 10.2: Dundalk SPA



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	<p>Scale: Not to Scale</p>		



10.2.3.1 Policy Objectives

CH 1

To protect and conserve the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA) designated under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives.

CH 2

To ensure that all proposed developments comply with the requirements set out in the DECLG 'Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities 2010'.

CH 3

To ensure that no plan, programme, or project giving rise to likely significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on European sites arising from their size or scale, land take, proximity, resource requirements, emissions (disposal to land, water or air), transportation requirements, duration of construction, operation, decommissioning or from any other effects shall be permitted on the basis of this Local Area Plan, either individually or in combination with other plans, programmes or projects¹.

CH 4

All masterplans, and the objectives therein, being implemented by the Council for the Plan area shall have regard to the requirements under Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive.

CH 5

To co-operate with the Regional Planning Assembly and adjoining local authorities, public agencies and community interests to protect regionally significant heritage assets, environmental quality, and to identify threats to existing environmental quality in a transboundary context throughout the region including Northern Ireland.

10.3 Natural Heritage Area

The term 'Natural Heritage' covers wildlife (plants, animals and their habitats), in addition to geological and geomorphological sites. Wildlife sites of national importance including marine, ecological and geological sites are designated as Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000.

Sites identified but not yet designated as NHAs are known as 'proposed Natural Heritage Areas' (pNHAs) and these are protected from development only by inclusion in a Development Plan. The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) has proposed one Natural Heritage Area in Dundalk: the Dundalk Bay proposed Natural Heritage Area.

10.3.1 Policy Objective

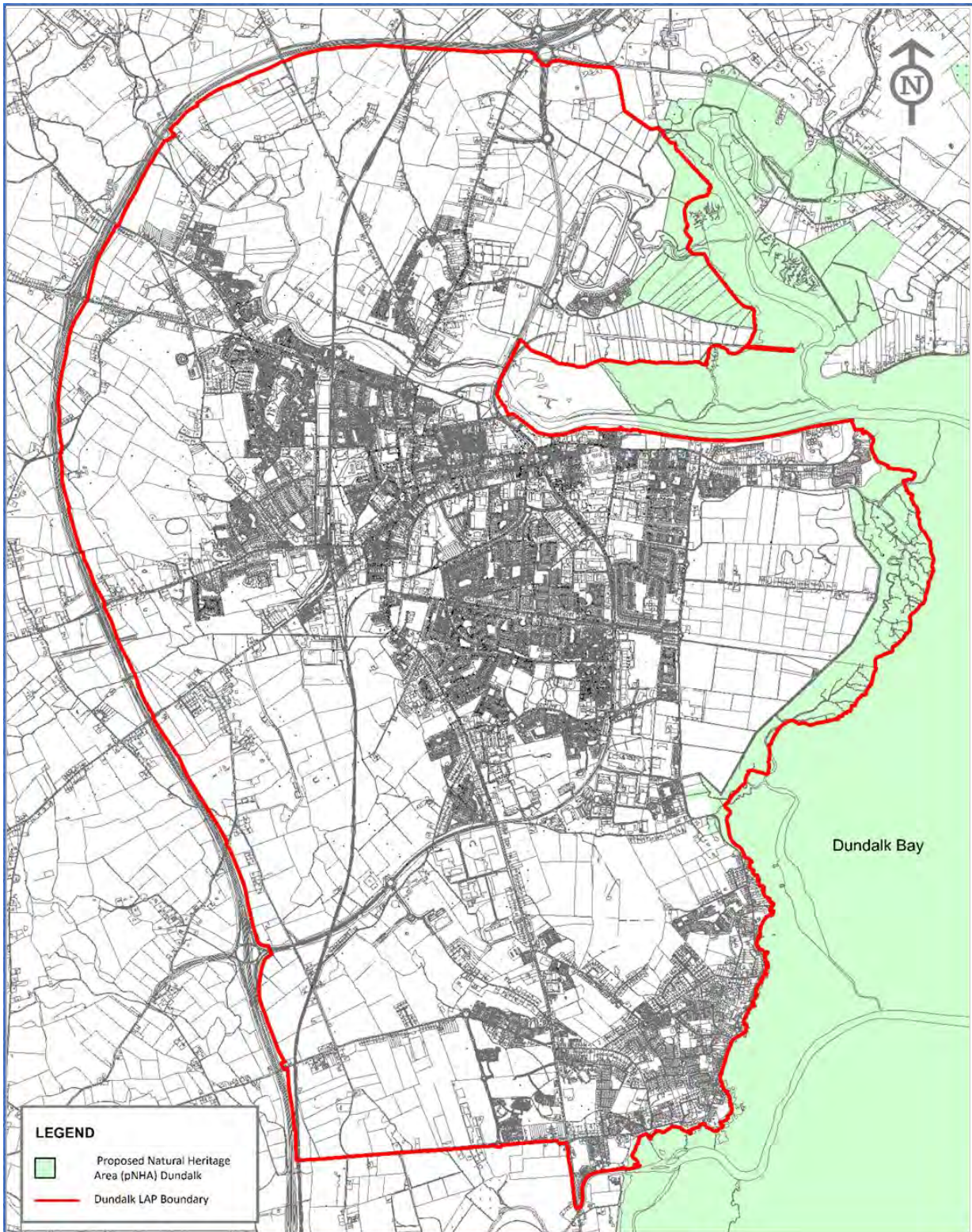
CH 6

To ensure that any development within or adjacent to a pNHA is designed and sited to minimise its impact on the ecological value of the site and to resist development that would result in a significant deterioration of habitats or a disturbance of species.

¹ Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, where there must be no alternatives, imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the project to proceed and adequate compensatory measures are in place.



Map 10.3: Dundalk pNHA



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**Proposed Natural
Heritage Area
(pNHA)**



10.4 Landscape

Landscapes provide vital locations to connect with the natural world and built environment. They also offer important opportunities for learning about our natural and cultural heritage, as well as providing essential insights into our ancestors and the places they lived. Moreover, landscapes have an important role in placemaking and the promotion of active and healthy lifestyles.

Dundalk's landscape character is formed by the built environment, and its coastal and riverside location. The town is mainly located at sea level and is surrounded by an arc of hills including Faughart to the North, and Castletown Mount and Ballybarrack to the west. Dundalk falls within three landscape character areas:

- Dundalk Bay Coast;
- Lower Faughart, Castletown and Flurry River Basins; and
- Muirhevna Plain.

The Dundalk Bay Coast landscape character area is of Regional Importance whilst the remaining landscape character areas are of Local Importance.

The Landscape Character Assessments highlight the importance and vulnerability of Dundalk's landscape and in particular the lands that remain undeveloped.

10.4.1 Policy Objective

CH 7

To ensure the preservation of the uniqueness of Dundalk's sensitive landscape setting by ensuring that new development meets high standards of siting and design and does not unduly damage or detract from the character of a landscape or natural environment.

10.5 Sites of Geological Interest

An audit of Geological Sites in Louth was undertaken in 2013 and a number of 'County Geological Sites' were identified. One site of 'Geological Interest' was identified in Dundalk – Dundalk Bay. This designation seeks to provide a level of protection to the site so that it is not inadvertently damaged.

Table 10.3: Sites of Geological Interest

Dundalk Bay		
Site Description and Geological Interest	Management	Location
<p>Wide coastal embankment, flanked on either side by bedrock headlands and incorporating wide expanses of coastal flats.</p>	<p>The location of the features of interest makes them easily accessible, and Dundalk Bay is a popular recreational area given the number of fine beaches around its perimeter. Information boards at the Port and Blackrock are worthy additions to the site, and explain the features associated habitats, flora and fauna. The geological formation of the feature could be highlighted in future on literature produced.</p>	



10.5.1 Policy Objectives

CH 8

In consultation with the Geological Survey of Ireland – protect from inappropriate development and maintain the character, integrity and conservation value of those features or areas of geological interest.

CH 9

To promote awareness, where appropriate, of sites of geological interest including the provision of access and interpretation where desirable and feasible.

10.6 Wetlands

A Wetland Survey was carried out in Louth over a three-year period between 2011-2014, this identified wetland sites throughout the County and in Dundalk, Dundalk Bay SPA and SAC are international important wetlands however there are also a number of terrestrial wetland sites in Dundalk, details of which are set out in Table 10.4. The number of wetlands in the town is reflective of its low-lying coastal location. The wetlands of the highest conservation value, 'A - Internationally Important', are associated with Dundalk Bay SPA and SAC.

10.6.1 Policy Objective

CH 10

To ensure that any development proposals protect and enhance the wetland sites in Dundalk.

Table 10.4: Wetland Sites

Site Code	Name	Description	Importance
WHI_LH195	Ballynahattin and Redcow	This site contains no significant wetland habitat; a deep hollow was excavated to build the railway embankment, and this floods seasonally. Spring within site damaged by cattle	D Rating: Local conservation value (moderate value)
WHI_LH245	Balrigan	Small depression in the landscape with degraded reed swamp vegetation surrounded by improved agricultural grassland. Cattle have access to this area.	E Rating: Local conservation value (low value)
WHI_LH227	Redcow	Small area of dense mixed plantation with willow, ash, and pine. Drainage ditch along roadside with common reed. No wetland interest.	E Rating: Local conservation value (low value)
WHI_LH244	Ballynahattin	No significant wetland habitat remains on this site which has been mostly infilled under a waste permit licence.	E Rating: Local conservation value (low value)



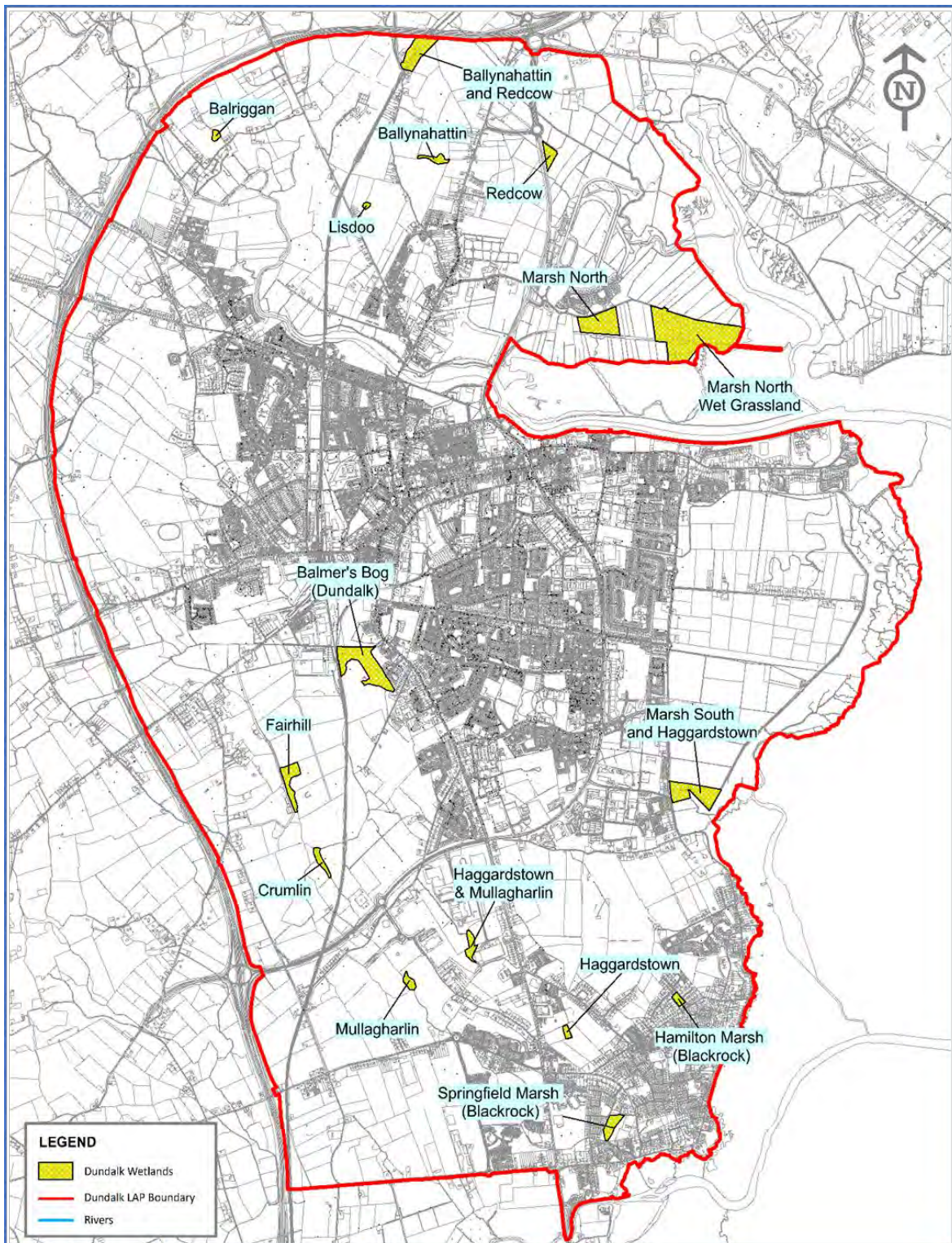
Site Code	Name	Description	Importance
WHI_LH298	Lisdoon	Small depression in the landscape with degraded reed swamp vegetation surrounded by improved agricultural grassland. Cattle have access to this area.	E Rating: Local conservation value (low value)
WMI_LH302	Marsh North	Site consists of a series of Juncus wet grassland areas.	E Rating: Local conservation value (low value)
WMI_LH220	Marsh North Wet Grassland	Wet grassland which has been improved through drainage, fertilisation and reseeded. Bounded by deep drainage ditches and hedgerows.	E Rating: Local conservation value (low value)
WHI_LH177	Balmer's Bog	Dense stand of Phragmites reed swamp which is rather species poor. Main interest ornithological. Location in town does provide a valuable biodiversity area in otherwise built-up urban environment	D Rating: Local conservation value (moderate value)
WMI_LH281	Fairhill	Small isolated site with Phragmites dominated reed swamp, with Typha latifolia. Scrub and a small ash dominated woodland also occurs within the site.	C Rating: Local conservation value (high value)
WHI_LH202	Crumlin	Depression between low hills, with narrow reed bed and wet willow woodland. Southern end grazed by cattle. Marginal areas grazed by cattle. Drain runs through centre.	E Rating: Local conservation value (low value)
WMI_LH307	Mullagharlin	Eutrophic lake with band of Phragmites reed swamp. Lake is surrounded by arable crops with abrupt edge containing a thicket of Urtica dioica	E Rating: Local conservation value
WMI_LH287	Haggardstown and Mullagharlin	Eutrophic lake with floating aquatic vegetation. Lake is surrounded by narrow Typha reed swamp along the northern margins. Small willow woodland adjoins southern part of site	D Rating: Local conservation value (moderate value)
WMI_LH303	Marsh South and Haggardstown	No wetland interest at this site. Area of dry unmanaged grassland that may be occasionally grazed or cut for hay.	E Rating: Local conservation value (low value)



Site Code	Name	Description	Importance
WMI_LH173	Haggardstown	Area of former marsh that has been heavily impacted by infill and drainage. Small remnants of wetland vegetation restricted to drainage ditches and a small, degraded marsh area in southern part.	E Rating: Local conservation value (low value)
WMI_LH153	Hamilton Marsh	Eastern part of site is freshwater marsh with <i>Typha latifolia</i> , <i>Equisetum fluviatile</i> and <i>Iris pseudacorus</i> . Site grades into wet grassland to the west. Site used as amenity – signage has been erected and a well-maintained path borders northern side	D Rating: Local conservation value (moderate value)
WMI-LH155	Springfield Marsh	There is only a small, isolated wetland area remaining which comprises <i>Phragmites australis</i> reed swamp and <i>Typha latifolia</i> reed swamp. Elsewhere a mosaic of dry meadow and recolonising bare ground has established on areas of spoil.	E Rating: Local conservation value (low value)



Map 10.4: Wetland Sites



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Wetland Sites



10.7 Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows

Woodlands, trees and hedgerow are an environmental, amenity and landscape resource of great importance to Dundalk. There are individual trees interspersed throughout the town within private gardens, on areas of public open space and along roads including the Inner Relief Road. Woodlands are mainly concentrated in existing urban parks; Ice House Hill, St Helena's, Farndreg and Muirhevamor. There is also a grouping of trees close to Castletown Motte.

Any development that, in exceptional circumstances, requires the removal of trees or groups of trees shall include proposals that replace the trees to be removed with semi-mature, native trees at a ratio of five new trees per single tree felled (5:1). On smaller, more constrained sites, where the ratio of 5:1 trees cannot be provided, consideration may be given to reducing this ratio.

Where trees and/or hedgerows are required to be removed in order to facilitate development, this shall be done outside the nesting season (1st of March to the 31st of August each year).

10.7.1 Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's)

There are presently no Tree Preservation Orders in effect in Dundalk.

10.7.2 Trees and Woodlands of Special Amenity Value (TWSAV)

There are many trees and woodlands of special amenity value in Dundalk which make an important contribution to the town's landscape setting, biodiversity, amenity and natural heritage, see Table 10.5 for details.

Table 10.5: Trees and Woodlands of Special Amenity Value in Dundalk

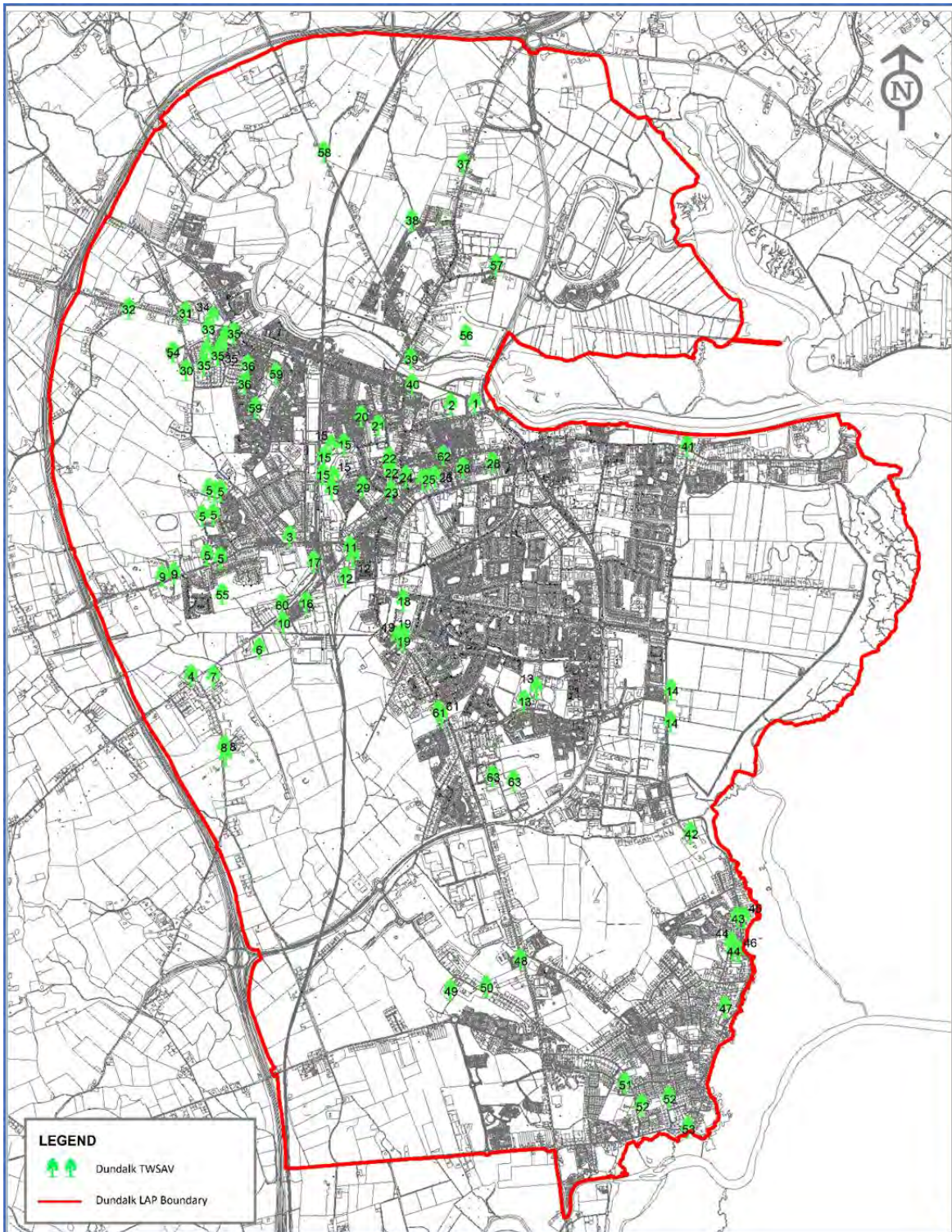
Reference DLK No.	Location	Reference DLK No.	Location
1	St. Helena's Park	2	Marist Grounds, St. Mary's Road
3	Derryhale Hotel, Carrick Road No. 6 Carrickmacross Road	4	In the curtilage of Rath Knockbridge Rd/Ardee Rd
5	Lisnawully House Carrick Road	6	Brookfield House, Ardee Road
7	St. John of God (Hilltop services) and lands to the SW (site of former Workhouse)	8	St. Oliver Plunkett Shrine and lands to the south of the entrance Ardee Road
9	North side of Carrick Road, Rucky Hill either side of entrance to Deer Park	10	St. Margaret's
11	The Crescent/ Crescent Park	12	Grammar School, The Crescent
13	Hoey's Lane and Muirhevnamor Park	14	Blackrock Road
15	Ice House Hill and including lands to the west of Pearse Park.	16	Brook Street/ Ardee Terrace
17	Louth Disability Services/ Mounthamilton House, Carrick Road	18	To the rear of Dunmore, Avenue Road




Reference DLK No.	Location	Reference DLK No.	Location
19	Ladywell Shrine, and surrounds, Dublin Road	20	The Laurels
21	Carroll Village – Old De La Salle Field	22	Long Walk
23	Demesne	24	Courthouse Square
25	Kelly's Monument	26	Entrance to library, Roden Place
27	Douglas Place	28	Northern side of Jocelyn Street and Seatown Place
29	Park View	30	Trees on Mount Avenue
31	De la Salle, Mill Road	32	Entrance to Grey Acre, Castletown Road
33	Castletown Cemetery	34	St. Louis Convent/ Castletown Castle
35	Castle Park, Castle Heights, Headford House, The Paddock, Mount Avenue	36	Between Farndreg Estate and Marion Park
37	Newry Road: Red Cow	38	Motte and Bailey, Doylesfort Road
39	South of Riverside Crescent	40	Fairgreen, Fairgreen Row
41	Point Road - The Towers and two adjoining properties to the west	42	The junction of Bóthar Maol and Blackrock Road
43	Within curtilage of Bunker Lodge, Sandymount	44	In the vicinity of Field House, Sandymount
45	Sandymount/ Rockmount	46	The Crescent, Blackrock
47	Catholic Church, Blackrock	48	Bellfield, Dublin Road
49	Church Road, Haggardstown	50	Marl House, Church Road, Haggardstown
51	Seafield House, Seafield Road	52	Fairy Mount, Seafield Road
53	Cockle Hill Road (Coast Road close to bend)	54	Cú Chulainn's Castle (Castletown Mount)
55	Lands to the south of Willow Grove, area known as 'The Gut'	56	Former landfill site, Newry Road
57	Farm buildings and house. South of graveyard / north side of Racecourse Road (west)	58	Carnbeg Hotel and Spa
59	Ashling Park	60	Lands to the rear/ in the vicinity of Texaco Station, Ardee Road
61	Lands north of Langsfield, Dublin Road	62	Louth Meath Education and Training Board Grounds St. Leonard's Garden
63	Along the stream within the grounds of DkIT		



Map 10.5: Trees and Woodlands of Special Amenity Value



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		<p>Scale: Not to Scale</p>		



10.8 Hedgerows

Deciduous hedgerows provide food, shelter and habitat for many of our native flora and fauna, acting as important wildlife corridors, connecting species and spaces that would otherwise be isolated. They can also improve water quality by reducing sediment and nutrient loss by slowing water flow.

This Plan will seek to protect and retain hedgerows of visual and ecological value. Where hedgerows cannot be retained as part of a development, a new hedgerow consisting of native species shall be planted when feasible.

10.8.1 Policy Objective

CH 11

To protect Trees and Woodlands of Special Amenity Value except in exceptional circumstance where it can be demonstrated to the Planning Authority their removal is warranted.

CH 12

Where in exceptional circumstances, trees and or hedgerows are required to be removed in order to facilitate development, this shall be done outside the nesting season. There shall be a requirement that for each tree felled in Dundalk, replacement trees will be required at a ratio of 5:1 where the removal of trees is required in order to facilitate development. On smaller, more constrained sites where there is limited space/opportunities for planting new trees, consideration may be given to reducing the ratio of trees to be planted on an application site if an alternative location for the shortfall of trees to be planted is identified and the consent of the landowner, on whose lands the trees are to be planted, is provided as part of a planning application.

10.9 Views and Prospects of Special Amenity Value

Dundalk contains many sites, areas and vantage points from which views of expansive areas of natural beauty, streetscapes and local landmarks can be obtained.

The scenery and streetscape of the town and scenic views of the surrounding area is of

immeasurable amenity value to tourists and residents alike, contributing to well-being and constituting a valuable economic asset. It is important that development is appropriately managed, so it does not negatively impact on the highly sensitive views and prospects, which are set out in Table 10.6.

Table 10.6: Views and Prospects in Dundalk

LAP Reference	Location of Viewpoint	Direction of View
DLK VP 1	Navy Bank and open space along Point Road	Views of the Ring of Gullion, Cooley Mountains and Dundalk Bay
DLK VP 2	Castletown Motte	Dundalk Bay, Cooley Mountains and Ring of Gullion
DLK VP 3	Ardee Road	Views of the town



LAP Reference	Location of Viewpoint	Direction of View
DLK VP 4	Old Racecourse Road	Ring of Gullion and Cooley Mountains
DLK VP 5	Soldiers Points	Views of the Cooley Mountains
DLK VP 6	Shore Road	Dundalk Bay and Cooley Mountains
DLK VP 7	Coast Road	Views of Dundalk Bay and the Cooley Mountains
DLK VP 8	The Crescent to Main Street	Views of Dundalk Bay and Cooley Mountains
DLK VP 9	From the Cockle Hill Road	Views out to sea
DLK VP 10	Car park at St. Fursey's Church, Haggardstown	Views of the Cooley Mountains
DLK VP 11	The Quays	Views of Dundalk Bay and Cooley Mountains
DLK VP 12	Dundalk House/ Green Church/ St Mary's	Cooley Mountains
DLK VP 13	Market Square	Crowe Street, Roden Place, Seatown Place, Barrack Street
DLK VP 14	St Patrick's Cemetery Dowdallshill	View of Ring of Gullion and Cooley Mountains
DLK VP 15	Newry Road Bridge	View of Castletown River, Castletown Motte, Ring of Gullion, Cooley Mountains and views into Town.
DLK VP 16	Táin Bridge	View of Dundalk Bay, River, Castletown Motte, Ring of Gullion, Cooley Mountains
DLK VP 17	The Blackrock Road (east of Bóthar Maol junction).	View of Dundalk Bay and Cooley Mountains

10.9.1 Policy Objectives

CH 13

To protect views and prospects listed in Table 10.6 from inappropriate development that would either obstruct the view/prospect from the identified vantage point or form an obtrusive or incongruous feature in that view/prospect.

CH 14

To improve, where necessary, access to viewing points, subject to availability of resources.



10.10 Scenic Routes

Dundalk's coastal location and natural surrounds contributes positively to its setting. In association with this high quality landscape, one scenic route has been identified which is of amenity and tourism value, and which requires protection.

There is one designated scenic route in Dundalk :

Table 10.7: Scenic Route in Dundalk

Reference No.	Route
DLK SR 1	Coastal Road, Blackrock Village

Applications for development must carefully consider the siting, design and landscaping of the proposed development to ensure that there are no significant alterations to the character of the area. Any development proposals, which would interfere with or adversely affect this Scenic Route, will not be permitted. Refer to Map 10.7.

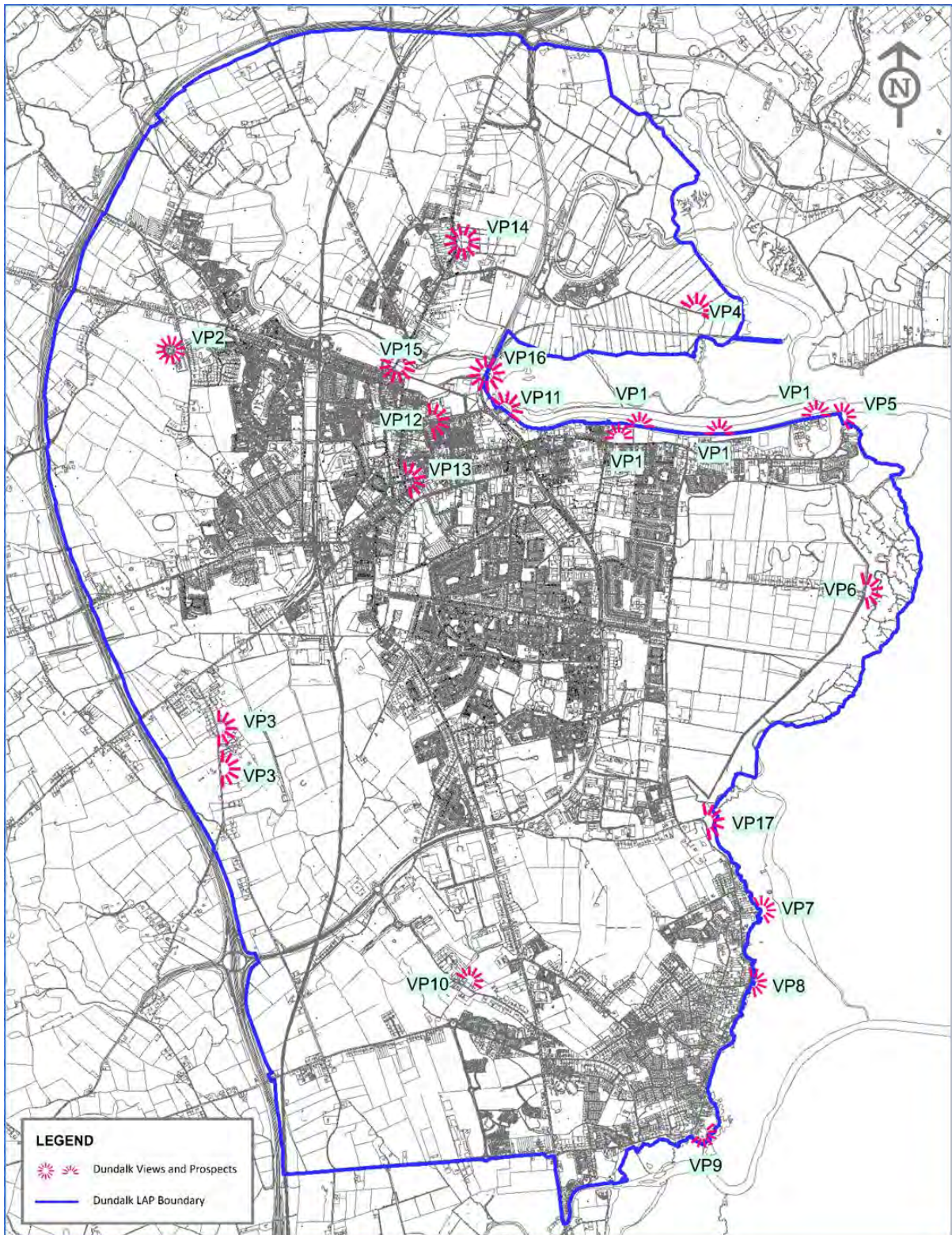
10.10.1 Policy Objective

CH 15

To prohibit inappropriate development which would interfere with or adversely affect the Coastal Road scenic route.



Map 10.6 – Views and Prospects, Dundalk



LEGEND

- Dundalk Views and Prospects
- Dundalk LAP Boundary



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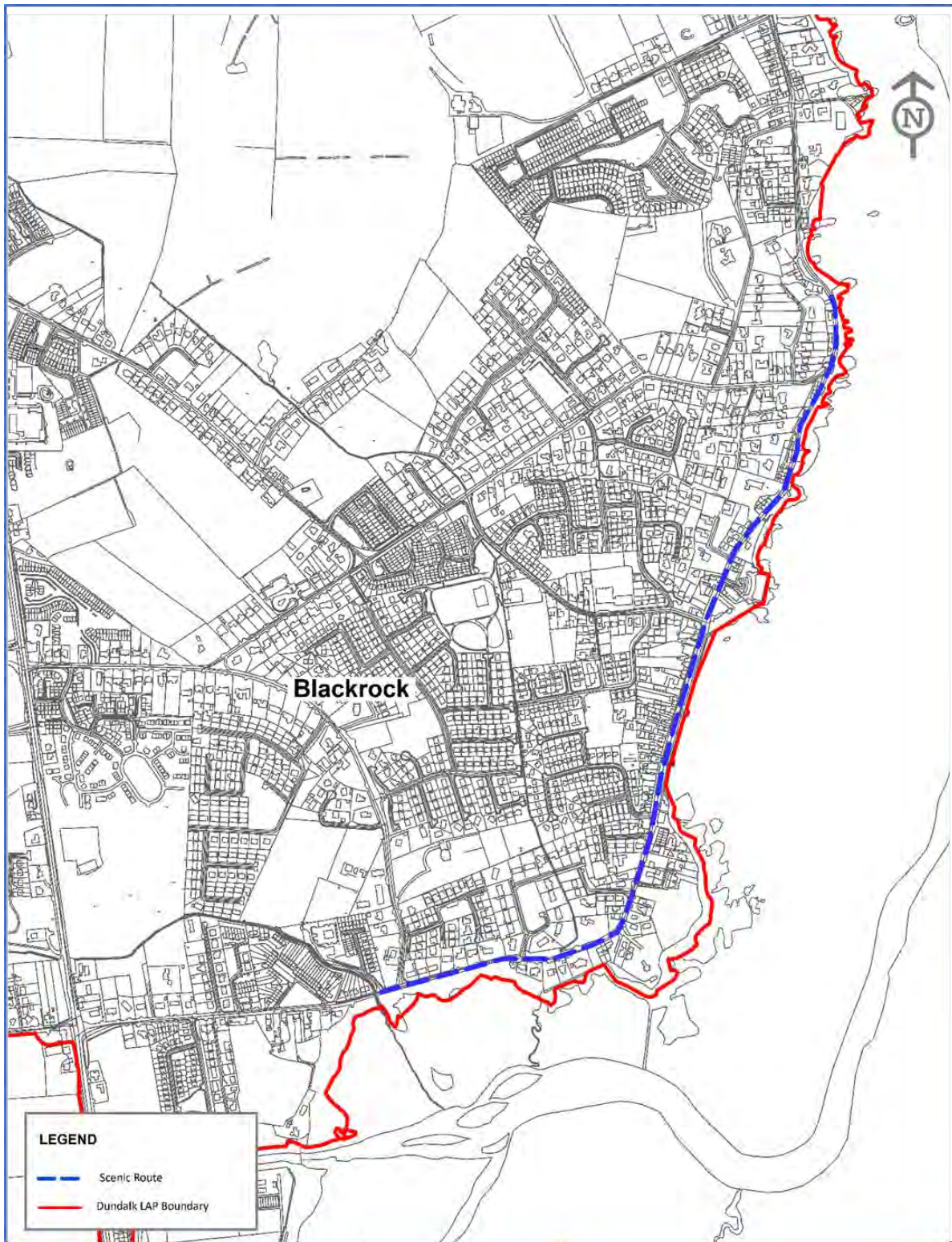
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Map 10.7 – Scenic Route, Dundalk



LEGEND

- Scenic Route
- Dundalk LAP Boundary



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Scenic Route



10.11 Protecting Biodiversity Value in Non-Designated Sites

There are numerous non-designated sites of biodiversity value which have an immense ecological value and form an essential part of Dundalk's ecological network. These include hedgerows, marshland, small wooded areas, ponds, streams and riverbanks. These non-designated sites are an essential part of Dundalk's green infrastructure network and are important for foraging, migration, dispersal, habitat and genetic exchange of wild species. An ecological assessment may be required to ensure that any development proposal does not adversely impact upon the ecological value of such sites.

10.11.1 Policy Objective

CH 16

To ensure that development proposals protect and conserve the biodiversity value of non-designated sites, and to require an ecological assessment by a suitably qualified person in instances where development proposals are likely to impact upon such sites.

10.12 Species Protected by Law

Dundalk's green infrastructure network provides an important habitat for both protected and non-protected wildlife. In all instances, the protected species and their habitat ought to be safeguarded unless in exceptional circumstances or where an alternative habitat can be provided.

The presence of species such as otters, pine martins, badgers, frogs, newts, bats and swifts which are protected by law is a material consideration when the Council is considering any development proposal.

10.12.1 Policy Objective

CH 17

To protect and enhance features of interest in Dundalk's Green Infrastructure network thereby ensuring that sensitive habitats and protected species are safeguarded, unless in exceptional circumstances or when an alternative habitat can be provided.



10.13 Green Infrastructure



10.13.1 Introduction

Green infrastructure is a term used to describe the network of natural spaces and corridors in a given area. Green infrastructure assets include open spaces, such as, parks and gardens, woodlands, fields, hedges, playing fields, coastal habitats, as well as footpaths, cycleways and/or rivers. Assets involving water are often referred to as ‘blue infrastructure’, but these are all included in the overarching term of ‘Green Infrastructure’.

Green Infrastructure assets offer areas for recreation and education, habitats for wildlife and also provide environmental services such as flood defences and/or absorption of air pollution. Green Infrastructure is now considered to be essential to the success of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures through nature-based solutions.

The Green Infrastructure Strategy in the following section follows the ‘Guiding Principles for the preparation of Green Infrastructure Strategies’ in Section 7.7 of the RSES.

This Plan will support the integration of green infrastructure into new and existing developments in order to support the creation of attractive urban spaces and recreational areas whilst also ensuring they are climate resilient.

The Regulations on Nature Restoration (Nature Restoration Law) came into effect in August 2024, the purpose of which is to restore Europe’s biodiversity and to prevent any further biodiversity loss. Each member state is to develop its own National Restoration Plan. Ireland’s National Restoration Plan is to be in place by 2026. Once adopted consideration shall be given to any requirements/recommendations of the National Restoration Plan, as applicable.

10.14 Dundalk’s Green Infrastructure Strategy

Dundalk’s two European sites (Dundalk SPA and Dundalk SAC), cover Dundalk Bay. Habitats protected by these include mud banks, sand banks and salt meadows. Dundalk SPA and SAC are considered to be the town’s most biodiversity-rich ecological areas and are the core areas for the movement and flow of species. Other natural and man-made habitats in Dundalk, whilst not formally protected by legislation, nonetheless act as vital green passageways.

Dundalk’s watercourses, tributaries and associated riparian strips form a major and unique element of the town’s green infrastructure network.



The Castletown, Blackwater and Fane rivers flow into Dundalk Bay and are vitally important biodiversity corridors for a range of protected and non-protected species. The Castletown River is also an important recreational facility.

The Dublin to Belfast Railway line runs through the town on a north-south axis. There is an undeveloped vegetated strip on either side of the track along the majority of its route through the town.

Another significant man-made ecological feature in Dundalk is the Inner Relief Road with an almost continuous network of trees, hedges and grass verges for its length through the town. Tree provision along this corridor has been augmented in recent years.

The railway track and road are important green passageways, facilitating the movement of flora and fauna, and linking the town with the wider rural landscape to the north and south.

It is anticipated that a new green corridor will be developed in Dundalk, in association with the provision of the Dundalk-Blackrock Flood Relief Scheme which will incorporate a series of biodiversity and ecological enhancing measures.

It is acknowledged that the ecological features in the town do not operate in a vacuum. There are also a range of local and neighbourhood parks interspersed throughout the urban area of Dundalk including St. Helena Park as well as treed/open space areas at Ice House Hill, Farndreg, Muirhevnemor, and at the former landfill site.

They all make a significant contribution to Dundalk's green infrastructure network.

A total of 63 'Trees and Woodlands of Special Amenity Value' have been designated within Dundalk. These, along with all other individual trees and groups of trees, form essential connecting features and stepping stones, facilitating the movement of flora and fauna between various habitats. Other important habitats include open space/amenity areas, semi-natural grasslands, hedgerows, private gardens, graveyards and grass verges, which perform as essential linkages between habitats.

Man-made features such as stone walls, bridges and older buildings also play a considerable part in Dundalk's green infrastructure. This Plan will seek to enhance and protect the wildlife corridors and habitats throughout Dundalk.

Any new development shall strive to identify existing features of ecological importance and, where possible, should incorporate and utilise these to facilitate the building of a coherent network of rich biodiversity sites and linkages. All development proposals should seek to enhance biodiversity and make a positive contribution to the overall green infrastructure network of Dundalk. It is considered that the augmentation of Dundalk's green infrastructure through the provision of ecological enhancement, will make a positive contribution to Dundalk's ecological value and also climate change mitigation.

Table 10.8: Dundalk's Green Infrastructure Features and Potential for Enhancement

Features of Interest	Potential for Green Infrastructure Enhancement
<p>Two European sites: Dundalk SPA/SAC and associated coastlines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance and, as appropriate, achievement of 'favourable conservation status' of habitats and species within SACs and SPAs as per the requirements and obligations of the Habitats Directive Council Directive 92/43/EEC and the Birds Directive 2009/147/EC; • Remove litter from coastline and inland environments; and • Promote protection of habitats and support education and research.



Features of Interest	Potential for Green Infrastructure Enhancement
Rivers: Including the Castletown, Fane and their tributaries Cont'd.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove culverting, if possible, 'daylighting' the stream; Provision of a graded system of planting that mimics the natural succession of species from open water to dry land; Retention and appropriate augmentation of suitable bank side vegetation along the course of the river/stream/ watercourse; and Appropriate aquatic planting.
Coastlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance and as appropriate, achievement of 'favourable conservation statuses of habitats and species within SACs and SPAs as per the requirements and obligations of the Habitats Directive Council Directive 92/43/EEC and the Birds Directive 2009/147/EC.
Rivers: Including the Castletown, Fane and their tributaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of River Basin Management Plans; Incorporation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems into developments; The integration of nature-based solutions into the management of surface water such as attenuation ponds, swales and reed beds; Facilitate the rewilding of streams, where this can be done without increasing the risk of flooding of property; Provision of riparian corridors where possible (minimum set back of 10m from each bank of any river stream or watercourse where feasible); Maintenance of rivers/ streams/ other watercourses in an open state capable of providing suitable habitat for fauna and flora, including fish; If culverting is necessary, provide mammal passes which maintain connectivity for species such as otters and badgers;
Railway Lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance of buffer zone on either side of the Belfast to Dublin railway line, except in exceptional circumstances; and Retention of trees and other vegetation save for exceptional circumstances.
Individual trees and woodlands including the 63 designated as 'Trees and Woodlands of Special Amenity Value (TWSAV)'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of trees will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and replaced at a ratio of five new trees per single tree removed where this is feasible; Protection and enhancement of existing linear tree lines; Provision of additional tree planting along roads, streets and within urban spaces where feasible. Native species suitable for streets and confined places include birch, rowan, whitebeam and wild cherry; Planting small cluster of trees within new developments mimicking woodlands; and Do not over-manage or "tidy" the tree understorey area. Allow the ground flora to evolve naturally and allow a build-up of natural debris on the woodland floor.



Features of Interest	Potential for Green Infrastructure Enhancement
Hedgerows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain and enhance existing hedgerows where possible; • Where retention is not possible provide an appropriate length of native species hedgerow within any proposed development. Native species include hawthorn, hazel and blackthorn; • Enhancing connections and additional provision of hedgerows where possible; • Only cut hedgerows outside nesting season; and • Hedgerow management plan.
Sites of Geological Interest:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of information signboards.
Wetlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of a buffer zone, where considered necessary; • Remove any illegal dumping and discourage same; • Removal of invasive species and non-native plants; and • Creation of areas of open water, scrapes and meandering channels, if appropriate.
Existing and proposed urban spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancement of biodiversity by ensuring native trees and other forms of planting are included in any public realm improvement scheme; • Provision of additional native street trees in appropriate locations. Native species suitable for streets and confined places include birch, rowan, whitebeam and wild cherry; • Provision of comprehensive landscaping scheme for any new development/ public realm proposals; • Creation of informal and formal flower beds which will attract insects; • Provision of bat and bird boxes; • Provision of dead wood piles; • Less intensive and frequent management of grass cutting; and • Provision of interpretation panels.
Gardens / amenity grassland/ parkland, playing fields/ church and graveyards / recreational and informal walkways /road verges/ laneways/ allotments / roundabouts/fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native shrub planting and allowing natural flora to develop; • Plant trees of native provenance to diversify gardens, new grassland area and road verges; • Diversify grasslands by altering the mowing regime to provide areas of tall grass thereby providing habitat for invertebrates including butterflies and other pollinators; • Use wildflower seeds of local provenance where possible; • Creation of habitat patches connecting new and existing hedgerows/ trees; • The planting of native blue bells, fox gloves and primroses; • Provision of bat and bird boxes; • Leave any older walls and headstones untouched; and • Install Signage /Interpretation panels.



Features of Interest	Potential for Green Infrastructure Enhancement
Areas within/adjacent to existing housing developments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave margin of grass uncut; • Planting of new hedgerow and encourage growth of existing hedgerows; • Provision of bird feeders; • Pollinator planting; • Set up compost heaps; • Provision of bat and bird boxes; • Interpretation panels; and • Encourage community involvement.
Stone walls, bridges, and older buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain existing features and incorporate into overall design proposal, where possible; and • Consult with National Parks and Wildlife Service regarding licensing requirements for protected animals such as bats.

10.14.1 Policy Objective

CH 18

To protect and enhance Dundalk's Green Infrastructure in accordance with the details and recommendations included in Table 10.8 'Dundalk's Green Infrastructure Features and Potential for Enhancement'.

10.15 Built Heritage



10.15.1 Introduction

The first important settlement in the Dundalk area was situated around the Motte Castle at Castletown. 'Dundalk' was later relocated downstream and a 'Newtowndundalk' was

established further east, at the Castletown River, now the site of Dundalk Bridge, while the original Dundalk became known as Castletown.



The Castletown River provided a vital trade route and was instrumental in the establishment of the town.

Market Square, to the south, became the heart of Dundalk's civic and commercial life in the 18th century.

The strong linear emphasis created by the new north-south thoroughfare is still present today in the main artery of Bridge Street, Church Street and Clanbrassil Street.

During the late Middle Ages Dundalk became the northernmost outpost of 'The Pale', it was essentially a frontier town and heavily fortified due to frequent attack. During the seventeenth century, the town was burned several times and endured warfare and depopulation. However, economic conditions improved with the development of a new harbour and the reclamation of several hundred acres of former marshland, hence today the main part of the town lies at sea level.

In the 1840's the development of the town was boosted by the arrival of the railway and the success of local agriculture-based industries; textile, boot manufacture, tobacco, brewing and distilling. These created a significant link with the contemporaneous manufactories in Belfast and Dublin and strengthened export markets. All railway engineering services for the Great Northern Railway were concentrated in the town, with ship building and maintenance companies established at the harbour area.

By the close of the century, Dundalk had become an industrial town which flourished as a result of the Industrial Revolution. Dundalk's rich industrial legacy is evident today in many historic industrial structures and buildings.

During the 20th century growth in the town was hindered to a certain degree by Partition and the Troubles. Over the past few decades Dundalk has continued to experience an influx of investment and industrial development.

10.15.2 Archaeological Heritage

Archaeological heritage is an intrinsic part of Dundalk's heritage and provides an opportunity to learn about the past and reinforce the town's sense of place. Archaeological heritage consists of various types of known and as yet unidentified sites, monuments, objects and environmental evidence.

Dundalk benefits from a range of archaeological sites, monuments, places, areas, and objects which are protected by the following means:

- Sites and monuments included in the Sites and Monuments Record as maintained by the National Monuments Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage;
- Monuments and places included in the Record of Monuments and Places, established under the National Monuments Acts;
- Historic monuments and archaeological areas included in the Register of Historic Monuments as established under the National Monuments Acts;
- National monuments, subject to Preservation Orders under the National Monuments Acts and national monuments which are in the ownership or guardianship of the Minister of Housing, Local Government and Heritage or the local authority;
- Archaeological objects, within the meaning of the National Monuments Acts and Wrecks, protected under the National Monuments Acts or otherwise included in the Shipwreck Inventory, maintained by the National Monuments Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage; and
- National Monuments, such as Walled Towns, under the National Walled Towns Policy 2008.



In all instances, development should be designed and carried out in a manner that protects archaeological heritage and avoids adverse impacts on sites, objects or features of significant archaeological interest. In accordance with the recommendations of the Framework and Principles for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (1999), in-situ preservation of archaeological features is preferred.

Regard shall therefore be had in relation to potential impacts on archaeological heritage before commencement of development, and any known or discovered features or sites should be sensitively incorporated where possible.

10.15.3 Zones of Archaeological Potential (ZAP)

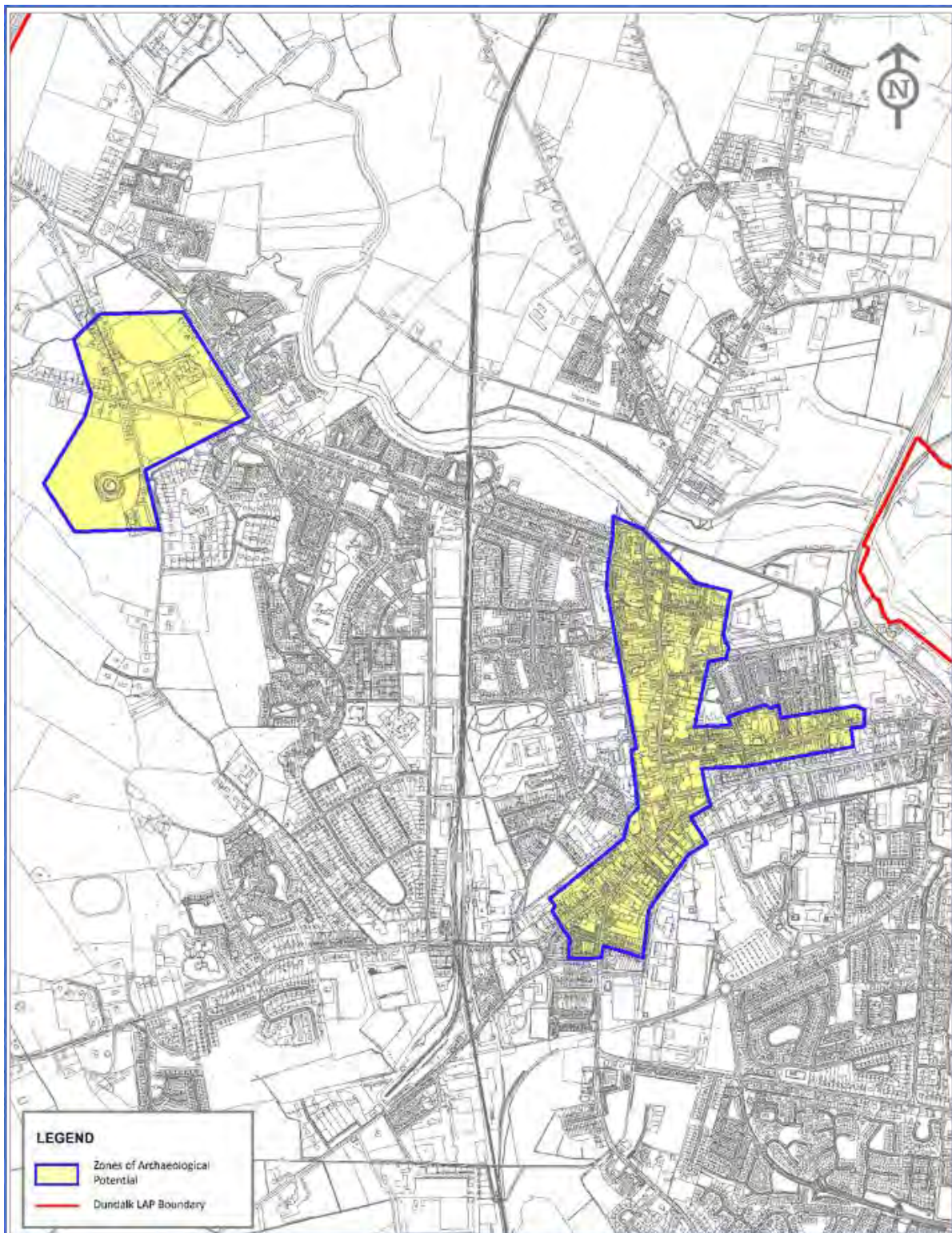
There are two large Zones of Archaeological Potential in Dundalk. The extent of the Zones of Archaeological Potential is detailed in Table 10.9 and Map 10.8.


Table 10.9 Zones of Archaeological Potential

ZAP No.	Description
1	The historic core, which essentially extends from the Castletown River to Market Square, where it bends south-west to cover the roads to Ardee/Carrickmacross and to Dublin, with an extension to the east (Seatown).
2	Castletown, the site of the original Dundalk.



Map 10.8: Zones of Archaeological Potential



	Comhairle Contae Lú Louth County Council Email: info@louthcoco.ie	Date: March 2025 Scale: Not to Scale	Dundalk Local Area Plan 2025-2031	Drawing Name / Ref. Zones of Archaeological Potential
	An Roinn um Pleanáil Planning Department www.louthcoco.ie	CYAL50441422 © Tallte Éireann – Surveying		



10.15.4 Policy Objectives

CH 19

To protect known and unknown archaeological areas, sites, monuments, structures and objects, having regard to the advice of the National Monuments Services of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage including the guidance and principles set out in 'The Framework and Principles for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage' (1999).

CH 20

To protect the archaeological assets of Dundalk and ensure they are managed and preserved in a manner that does not adversely impact on the intrinsic value of these assets whilst supporting economic renewal, tourism and sustainable development.

CH 21

To require applicants seeking planning permission to utilise a licensed archaeologist, as required, to undertake archaeological impact assessments, geophysical surveys, test excavations and monitoring.

10.16 Protected Structures

Dundalk's historic built environment encompasses fine examples of built heritage and historic streetscapes, which make a vital contribution to the visual amenity and character of the town. Protected Structures have a key role to play in place-making and contribute significantly to Dundalk's sense of identity and cultural heritage. The re-use, repair and energy upgrading of protected structures is therefore an important consideration for sustainable development and urban regeneration.

Full details of the Protected Structures in Dundalk are set out in the Record of Protected Structures published as part of the County Development Plan.

The range of Protected Structures varies from medieval structures, churches and public and civic buildings to more modest buildings and elements of streetscape.

The variety of historic building stock contributes to Dundalk's unique character. The value of Dundalk's rich built heritage is recognised.

A key challenge is to safeguard the integrity of protected structures, whilst at the same time facilitating their rehabilitation, renovation, incorporation and appropriate use and reuse.

Proposals to extend, alter or refurbish a Protected Structure(s) shall be sympathetic to their special character and integrity (including historic curtilage and visual setting) of the Structure(s) and should be appropriate in terms of architectural treatment, character, scale and form. All such proposals shall be consistent with the *Architectural Heritage Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011)* and in accordance with good conservation practice.

10.16.1 Policy Objectives

CH 22

To preserve, enhance and promote the reuse of buildings identified in the Record of Protected Structures and National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) and to carefully consider any proposals for development that would affect the special value of such structures, including their historic character. Such proposals will include Architectural Heritage Impact Statements and Conservation Methodology Statements.



CH 23

To address dereliction and vacancy by encouraging and supporting creative approaches to adaptive reuse, which adhere to conservation principles and practice.

10.17 Architectural Conservation Areas

An Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) is a place, area, group of structures or a townscape that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures.

The buildings and spaces found within the ACAs represent a unique aspect of Dundalk’s built heritage and contribute to its attractiveness and character. Dundalk’s ACAs can also contribute to revitalisation, as they provide the town with a distinctive identity and can make a positive contribution to local economies and tourism.

There are eight Architectural Conservation Areas in Dundalk:

1. **St. Mary’s Road:** Red brick Victorian and Edwardian housing with original railings.
2. **Roden Place:** Contains buildings of national importance. Largely Georgian in character with some Victorian additions. Many of the buildings display original features.
3. **The Crescent:** Mainly red brick two storey buildings with slated pitched roofs dating from the end of the nineteenth century.
4. **Clanbrassil Street:** Extending from St Nicholas’s Church of Ireland to Market Square. Contains a large number of protected structures.

5. **Jocelyn Street/ Seatown Place:** Wide streets laid out in the 1740’s containing Georgian and Victorian properties also comprising regionally important buildings.
6. **Soldiers Point – Coastguard Houses:** Row of 9 terraced houses, two storey, 3 bay properties.
7. **Magnet Road/ Demesne:** Comprises both buildings and open space. Consists of 1&2 Park Villas, 1&2 The Demesne, former revenue commissioner’s office and the former Adelphi cinema building.
8. **The Crescent/ Blackrock:** Consists of a terrace of six houses, four of these being in a straight row, and the larger two, on the southern end, angled to enclose a space around a communal green to the front.

Full details of the Architectural Conservation Areas are available in Appendix 6 of this Plan.

10.17.1 Policy Objective

CH 24

To require that all development proposals within or affecting an Architectural Conservation Area preserve or enhance the character and appearance of that area, protect architectural features of special interest and ensure that the design respects the character of the historic architecture in terms of height, scale, layout and materials. Development proposals should not adversely impact upon views into or from an Architectural Conservation Area.

10.18 Vernacular Heritage

Buildings of vernacular architecture primarily consist of homes and workplaces built by local people using local materials. Vernacular buildings are an intrinsic and finite part of Dundalk’s urban landscape, their unique character provides historical depth and a strong sense of identity.



Protection and enhancement of vernacular buildings is an important aspect of place making.

Vernacular buildings by their very nature are often the most sustainable forms of construction, built with local materials in a style responding to local conditions, with a low energy use.

It is acknowledged that alterations and adaptations to vernacular structures may be required to ensure their continued use however any proposals should be sympathetic to their special features and character.

This Plan will therefore encourage and promote the rehabilitation and re-use of vernacular buildings, while ensuring their continued use. Furthermore, the re-use of buildings minimises the depletion of non – renewable resources and is therefore essential to sustainable development.

10.18.1 Policy Objectives

CH 25

To promote, where feasible, the protection, retention, sympathetic maintenance and appropriate revitalisation and use of Dundalk's vernacular buildings and heritage, which contribute to the streetscape and to discourage the demolition of these structures.

CH 26

To encourage the re-use and adaption of existing historic buildings, both designated and non-designated, in a manner compatible with their character, and which enhances their vernacular heritage or contribution to the ACA within which they are located.

10.19 Dundalk Style Architecture

A distinctive feature of Dundalk's built heritage and elevating the architectural merit of the Clanbrassil streetscape is the presence of buildings, executed in an exuberant Italianate style known as 'Dundalk Style', coined by the 'Dublin Builder' (a contemporary publication). These facades typically encompass elaborate window surrounds, heavy bracketed cornices and decorative keystones.

This style developed in the mid to late 19th Century, reflecting the commercial wealth and confidence of the town, and many of the facades of the earlier buildings on the street were remodelled to incorporate elements of this style.

Render is the predominant facing material, but a number of red brick buildings punctuate the streetscape, in particular, along the mid-section on the west side of Clanbrassil Street. The intrinsic irregularity of the building fronts pleasantly conflict with the attempt to create a more refined classical appearance to the buildings in the form of parapet walls and window size gradations.

This Plan recognises the important contribution that 'Dundalk-Style' architecture makes to the built and cultural heritage of Dundalk.

10.19.1 Policy Objective

CH 27

To recognise the unique characteristics of the 'Dundalk Style' of architecture and the contribution it makes to the built heritage of the town.