

SEA STATEMENT

FOR THE

LOUTH COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2027

for: Louth County Council

County Hall
Millennium Centre
Dundalk
County Louth



Comhairle Contae Lú
Louth County Council

by: CAAS Ltd.

1st Floor
24-26 Ormond Quay Upper
Dublin 7



NOVEMBER 2021

Table of Contents

Section 1	Introduction	1
1.1	Introduction and Legislative Context	1
1.2	Content of the SEA Statement	1
1.3	Implications of SEA for the Plan	1
Section 2	How Environmental Considerations were/were not integrated into the Plan	2
2.1	Introduction.....	2
2.2	Instances whereby Environmental Considerations were not integrated into the Plan.....	2
2.3	Consultations.....	5
2.4	Communication of environmental sensitivities throughout the SEA process	5
2.5	Appropriate Assessment	5
2.6	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	5
2.7	Consideration of Alternatives	5
2.8	Integration of environmental considerations into Zoning of the Plan.....	6
2.9	Integration of individual SEA, AA and SFRA provisions into the text of the Plan.....	6
Section 3	Environmental Report and Submissions/ Observations	23
3.1	Introduction.....	23
3.2	SEA Scoping Notices and Submissions	23
3.3	Submissions on the Environmental Report for the Draft Plan.....	23
3.4	SEA documents including SEA Environmental Report	24
Section 4	Summary of Alternatives considered.....	25
4.1	Introduction.....	25
4.2	Limitations in Available Alternatives.....	25
4.3	Alternatives for Settlement Hierarchy	25
4.4	Alternatives for Population Allocations	26
4.5	Alternatives for Rural Areas	27
4.6	Alternatives for Densities	28
4.7	Alternatives for Land Use Zoning.....	29
4.8	Reasons for choosing the alternatives for the Plan in the light of the other reasonable alternatives	31
Section 5	Monitoring Measures.....	32
5.1	Introduction.....	32
5.2	Indicators and Targets	32
5.3	Sources	32
5.4	Reporting and Responsibility.....	33

Section 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction and Legislative Context

This is the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statement for the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027.

SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely environmental effects of implementing a plan, or other strategic action, in order to ensure that these effects are appropriately addressed at the earliest appropriate stage of decision-making on a par with economic and social considerations.

Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of Ministers, of 27th June 2001, on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment, referred to hereafter as the SEA Directive, introduced the requirement that SEA be carried out on plans and programmes which are prepared for a number of sectors, including land use. The SEA Directive was transposed into Irish Law through the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 and the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004. The Regulations have been amended by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 and the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011.

1.2 Content of the SEA Statement

Where SEA is undertaken, the Regulations require that a Statement is made available to

the public and the competent environmental authorities after the making of the Plan.

This Statement is referred to as an SEA Statement.

The SEA Statement is required to include information summarising:

- a) how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan;
- b) how the following have been taken into account during the preparation of the Plan:
 - the environmental report,
 - submissions and observations made to the planning authority on the Draft Plan and Environmental Report, and
 - any transboundary consultations.
- c) the reasons for choosing the Plan in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and
- d) the measures decided upon to monitor the significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan.

1.3 Implications of SEA for the Plan

SEA has been undertaken on the Plan and the findings of the SEA are expressed in an Environmental Report, the first published version of which accompanied the Draft Plan on public display. The Environmental Report was updated in order to take account of changes to the original Draft Plan that were made on foot of submissions and recommendations in the submissions.

Louth County Council have been provided with the findings of SEA output during their consideration of the Plan and before the Plan was adopted.

Section 2 How Environmental Considerations were/were not integrated into the Plan

2.1 Introduction

Environmental considerations were presented to the Council for its consideration through:

1. Consultations;
2. Communication of environmental sensitivities throughout the SEA process;
3. Appropriate Assessment;
4. Strategic Flood Risk Assessment;
5. Consideration of alternatives;
6. Integration of environmental considerations; and
7. Integration of individual SEA and AA provisions into the Plan.

2.2 Instances whereby Environmental Considerations were not integrated into the Plan

The Plan, considered as a whole, contributes towards environmental protection and management and sustainable development and complies with various legislative requirements. This is identified throughout the SEA documentation.

Various Plan provisions that would contribute towards the sustainable development of the County would, at the same time, have the potential to conflict with the environment, were mitigation measures not taken into account. This is normal and mitigation measures have been integrated into the Plan to deal with these potential effects.

However, a small number of provisions have been adopted by the Elected Members as part of the Plan that are internally inconsistent with the overall approach provided for by the Plan. These provisions – and the associated environmental consequences – are identified on Tables 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 overleaf.

Table 2.1 Amendments agreed at Special Meetings in relation to the Pre-Draft Plan (October, 2020)

Chapter / Section	Included as part of Draft Plan?	Environmental Assessment provided at time
Chapter 3, 'Housing 3.4' Local Qualifying Criteria in RPZ 1	Amended as per revised criteria in MA 44 (Table 2.3)	Wording inserted into Table 3.4: "Permission will be considered for 2 no. dwellings, in addition to the family home, for a son or daughter of a landowner who are native residents of the area to build a first home for permanent occupation. A qualifying landowner is defined as a person who owns a landholding of at least 3 hectares and has owned the land for a minimum of 10 years. Any applicant under this category must demonstrate a rural housing need and shall not have previously owned a dwelling. Any application will be subject to the appropriate siting and consideration of proper planning and sustainable development." Wording inserted into Section 13.12.6: "Backland Development will only be considered in Rural Policy Zones 1 and 2 where the applicants' site has been owned by the family for at least 15 years and the landholding is at least 1.5 hectares. Only one dwelling will be permitted per landowner. Any backland development should be accompanied by a deed of right of way to the proposed dwelling and must not have a negative impact on traffic safety."
Chapter 13 'Development Management Standards', Section 13.12.6- Backland Development	Included	These two motions are not in the interests of proper planning or sustainable development. The additional qualifying criteria provided Rural Policy Zone 1, which is in the most scenic and environmentally sensitive parts of the County would place further pressure on this sensitive landscape for one-off housing. In addition, the caveat that would facilitate backland development in certain circumstances would result in a further loss of rural character in a countryside that is already under significant pressure from one off housing. As a result, these amendments would have the potential to result in significant adverse effects on environmental components including landscape, ecology, water quality, sustainable mobility and climate emission reduction targets
Re-zoning of c.4.1 acres of land at Dundalk Racecourse to Residential to facilitate a retirement village	Included	This amendment is not in the interests of proper planning or sustainable development. The Members were advised that there were more suitable, alternative sites available for this type of development, closer to the centre of the town, and that the amendment would be contrary to other housing provisions contained within the Draft Plan. This amendment would have the potential to result in significant adverse effects on efforts to maximise sustainability and reduce transport related climate emissions.

Table 2.2 Proposed Material Alterations agreed at Special Meetings in relation to submissions to the Draft Plan (April, May and June 2021)

Ref. no. as per CE Report on Material Alterations 29 th June 2021	Included as part of Plan?	Environmental Assessment provided at time
Land Use Zoning:		
L3-2	Included	<p>There is no planning justification for these Proposed Material Alterations, they would not align with objectives relating to sustainable development, relate to greenfield lands in many cases and would present additional, unnecessary and potentially significant adverse effects on various environmental components. Potentially significant adverse effects, alone and/or in-combination with other similar changes alterations to zoning, would be likely to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects on ecology and ecological connectivity • Loss of an extent of soil function arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces • Increased loadings on water bodies • Conflict with efforts to maximise sustainable compact growth and sustainable mobility • Occurrence of adverse visual impacts <p>Where such alterations are beyond the established settlement envelope, potentially significant adverse effects would be likely to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in providing adequate and appropriate waste water treatment as a result of zoning outside of established built development envelopes of settlements • Adverse impacts upon the economic viability of providing for public assets and infrastructure • Adverse impacts upon carbon emission reduction targets in line with local, national and European environmental objectives • Conflicts between transport emissions, including those from cars, and air quality • Conflicts between increased frequency of noise emissions and protection of sensitive receptors • Potential effects on human health as a result of potential interactions with environmental vectors <p>Furthermore, Alteration ARD3 does not comply with the Guidelines as it proposes incompatible New Residential Zoning in an area of elevated flood risk that fails the Justification Test under the Guidelines.</p>
L3-5	Included	
L3-6	Included	
L3-7	Included	
L4-9	Included	
L5-1	Included	
L5-2	Included	
L5-3	Included	
L5-4	Included	
L5-5	Included	
L5-6	Included	
L5-7	Not included	
L5-8	Included	
L5-9	Included	
L5-11	Included	
L5-12	Included	
L5-13	Included	
DR0G2	Included	
DLK1	Included	
DLK4	Included	
DLK7	Not included initially but refer to Table 2.3 below	
DLK 13	Included	
DLK14	Included	
DLK15	Included	
DLK16	Retained as A2 New Residential	
DLK 17	Retained as A2 New Residential	
DLK18	Not included	
ARD1	Retained as New Residential Phase 1	
ARD3	Included	
DLR1	Not included	
DLR2	Included	
DLR3	Included	
Rural Housing Policy:		
44	Revised refer to Chapter 3 Table 3.4	This Proposed Material Alteration is not in the interests of proper planning or sustainable development. This Alteration dilutes the circumstances for new residential development outlined in the Qualifying Criteria for Rural Policy Zone 1, potentially facilitating more housing in what includes some of the most scenic and environmentally sensitive parts of the County. Further pressure for one-off housing would be placed on this sensitive landscape area. This Alteration would have the potential to result in significant adverse effects on environmental components including landscape, ecology, water quality, sustainable mobility and climate emission reduction targets
44	Included (Chapter 3, Table 3.5 of Plan)	

Table 2.3 Additional Modifications adopted as part of Plan but advised against by the Executive at Special Meetings in relation to submissions on Material Alterations in September 2021

Ref. no. as per CE Report on Material Alterations 29th June 2021	Ref. no. is the submission number in the CE Report on Submissions Received to the Material Alterations dated 23rd August 2021	Environmental Assessment	Zoning
DLK3	MA004 (OPR)	Please refer to Table 3.1 and 3.2 where relevant. All further modifications were assessed before adoption and it was identified that: "There are no additional sources that have not been considered by the AA to date. Taking into account all of the mitigation measures that have already been integrated into the Draft Plan, I can confirm that none of the further modifications would affect the integrity of any European site. The modifications further contribute towards provisions related to sectors and topics that are already provided for within the Draft Plan and/or relevant Alterations. Taking into account the measures that have already been integrated into the Draft Plan and relevant alterations that provide for and contribute towards environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development, any potential effects arising from these modifications would either: be present already (beneficial) and would be further contributed towards, but not to a significant extent; and/or would be mitigated so as not to be significant (adverse). Taking this into account the further modifications would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects."	A2 residential Phase 1
DLK7			A2 Residential Phase 1
ARD 3			A3 New Residential Phase 2
L3-2			Lands included in settlement boundary of Carlingford
L5-5			Lands included in settlement boundary of Glenmore
L5-6			Lands included in settlement boundary of Lordship
L5-8			Lands included in settlement boundary of Lordship
L5-9			Lands included in settlement boundary of Lordship
L5-12			Lands included in settlement boundary of Sandpit
L5-13			Lands included in settlement boundary of Sandpit
DLK 2	MA 002 (Racecourse 4.1acres)		'A2 New Residential Phase 1' and 'Spot Objective 13' 'To provide for the development of a retirement village'
DLK32	MA038		H1 Open Space to A2 New Residential Phase 1
DLK 21	MA 003		A3 New Residential Phase 2 to A2 New Phase 1
DLK 17	MA064		C1 Mixed Use to A2 New Residential Phase1
DLK 23	MA 029		A3 New Residential Phase 2 to A2 New Residential Phase 1
DLK 6	MA012		A3 New Residential Phase 2 to A2 New Residential Phase 1
DLK 16	MA065		H1 Open Space to A2 New Residential Phase 1
ARD 1	MA 031 MA037		A3 New Residential Phase 2 to A2 New Residential Phase 1
ARD 7	MA53		H1 Open Space to E1 General Employment

2.3 Consultations

As environmental authorities identified under the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations, as amended, the following authorities were sent SEA scoping notices indicating that submissions or observations in relation to the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the environmental report could be made to the Louth County Council; Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage; Department of Environment, Climate and Communications; Environmental Protection Agency; Meath County Council; and Monaghan County Council.

Detail on submissions made on foot of the SEA scoping notice is provided under Section 3.2.

Detail is also provided on submissions that were made on the Draft Plan and/or the SEA Environmental Report while they were on public display (see Section 3.3).

2.4 Communication of environmental sensitivities throughout the SEA process

Environmental considerations were integrated into the Plan before it was placed on public display. Individual sensitivities that were considered by the Planning Team preparing the Plan included the following:

- European Sites (Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas);
- Other Ecological Designations;
- Status of Surface and Ground Waters;
- Various entries to the **Water Framework Directive's Register of Protected Areas**;
- Groundwater Vulnerability;
- Water Services Capacity, Performance and Demand;
- Cultural heritage (archaeological and architectural) sensitivities; and
- Landscape Designations.

A number of these sensitivities are mapped on Figures 2.1 to 2.3.

2.5 Appropriate Assessment

Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening and Stage 2 AA have been undertaken alongside the Plan. The requirement for AA is provided under the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 1992/43/EEC).

The conclusion of the AA is that the Plan will not affect the integrity of the European Sites, alone or in combination with other plans or projects.¹

The preparation of the Plan, SEA and AA has taken place concurrently and the findings of the AA have informed the SEA.

2.6 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been undertaken alongside the Plan. The requirement for SFRA is provided under 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (Department of Environment and Office of Public Works, 2009) and associated Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government Circular PL2/2014. Recommendations from the SFRA have been integrated into the Plan.

2.7 Consideration of Alternatives

Consideration of the environmental effects arising from a variety of different alternatives for the Plan (see Section 4) has contributed towards the protection and management of the environment within the Plan.

¹ Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: (a) no alternative solution available, (b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the plan to proceed; and (c) adequate compensatory measures in place.

2.8 Integration of environmental considerations into Zoning of the Plan

Environmental considerations were integrated into the Plan's zoning through an interdisciplinary approach.

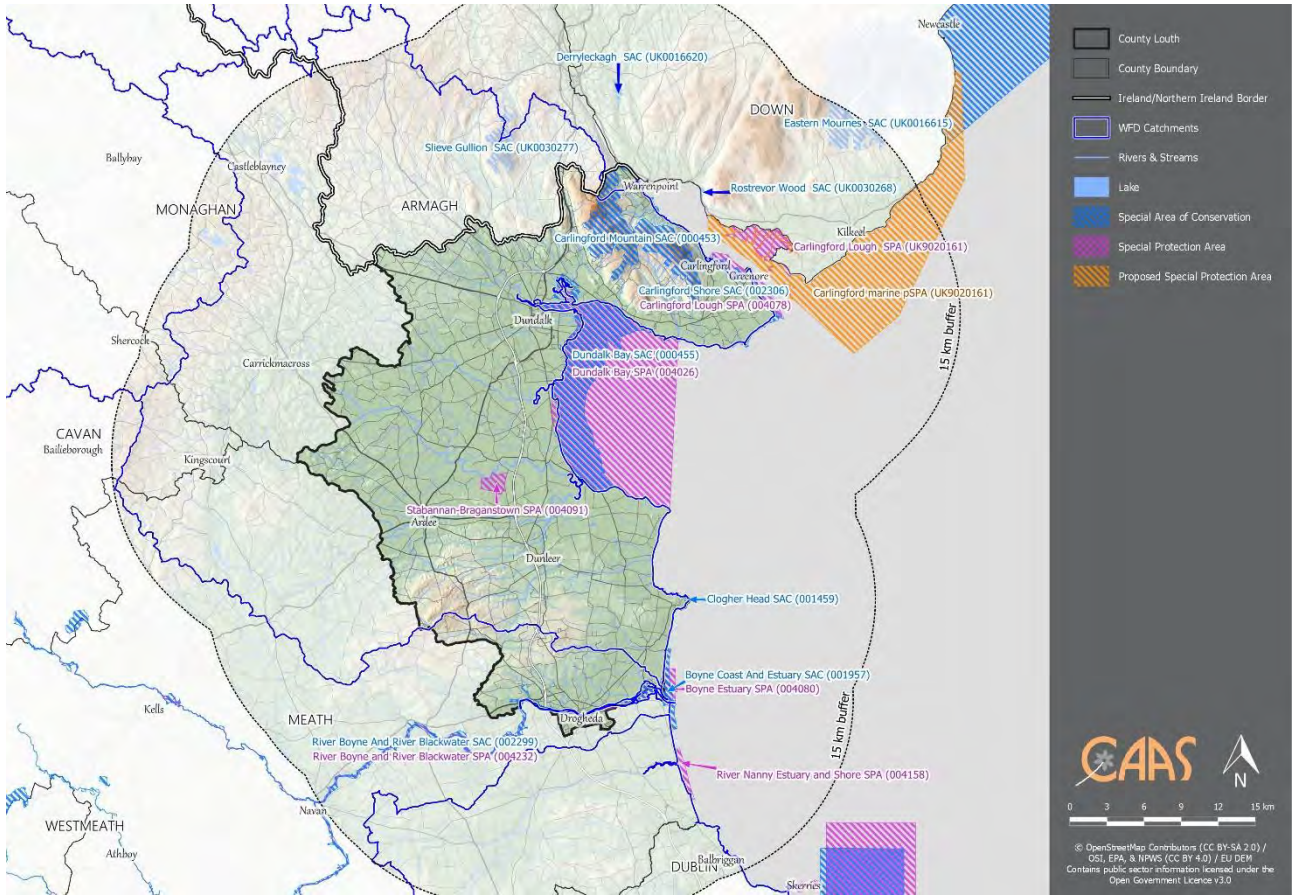
Zoning has been applied in a way that primarily seeks to achieve sustainable and compact growth, taking into account the various requirements set out in the higher-level NPF and Eastern and Midlands RSES.

The detailed Plan preparation process undertaken by the Planning Department combined with specialist input from the SFRA process facilitated zoning that avoids inappropriate development being permitted in areas of high flood risk. Various provisions have been inserted into the Plan which provide for flood risk management at project level.

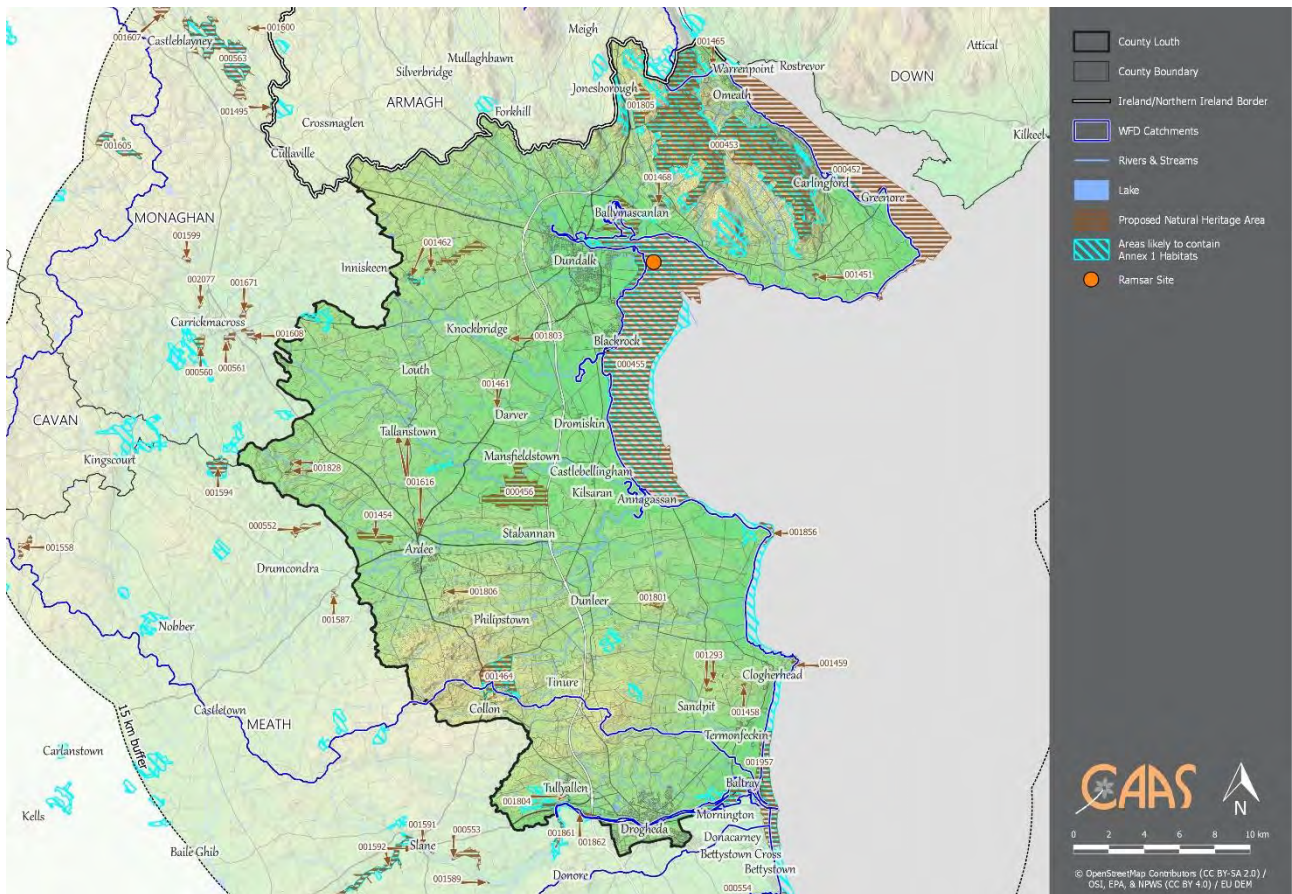
Also taken into account were environmental sensitivities relating to ecology, cultural heritage, landscape and water, as well as overlay mapping of environmental sensitivities.

2.9 Integration of individual SEA, AA and SFRA provisions into the text of the Plan

Table 2.4 links key mitigation measure(s) - which have been integrated into the Plan - to the potential significant adverse effects of implementing the Plan, if unmitigated. The integration of these measures into the Plan occurred over a number of iterations and was informed by, inter alia, various communications through the SEA, AA and SFRA processes. The measures generally benefit multiple environmental components i.e. a measure providing for the protection of biodiversity, flora and fauna could beneficially impact upon the minimisation of flood risk and the protection of human health, for example.

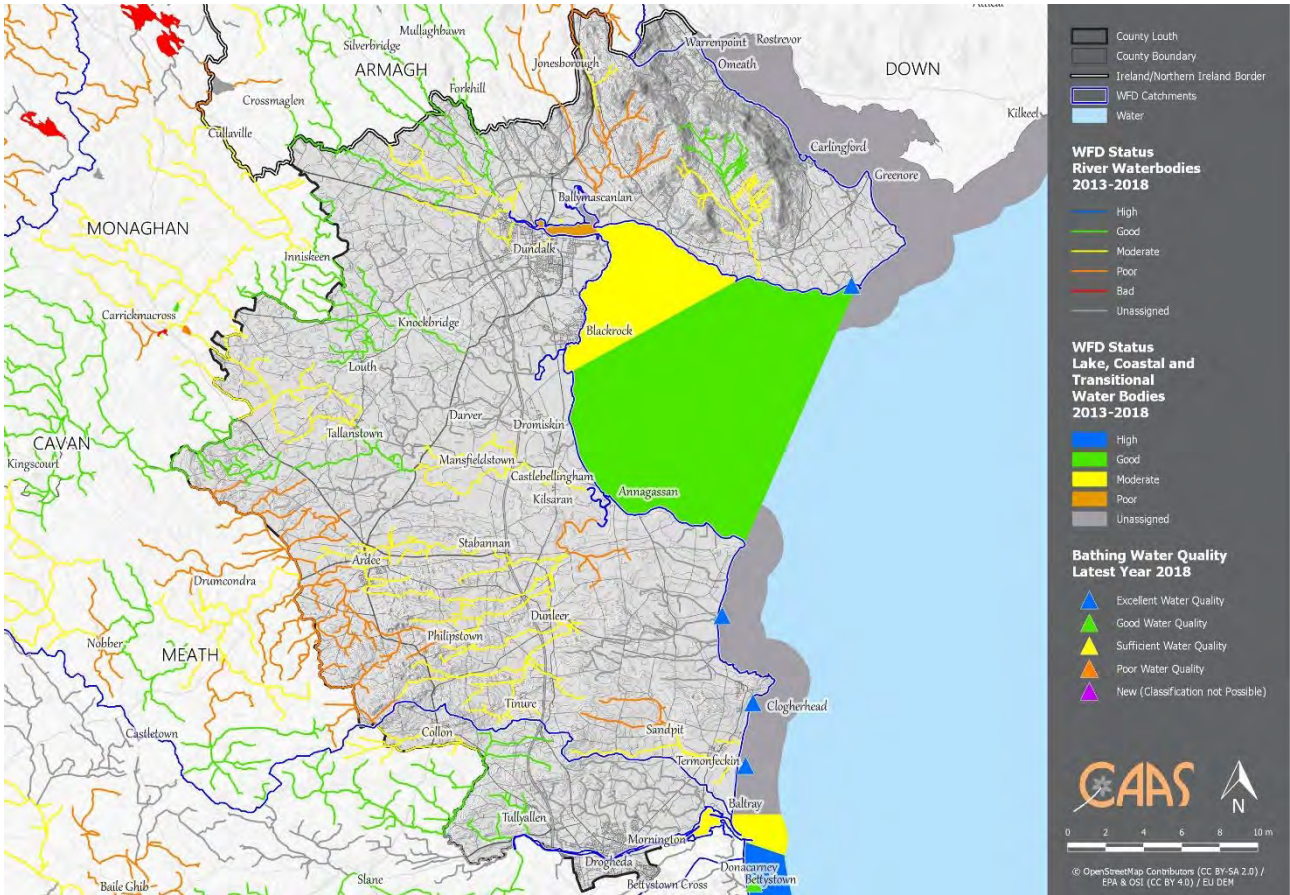


European Sites within and adjacent to the Plan area

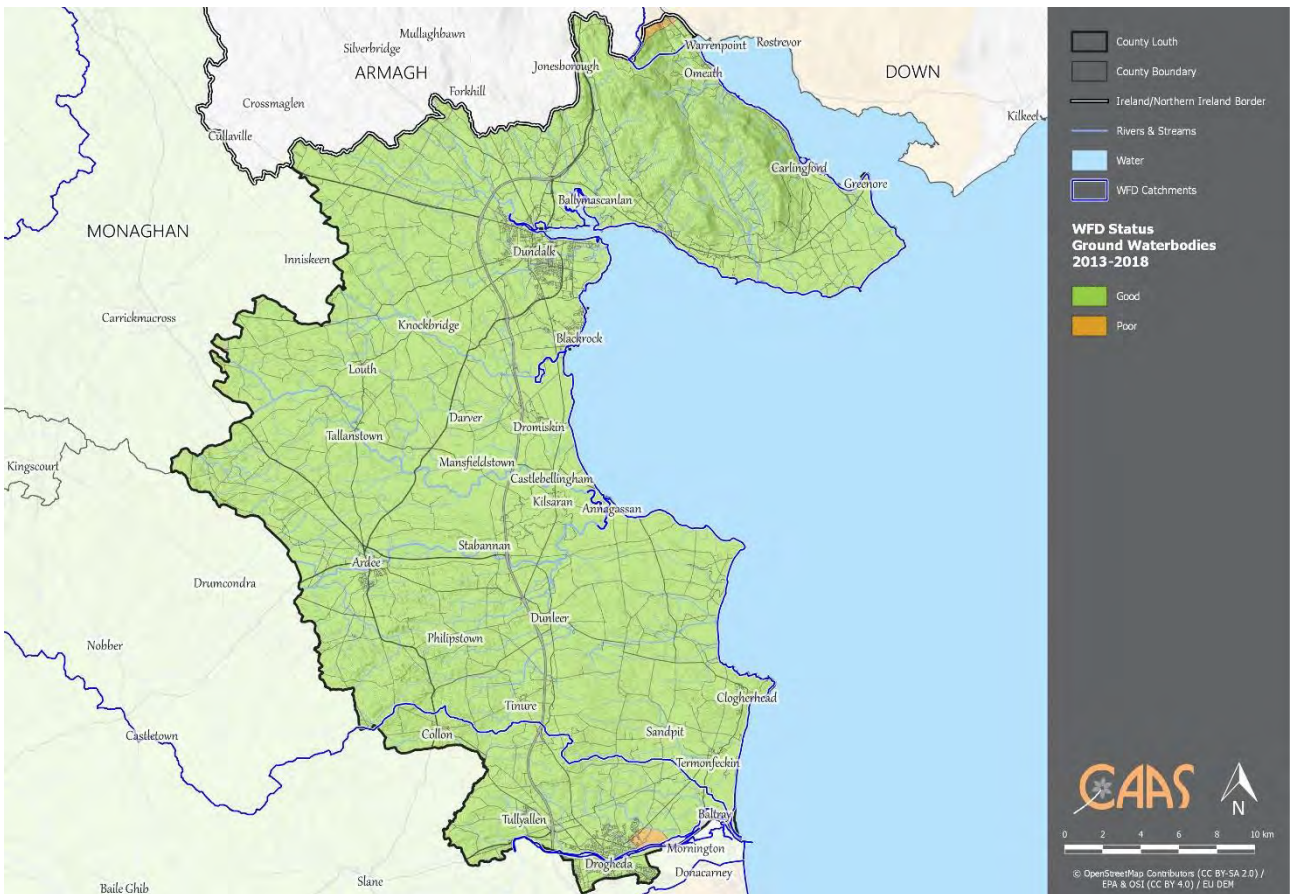


Other Ecological Designations within and adjacent to the Plan area

Figure 2.1 Selection of Individual Environmental Sensitivities taken into account (1 of 3)

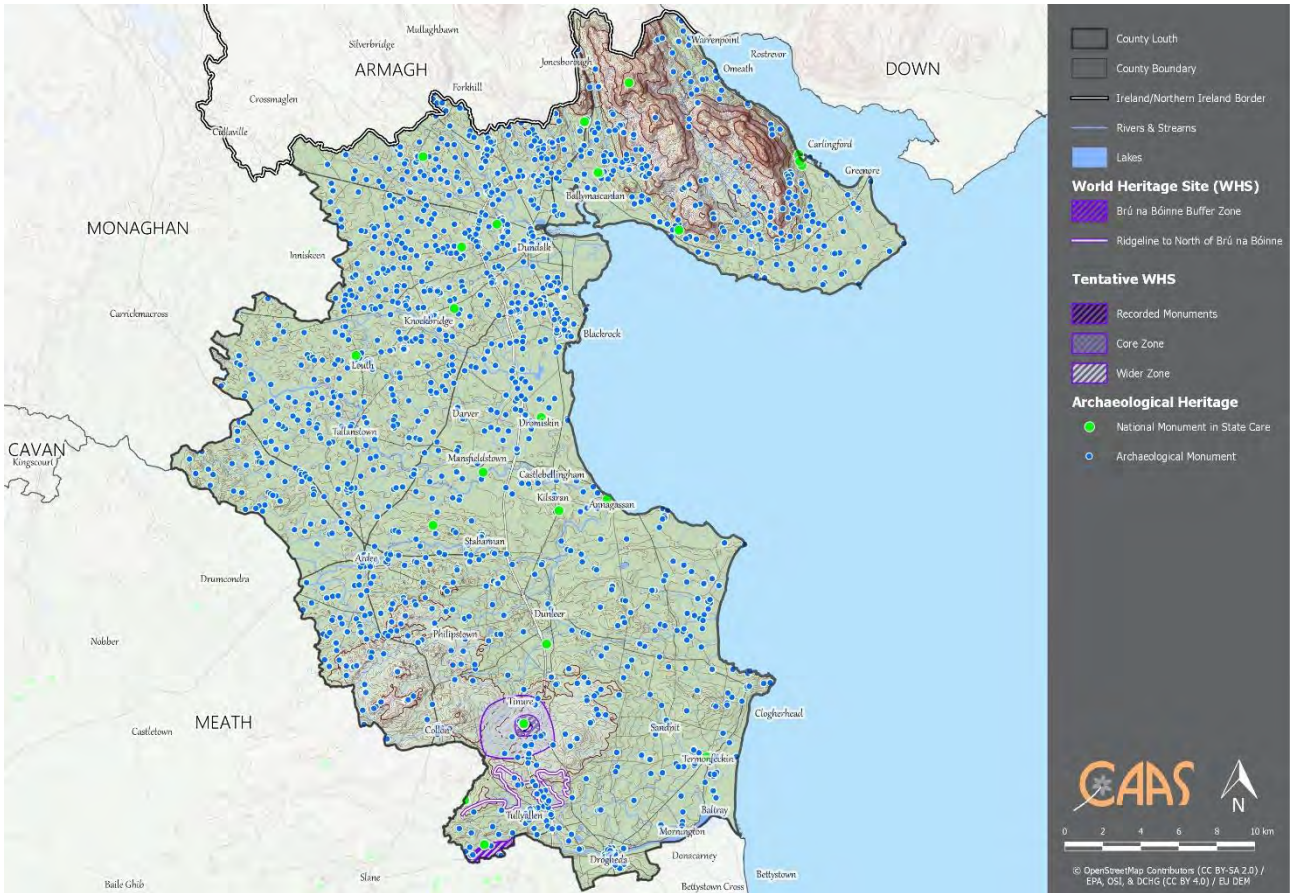


Surface Water Status

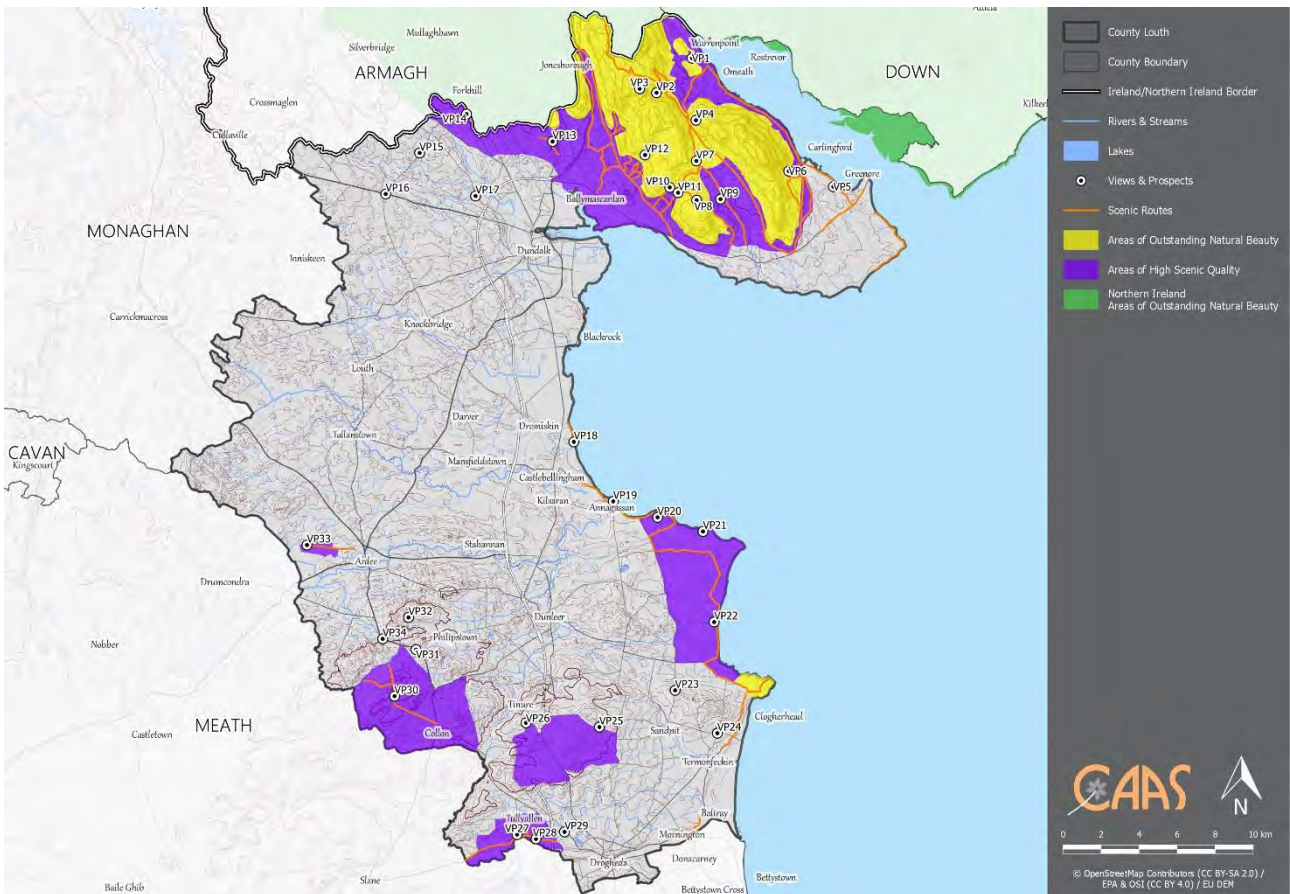


Groundwater Status

Figure 2.2 Selection of Individual Environmental Sensitivities taken into account (2 of 3)



Archaeological Designations



Landscape Designations

Figure 2.3 Selection of Individual Environmental Sensitivities taken into account (3 of 3)

Table 2.4 Integration of Environmental Considerations

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
All	Various	<p>1.7.2 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), as required under the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004, was carried out as part of the preparation of this Plan. SEA is the process by which environmental considerations are required to be fully integrated into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes and in this case the preparation of the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027. Article 1 of the EU Directive 2001/42/EC states “The objective of the SEA process is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of specified plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development, by ensuring that, in accordance with this Directive, an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment”. The results of the SEA process were fully considered and integrated into the preparation and making of this Plan. The resulting Environmental Report has been published as a separate document in conjunction with this Plan and is included in Volume 5.</p> <p>1.7.3 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT The EU Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna and Flora, otherwise known as The Habitats Directive, in combination with the Directive on the conservation of wild birds (79/409/EEC as amended by 2009/147/EC), otherwise known as the Birds Directive, provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance, through the establishment and conservation of an EU-wide network of sites known as the Natura 2000 Network of European Sites. Article 6(3) establishes the requirement for Appropriate Assessment (AA) of plans and projects likely to affect European Sites. Appropriate Assessment is an evaluation of the potential impacts of a plan on the conservation objectives of a European site, and the development, where necessary, of mitigation or avoidance measures to preclude negative effects. An Appropriate Assessment was conducted as part of the preparation of this Plan. A Natura Impact Report (NIR) has been published as a separate document in conjunction with this Plan and is included in Volume 5.</p> <p>1.7.4 STRATEGIC FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT (SFRA) In meeting the requirements of both the Strategic Environmental Assessment process and The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009), the Council has conducted a County wide Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the Plan area. This provides a broad assessment of flood risk within the County and will inform strategic land-use planning decisions in this and other plans. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been published as a separate document in conjunction with this Plan and is available in Volume 5.</p>
All	Various	<p>1.7.5 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION The development objectives in the Plan are consistent, as far as practicable, with the conservation and protection of the environment. The accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) processes have informed the preparation of the Plan (Volume 5 of the Plan provides associated documents detailing the findings). All recommendations made by these processes have been integrated into this Plan and this will contribute towards environmental conservation and protection within the County and beyond.</p> <p>1.7.5.1 Ecosystems Services Approach and Natural Capital In preparing the Draft Plan and developing policy objectives, the Council have followed these Ecosystem Services² Approach principles: a) Consideration of natural systems - by using knowledge of interactions in nature and how ecosystems function (including at Plan Chapters 8 and 11); b) Taking into account of the services that ecosystems provide - including those that underpin social and economic well-being, such as flood and climate regulation (including at Plan Chapters 8, 10 and 12), resources for food, fibre or fuel (including at Chapters 5 and 11), or for recreation, culture and quality of life (including at Plan Chapters 4, 6, 9 and 11); c) Involving people - those who benefit from the ecosystem services and those managing them need to be involved in decisions that affect them. Public consultation has informed the preparation of the Draft Plan which will be further refined before adoption, taking into account submissions/observations made on the Draft Plan during public display. The Council shall promote an Ecosystem Services Approach, following the above principles, in its decision-making processes, including those relating to the preparation of statutory land use plans. In recognition of the need to manage natural capital³, provisions have been integrated into the Plan that will contribute towards management of air quality, noise pollution,</p>

² Ecosystems are multifunctional communities of living organisms interacting with each other and their environment. Ecosystems provide a series of services for human well-being (ecosystem services) either directly or indirectly contributing towards human wellbeing

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
Biodiversity and flora and fauna	<p>Arising from both construction and operation of development and associated infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European sites and Natural Heritage Areas) and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna; Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including patch size and edge effects; and Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting along transport corridors) and displacement of protected species such as birds and bats. 	<p>light pollution, water quality and integrated catchment management.</p> <p>Designated and Non-Designated Sites</p> <p>NBG 1 To promote the implementation of the draft Louth Heritage Plan 2021-2026 and any subsequent Louth Heritage Plan endorsed during the life of this Plan.</p> <p>NBG 2 To promote and implement the objectives of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for County Louth 2021 -2026 and any subsequent Louth Biodiversity Action Plan published during the life of this Plan.</p> <p>NBG 3 To protect and conserve Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives.</p> <p>NBG 4 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"</p> <p>NBG 5 To ensure that no plan, programme, or project giving rise to 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 Plan, either individually or in combination with other plans, programmes, etc. or projects⁴</p> <p>NBG 6 To ensure a screening for Appropriate Assessment (AA) on all plans and projects and or Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (NIR/NIS) where appropriate, is undertaken to make a determination. European Sites located outside of the County but within 15 km of the proposed development site shall be included in such screenings as should those to which there are pathways, for example, hydrological links for potential effects.</p> <p>NBG 7 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.</p> <p>NBG 8 To consult with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, taking account of their views and any licensing requirements, when undertaking, approving or authorising development, which is likely to affect plant, bird or other animal species protected by law.</p> <p>NBG 9 To ensure that proposals for development, where appropriate, protect and conserve biodiversity sites outside designated sites and require an appropriate level of ecological assessment by suitably qualified professionals to accompany development proposals likely to impact on such sites.</p> <p>NBG 10 To ensure that development proposals, where relevant, improve the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 Network of European Sites and encourage the retention and management of landscape features as per Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>NBG 11 Where feasible, ensure that no ecological networks, or parts thereof, which provide significant connectivity between areas of local biodiversity, are lost without remediation as a result of implementation of this Plan.</p> <p>NBG 12 Prevent and control the spread of invasive plant and animal species within the County.</p> <p>NBG 13 Development sites must be investigated for the presence of invasive species, which if present must be treated and/or eradicated in accordance with best practice. Where appropriate, Invasive Species Management Plans will be prepared for such development proposals.</p> <p>NBG 14 To protect from inappropriate development and maintain the character, integrity and conservation value of those features or areas of ecological interest listed as pNHA or that may be designated as NHA, during the lifetime of this Plan.</p> <p>NBG 15 To ensure that any development within or adjacent to a NHA or 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.</p> <p>ENV 37 To consider the preservation of any tree, trees or groups of trees or woodland of special amenity or environmental value by use of Tree Preservation Orders.</p> <p>ENV 38 To retain and protect significant stands of existing trees/ hedgerows/woodlands, and seek increased planting of native trees, where appropriate, in new developments</p> <p>ENV 39 Protect and preserve existing hedgerows in new developments, particularly species rich roadside and townland boundary hedgerows, and where their removal is necessary during the course of road works or other works seek their replacement with new hedgerows of native species indigenous to the area.</p> <p>ENV 32 To encourage the development of a well-managed sustainable forestry sector, which is compatible with the protection of the environment including the avoidance of likely significant effects on European sites (SACs and SPAs) and is planted, managed and harvested in accordance with the Forest Service Guidelines for Landscape, Forest Harvesting and Environmental, Archaeology, Biodiversity and Water Quality.</p> <p>Peatlands, Wetlands, Watercourses</p> <p>NBG 19 To ensure that an appropriate level of ecological assessment is carried out for proposals involving drainage, infill or reclamation of wetland habitats.</p> <p>NBG 20 To protect and enhance wetland sites that have been rated A (International), B (National), C+ (County), C and D importance in the Louth Wetland Surveys and</p>

³ Renewable and non-renewable resources (e.g. plants, animals, air, water, soils, minerals)

⁴ Except as provided for in Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, viz. There must be: a) no alternative solution available, b) imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the project to proceed; and c) Adequate compensatory measures in place.

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
		<p>any subsequent versions thereof.</p> <p>NBG 21 To support the implementation of recommendations included in the Louth Wetland Survey and any subsequent versions thereof.</p> <p>NBG 22 To support the implementation of recommendations contained in the National Peatlands Strategy 2015 and any subsequent strategies.</p> <p>NBG 44 To protect, maintain, and enhance the natural and organic character of the watercourses in the County, including opening up to daylight where safe and feasible. The creation and/or enhancement of riparian buffer zones will be required where possible. All proposed coastal walkways will be required to comply with the Habitats, EIA and SEA Directives</p> <p>NBG 57 To ensure that no development, including clearing or storage of materials, takes place within a minimum distance of 10m measured from each bank of any river, stream or watercourse.</p> <p>Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows</p> <p>NBG 29 To protect trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders and seek to designate additional Tree Preservations Orders (TPO), where appropriate.</p> <p>NBG 30 To protect trees and woodlands of special amenity value. Review and where appropriate make Tree Preservation Order(s) in relation to trees of special amenity value.</p> <p>NBG 31 Where in exceptional circumstances, trees and or hedgerows are required to be removed in order to facilitate development, this shall be done outside nesting season and there shall be a requirement that each tree felled is replaced at a ratio of 10:1 with native species and each hedgerow removed is to be replaced with a native species. In Drogheda and Dundalk, replacement trees will be required at a ratio of 5:1 where the removal of trees is required in order to facilitate development.</p> <p>NBG 32 To investigate the identification and addition of suitable trees and woodlands of special amenity value for inclusion in Tables 8.7, 8.8, 8.9 and 8.10 where appropriate, during the lifetime of the Plan.</p> <p>NBG 33 To assess the implications of proposed development on significant trees and hedgerows located on lands that are being considered for development, seeking their incorporation into design proposals where appropriate and in compliance with procedures detailed in Appendix 6.</p> <p>NBG 34 To increase native tree coverage in the County to also act as carbon sinks by promoting the planting of suitable native trees and hedgerows along public roads, residential streets, parks and other areas of open space.</p> <p>NBG 35 To encourage initiatives supporting private and community driven native tree and woodland planting schemes throughout the County, utilising available funding schemes.</p> <p>Green Infrastructure</p> <p>NBG 41 To support the green infrastructure network of County Louth and ensure its implementation in the assessment of all development proposals to prevent adverse impact on the ecological connectivity of County Louth's Core Areas.</p> <p>NBG 42 To require the use of and develop the green infrastructure network, and support re-establishing connectivity to ensure the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and as a supplementary guide for the protection and conservation of the European Sites in County Louth.</p> <p>NBG 45 To prepare specific Green Infrastructure Strategies for the Regional Growth Centres of Drogheda and Dundalk and integrate into the local area plan for each settlement.</p> <p>NBG 46 To develop linear parks, particularly along waterways, and to link existing parks and open spaces in order to provide green chains that promote permeability for pedestrians and cyclists in the Regional Growth Centres of Drogheda and Dundalk.</p> <p>NBG 47 To support the existing features of interest in the Level 3 and 4 Settlements of County Louth and promote and facilitate any areas identified for green infrastructure enhancement.</p> <p>NBG 48 All future development proposals shall require within the overall design scheme the integration of environmental assets and existing biodiversity features including those identified in Table 9 of the Green Infrastructure Strategy Appendix 8, Volume 3, to enhance the quality, character and design of the proposal.</p> <p>NBG 49 To require the integration of green infrastructure and inclusion of native planting schemes in all development proposals in landscaped areas, open spaces and areas of public space.</p> <p>Invasive Species</p> <p>NBG 12 Prevent and control the spread of invasive plant and animal species within the County.</p> <p>NBG 13 Development sites must be investigated for the presence of invasive species, which if present must be treated and/or eradicated in accordance with best practice. Where appropriate, Invasive Species Management Plans will be prepared for such sites.</p> <p>Light Pollution</p> <p>ENV 8 To ensure that all external lighting whether free standing or attached to a building shall be designed and constructed so as not to cause excessive light spillage, glare, or dazzle motorists, and thereby limiting light pollution into the surrounding environment and protecting the amenities of nearby properties, traffic and wildlife.</p> <p>ENV 9 To require all details of on-site lighting associated with all future development are submitted to and agreed with the planning authority.</p>

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
		<p>ENV 10 To promote the use of low energy LED (or equivalent) lighting in support of Climate Action.</p> <p>ENV 11 To implement a hierarchy of light intensity zones as required in development schemes to ensure that environmental impact is minimised as far as possible particularly in areas proximate to ecological corridors.</p> <p>Increases in visitor numbers</p> <p>TOU 18 To enable, facilitate and encourage the growth and sustainability of the tourism sector through the provision of tourism enterprise developments in rural areas subject to the provision of adequate infrastructure and compliance with normal planning considerations.</p> <p>TOU 19 To co-operate with the relevant authorities and government agencies north and south of the Border in the provision of Narrow Water Bridge.</p> <p>TOU 20 To promote the sustainable development of County Louth as a quality tourist destination in partnership with Fáilte Ireland and associated agencies themed on heritage, culture and an unspoilt natural environment and support innovative tourism projects that would boost employment and promote County Louth as a tourism destination, subject to compliance with the requirements of the Development Zones as detailed in Chapter 3.</p> <p>TOU 34 To seek to manage any increase in visitor numbers in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance and ensuring that new any projects, such as greenways, are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities, such as riparian zones.</p>
<p>Population and human health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential adverse effects arising from flood events. • Potential interactions if effects arising from environmental vectors. 	<p>Also see measures under other environmental components including Soil, Water and Air and Climatic Factors.</p> <p>Human Health</p> <p>ENV 3 To seek to achieve European and National standards in relation to air, noise and water quality in the County and apply BAT standard (Best Available Techniques).</p> <p>ENV 6 To implement the Louth County Council Noise Action Plan 2018-2023 (and any subsequent Plan) in order to avoid, prevent and reduce the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to environmental noise exposure.</p> <p>ENV 7 To require that where new development is proposed within the limits of the noise maps for the designated sections of roads in the County, appropriate mitigation measures are undertaken so as to prevent harmful effects from environmental noise.</p> <p>ENV 12 To promote the preservation of best ambient air quality compatible with sustainable development in accordance with the EU Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (2008/50/EC) and ensure that all air emissions associated with new developments are within Environmental Quality Standards as out in the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011 (SI No. 180 of 2011), or any updated/superseding documents.</p> <p>ENV 14 To ensure that adequate soil protection measures are undertaken where appropriate. Adequate and appropriate investigations shall be carried out into the nature and extent of any soil and groundwater contamination and the risks associated with site development work, where brownfield development is proposed.</p> <p>Major Accidents Directive – Seveso III</p> <p>ENV 27 To comply with the SEVESO II Directive in reducing the risk and limiting the potential consequences of major industrial accidents.</p> <p>ENV 28 To ensure that land use policies take account of the need to maintain appropriate distance between future major accident hazard establishments and residential areas, areas of substantial public use and of particular natural sensitivity or interest.</p> <p>ENV 29 To have regard to the advice of the HSA when proposals for a new SEVESO site, modifications to an existing SEVESO site or when proposals for development within the consultation zone of a SEVESO site are being considered (including and as detailed in Table 11.1)</p> <p>Radon</p> <p>ENV 13 To ensure the implementation of the specific guidance on radon prevention measures for new homes as contained within the existing Building Regulations including any updated / superseding regulations.</p> <p>Wind Farms</p> <p>IU 57 To facilitate the development of wind energy in an environmentally sustainable manner ensuring proposals are consistent with the landscape preservation objectives of the Plan, the protection of the natural and built environment and the visual and residential amenities of the area.</p>
<p>Soil</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential adverse effects on the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource, including as a result of development on 	<p>Also see measures under other environmental components including Water.</p> <p>Soil Protection and Contamination</p> <p>ENV 14 To ensure that adequate soil protection measures are undertaken where appropriate. Adequate and appropriate investigations shall be carried out into the nature and extent of any soil and groundwater contamination and the risks associated with site development work, where brownfield development is proposed.</p> <p>Geology and Quarries</p> <p>NBG 16 Support the designation of qualifying sites of geological interest listed in Table 8.4 as Natural Heritage Areas.</p> <p>NBG 17 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 listed in Table 8.4 of the Plan.</p> <p>NBG 18 To promote awareness, where appropriate, of areas of geological interest, including the provision of access and interpretation where desirable and feasible.</p> <p>ENV 41 To ensure that all existing and proposed quarries comply with the requirements of the document Quarry and Ancillary Facilities – Guidelines for Planning</p>

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
	<p>contaminated lands.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for riverbank and coastal erosion. 	<p>Authorities, (DECLG) 2004 or any replacement document and to promote a whole of life plan for an extractive location, including a post-closure remediation plan.</p> <p>ENV 43 To prevent development that would hinder the efficient or effective recovery of the County's aggregate resources.</p> <p>ENV 45 To ensure that the extraction of stone and mineral materials is carried out in a manner that is sustainable and does not significantly impact on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing and proposed European Sites; Other areas of importance for the conservation of flora and fauna; Areas of significant archaeological potential; In the vicinity of a recorded monument; County Geological Site (CGS); Sensitive Landscapes; World Heritage Sites; or Tentative World Heritage Sites. <p>ENV 47 To refer any application for development to the Geological Survey of Ireland, where it relates to mineral extraction, quarrying developments/extensions and any development involving excavations greater than 50,000m³ in volume or one hectare in area.</p> <p>Coastal and Riverbank Erosion</p> <p>ENV 50 To require that all proposed developments within 100m of the coastline of Louth, outside the main settlements (Levels 1-4) submit a Coastal Erosion Assessment Report. New developments will be prohibited, unless it can be objectively established based on the best scientific information at the time of the application, that the likelihood of erosion at a specific location is minimal taking into account, inter alia, any impacts.</p> <p>ENV 51 To recognise the concept of coastal evolution and fluvial flooding as part of our dynamic physical environment, and adopt an adaptive approach to working with these natural processes. The focus of a flood management strategy should not solely be driven by conservation of existing lands. It should recognise that marshes, mud flats and other associated eco-systems evolve and degenerate and appropriate consideration should be given to the realignment of defences and use of managed retreat and sacrificial flood protection lands to maintain such habitats as part of an overall strategy.</p> <p>ENV 52 To ensure the County's natural coastal defences (beaches, sand dunes, salt marshes and estuary lands) are protected and to ensure they are not put at risk by inappropriate works or development.</p> <p>ENV 53 To explore, where coastal erosion is considered a threat to existing properties, the technical, environmental and economic feasibility of coastal adaptation and coastal retreat management options.</p> <p>ENV 54 To employ soft engineering techniques as an alternative to hard coastal defence works, wherever possible.</p> <p>ENV 55 To identify, prioritise and implement necessary coastal protection works subject to the availability of resources, whilst ensuring a high level of protection for natural habitats and features, and ensure due regard is paid to visual and other environmental considerations in the design of any such coastal protection works.</p> <p>IU 25 To ensure that no development including clearing or storage of materials takes place within a minimum distance of 10m measured from each bank of any river, stream or watercourse.</p>
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential adverse effects upon the status of water bodies and entries to the WFD Register of Protected Areas (ecological and human value), arising from changes in quality, flow and/or morphology. 	<p>Also see measures under other environmental components including Soil and Material Assets.</p> <p>Water Quality/Status</p> <p>ENV 15 To implement the recommendations contained in the River Basin District Management Plans for Ireland 2018-2021 or any subsequent plan. Proposed plans, programmes and projects shall not have an unacceptable impact on the water environment, including surface waters, groundwater quality and quantity, river corridors and associated woodlands. Also, to have cognisance of, where relevant, the EU's Common Implementation Strategy Guidance Document No. 20 and 36 which provide guidance on exemptions to the environmental objectives of the Water Framework Directive.</p> <p>ENV 16 To increase awareness through educational and other means so as to inform the public of the need and importance of maintaining the highest possible water quality standards.</p> <p>ENV 17 To implement the recommendations contained in any Groundwater Protection Scheme prepared under EU Ground Water Directives and to protect ground water resources in County Louth, nutrient sensitive areas and the designated shellfish growing areas within Carlingford Lough and Dundalk Bay.</p> <p>ENV 18 To protect fisheries in all rivers in the County, where appropriate, including relevant species as contained in Annex II of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>ENV 19 To implement the requirements of the Groundwater Protection Scheme to protect known and potential ground water reserves.</p> <p>ENV 20 To ensure compliance with and to implement the provisions of the Nitrates Directive in so far as it falls within the remit of the Council to do so.</p> <p>ENV 21 To assess agricultural developments and associated agricultural waste matters within the County in accordance with the European Union (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2017 for the purpose of preventing or eliminating the entry of polluting matters to waters.</p>

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in flood risk and associated effects associated with flood events. 	<p>ENV 22 To encourage the use of catchment-sensitive farming practices, in order to meet Water Framework Directive targets and comply with the River Basin Management Plan.</p> <p>ENV 23 To implement the relevant provisions of the Planning and Development (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2011, and the European Communities (Amendment to Planning and Development) Regulations 2011, which require planning permission be sought where the area impacted by works relating to the drainage or reclamation of a wetland exceeds 0.1 hectares, or where such works may have a significant effect on the environment.</p> <p>ENV 59 To protect the excellent status classification of identified bathing water areas within County Louth.</p> <p>Sustainable urban drainage systems and Surface Water</p> <p>IU 19 To require the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems to minimise and limit the extent of hard surfacing and paving and require the use of SuDS measures be incorporated in all new development (including extensions to existing developments). All development proposals shall be accompanied by a comprehensive SuDS assessment including run-off quantity, run off quality and impacts on habitat and water quality.</p> <p>IU 20 To require all development proposals meet the design criteria, (adjusted to reflect local conditions), and material designs contained in the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GSDSDS) and demonstrate how runoff is captured as close to source as possible with subsequent slow release to the drainage system and watercourse.</p> <p>IU 21 To seek to avoid the discharge of additional surface water to combined sewers and promote Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and solutions to maximise the capacity of towns with combined drainage systems.</p> <p>IU 22 To ensure all new development incorporates appropriate measures to protect existing water bodies, through appropriate treatment of runoff. In particular, discharges from car parks shall be appropriately treated so as to remove pollutant materials.</p> <p>IU 23 To ensure all new developments provide for separated drainage systems.</p> <p>IU 24 To encourage particularly in buildings of increased height the provision of green roofs and green walls as an integrated part of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and which provide benefits for biodiversity, wherever possible.</p> <p>Flood Risk Management</p> <p>IU 25 To ensure that no development including clearing or storage of materials takes place within a minimum distance of 10m measured from each bank of any river, stream or watercourse.</p> <p>IU 26 To reduce the risk of new development being affected by possible future flooding by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoiding development in areas at risk of flooding and Where development in floodplains cannot be avoided, taking a sequential approach to flood risk management based on avoidance, reduction and adaptation to the risk. <p>IU 27 To ensure all proposals for development falling within Flood Zones A or B are consistent with the “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities” 2009. Proposals for development identified as being vulnerable to flooding must be supported by a site specific Flood Risk Assessment and demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the development and its infrastructure will avoid significant risks of flooding and not exacerbate flooding elsewhere.</p> <p>In Flood Zone C, where the probability of flooding is low (less than 0.1%), site-specific Flood Risk Assessment may be required and the developer should satisfy themselves that the probability of flooding is appropriate to the development being proposed.</p> <p>The County Plan SFRA datasets and the most up to date CFRAM Programme climate scenario mapping should be consulted by prospective applicants for developments in this regard and will be made available to lower-tier Development Management processes in the Council.</p> <p>Applications for development in flood vulnerable zones, including those at risk under the OPW’s Mid-Range Future Scenario, shall provide details of structural and non-structural risk management measures, such as those relating to floor levels, internal layout, flood-resilient construction, emergency response planning and access and egress during flood events.</p> <p>IU 28 Where a site specific Flood Risk Assessment demonstrates that there are significant residual flood risks to a proposed development or its occupiers in conflict with “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities” 2009, planning permission will normally not be granted unless the requirements of Section 5.28 ‘Assessment of minor proposals in areas of flood risk’ can be satisfied.</p> <p>IU 29 To implement the Flood Risk Management Measures as detailed in the Neagh Bann Flood Risk Management Plan, the Eastern Flood Risk Management Plan and the Dunleer Flood Risk Management Plan, ensuring that proposals for development support and do not impede the progression of these measures. Louth County Council will, in partnership with the Office of Public Works (OPW) deliver the following Flood Relief Schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dundalk, Blackrock and Ardee; Drogheda and Baltray; and Carlingford and Greenore.

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
		<p>IU 30 To work with the Office for Public Works in the development and implementation of catchment-based strategies for the management of flood risk – including those relating to storage and conveyance.</p> <p>IU 31 To contribute towards the improvement and/or restoration of the natural flood risk management functions of flood plains subject to compliance with the environmental legislation and availability of resources.</p> <p>IU 32 To ensure each flood risk management activity is examined to determine actions required to embed and provide for effective climate change adaptation as set out in the OPW Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan Flood Risk Management applicable at the time.</p> <p>IU 33 Where a portion of a site is at risk of flooding, the lands at risk will be subject to the sequential approach to ensure first and foremost that new development is directed towards lands at low risk of flooding; and to restrict the type of development to that 'appropriate' to each flood zone in accordance with Tables 3.1 and 3.2 of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines.</p> <p>IU 34 To consult with the Office of Public Works (OPW) in relation to proposed developments in the vicinity of drainage channels and rivers for which the OPW are responsible.</p> <p>IU 35 To consult with the Office of Public Works (OPW) in relation to proposed developments which include the construction, replacement or alteration of a bridge or culvert and to require that the developers obtain consent from the OPW under Section 50 of the EU (Assessment and Management of Flood Risks) Regulations 2010 and Section 50 of the Arterial Drainage Act 1945, where appropriate.</p>
<p>Air and Climatic Factors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential conflict between development under the Plan and aiming to reduce carbon emissions in line with local, national and European environmental objectives. • Potential conflicts between transport emissions, including those from cars, and air quality. • Potential conflicts between increased frequency of noise emissions and protection of sensitive receptors. • Potential conflicts with climate 	<p>Also refer to the overall approach to compact development and sustainability provided by the Plan</p> <p>Air Quality ENV 3 To seek to achieve European and National standards in relation to air, noise and water quality in the County and apply BAT standard (Best Available Techniques). ENV 12 To promote the preservation of best ambient air quality compatible with sustainable development in accordance with the EU Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (2008/50/EC) and ensure that all air emissions associated with new developments are within Environmental Quality Standards as out in the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011 (SI No. 180 of 2011), or any updated/superseding documents.</p> <p>Noise ENV 3 To seek to achieve European and National standards in relation to air, noise and water quality in the County and apply BAT standard (Best Available Techniques). ENV 6 To implement the Louth County Council Noise Action Plan 2018-2023 (and any subsequent Plan) in order to avoid, prevent and reduce the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to environmental noise exposure. ENV 7 To require that where new development is proposed within the limits of the noise maps for the designated sections of roads in the County, appropriate mitigation measures are undertaken so as to prevent harmful effects from environmental noise.</p> <p>Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Also refer to Section 8.6 of the SEA Environmental Report and Chapter 12 of the Draft Plan. CA 1 To promote, support and direct effective climate action policies and objectives that seek to improve climate outcomes across the settlement areas and communities of County Louth helping to successfully contribute and deliver on the obligations of the State to transition to low carbon and climate resilient society through the encouragement and integration of appropriate mitigation and adaptation considerations and measures into all development. CA 2 Work to translate, support and implement strategic objectives of the National Planning Framework and the Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy to create an enabling local development framework that: Promotes and integrates important climate considerations in local development and planning decisions; Supports national climate policy and targets of the Climate Action Plan (as revised and updated) and the delivery of the national transition objective. CA 3 Actively implement policies that support and encourage sustainable compact growth and settlement patterns, integrate land use and transportation, and maximise opportunities through development location, form, layout and design to secure climate resilience and reduce carbon dioxide and greenhouse emissions. CA 4 Support the work of Louth County Council in: Developing a robust comprehension of the key risks and vulnerabilities of the County to the negative impacts of climate change The implementation of adaptation and mitigation actions of the strategy aimed at building climate resilience across local communities and Promoting the integration of effective adaptation and mitigation considerations into decision making processes. CA 5 To actively promote and encourage nature-based approaches and green infrastructure solutions as viable mitigation and adaptation measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase the adaptive capacity of ecosystems and optimize the multifaceted benefits through: Conservation, promotion and restoration of the natural environment, Integrating an ecosystem services approach and promote healthy living environments through enhanced connection with nature and recreation/amenity, Enhancing biodiversity in urban and rural settings,</p>

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
	adaptation measures including those relating to flood risk management.	<p>Assist with water and flood risk management, Carbon storage or sequestration.</p> <p>CA 6 To capitalise on the economic opportunities for County Louth that arise in association with the environmental and technological advances required to support the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient economy and in particular, opportunities arising from the implementation and translation of the European Green Deal and the post COVID-19 recovery plan Next Generation EU, to national policy.</p> <p>CA 7 Promote and encourage positive community led climate action initiatives and projects that seek to reduce emissions, improve energy efficiency, enhance green infrastructure and encourage awareness on climate change issues.</p> <p>CA 8 To seek to identify projects or initiatives that will assist in meeting national climate and energy targets and to seek funding or support any funding applications for the implementation of these initiatives from available sources including the Department of Environment, Climate & Communications Climate Action Fund.</p> <p>CS 6 To support the implementation of the EU Green Deal, National Climate Action Plan 2019, Programme for Government 2020, Louth Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024 and the Climate Action Charter through the Plan and to consider, if appropriate, a variation of the development plan to ensure the consistency with the approach to climate action recommended in any revised Development Plan Guidelines as adopted.</p> <p>Traffic and Transport Assessment</p> <p>MOV 47 To require the preparation of Transport and Traffic Assessments for new developments in accordance with the requirements set out in the TII Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines.</p>
Material Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to provide adequate and appropriate waste water treatment (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts). Failure to adequately treat surface water run-off that is discharged to water bodies (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts). Failure to comply with drinking water regulations and serve new 	<p>Also see measures under other environmental components including Population and Human Health and various land use/compact development/phasing provisions from the Plan.</p> <p>Water Services and Surface Water</p> <p>IU 1 To liaise and work in conjunction with Irish Water in identifying, prioritising and progressing the implementation of water and wastewater projects throughout County Louth over the lifetime of the Plan, in accordance with the Core and Settlement Strategies.</p> <p>IU 2 To work in conjunction with Irish Water to protect and make existing water and wastewater infrastructure climate resilient to maximise the potential of existing capacity and to facilitate the timely delivery of new water and wastewater services infrastructure, to facilitate existing and future growth.</p> <p>IU 3 To support the development of Drinking Water Protection Plans in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and the current and future cycles of River Basin Management Plans. In this regard, the Council supports mitigation and protection measures for all protected areas, including Drinking Water Protected Areas and associated Source Protection Plans.</p> <p>IU 4 To support the provision, extension and upgrade of high quality water and wastewater services infrastructure for both existing and future developments within County Louth, consistent with the principles of sustainability, prioritising those centres where serious deficiencies are in evidence or where further sustainable development can be reasonably anticipated.</p> <p>IU 5 To support the extension or upgrading of existing water services infrastructure within the County (including those listed in the IW Investment Programme) and the provision of water services infrastructure in unserved settlements to assist in the proper planning and sustainable development of the County.</p> <p>IU 6 To require all new developments connect to the public supply where public water and wastewater infrastructure is available or likely to be available and which has sufficient capacity.</p> <p>IU 7 To support the development and proper management of Group Water Schemes subject to appropriate level of treatment being provided and suitable robust arrangements being put in place.</p> <p>IU 8 To discourage the use of pump stations for conveyance of sewage unless the proposed pump station will cater for a significant catchment of zoned development lands that otherwise cannot be serviced. Where deemed appropriate, in consultation with Irish Water, temporary pumping arrangements may be considered as an interim measure, pending the provision of more permanent arrangements within a reasonable timeframe. All arrangements for same will be as per the requirements and agreement of Irish Water.</p> <p>IU9 To support the commitment to water conservation and leakage reduction in accordance with best practice, and through the implementation of the National Leakage Reduction Programme, in order to conserve valuable resources and reduce wastage.</p> <p>IU 10 To support Irish Water in promoting public awareness and involvement in water conservation measures by households, business and industry.</p> <p>IU 11 To encourage new developments to incorporate water conservation measures such as rain water harvesting to minimise wastage of water supply.</p> <p>IU 12 To promote and support the development and proper management of Group Water Schemes in the County, subject to an appropriate level of treatment being provided and suitable robust operational arrangements being put in place.</p> <p>IU 13 To require that all development taking place within an area served by a public wastewater treatment system connects to that system.</p> <p>IU 14 To require that on lands identified for non-domestic development where no public waste water facility exists or is proposed, that the wastewater be adequately</p>

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
	<p>development with adequate drinking water (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases in waste levels. Potential impacts upon public assets and infrastructure. Interactions between agricultural waste and soil, water, biodiversity and human health – including as a result of emissions of ammonia from agricultural activities (e.g. manure handling, storage and spreading) and the production of secondary inorganic particulate matter. 	<p>treated and discharged to suitable receiving water, subject to a discharge licence.</p> <p>IU 15 To promote rain water harvesting and grey water use in all developments and in particular for larger developments, as an alternative to attenuation.</p> <p>IU 16 To require that proper supervision, installation and commissioning of on-site wastewater treatment systems by requiring site characterisation procedures and geotechnical assessments be carried out by competent professionally indemnified and suitably qualified persons.</p> <p>IU 17 To require that the construction and installation of all wastewater treatment systems are supervised and certified by a suitably qualified competent person as fit for the intended purpose and comply with the Council's requirements.</p> <p>IU 18 To require that private wastewater treatment systems for individual houses where permitted, comply with the recommendations contained within the EPA Code of Practice Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems, Population Equivalent ≤ 10 (2021).</p> <p>Waste Management</p> <p>ENV 24 To implement and support the provisions of the Eastern-Midlands Region Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 or any subsequent plan and EU Directives/Policies.</p> <p>10.11.12 Waste Management and Disposal: All future developments should seek to minimise waste through reduction, re-use and recycling. Waste management and disposal should be considered as part of the construction process and in the operation of the development when completed.</p> <p>10.11.13 Construction Waste: Construction related waste accounts for a significant proportion of total land filled waste in Ireland. Therefore, developers and builders should minimise construction waste generated in development projects. During the construction process measures should be implemented to minimise soil removal (as part of the scheme design process), properly manage construction waste and encourage off-site prefabrication where feasible.</p> <p>10.11.14 Domestic Waste: Everyday domestic waste produced by future residents and businesses shall be minimised through reduction, reuse and recycling. All new developments should provide for occupants to comply with the Louth County Council Segregation, Storage and Presentation of Household and Commercial Waste Bye-laws, 2019, whereby people must segregate their waste into dry recyclables, food waste and residual domestic waste. New developments should facilitate a three bin system in each unit.</p> <p>Resource based industry</p> <p>ENV 18 To protect fisheries in all rivers in the County, where appropriate, including relevant species as contained in Annex II of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>ENV 31 To support National policy in relation to forestry in order to develop an internationally competitive and sustainable forest sector that provides a full range of economic, environmental and social benefits to society, subject to normal planning criteria.</p> <p>ENV 43 To prevent development that would hinder the efficient or effective recovery of the County's aggregate resources.</p> <p>ENV 48 To implement the policies and objectives as set out within the National Maritime Spatial Plan to support the effective management of marine activities and more sustainable use of our marine resources.</p> <p>ENV 67 To protect the quality of designated shellfish waters off the Louth coast.</p> <p>Agriculture and Nitrates</p> <p>ENV 20 To ensure compliance with and to implement the provisions of the Nitrates Directive in so far as it falls within the remit of the Council to do so.</p> <p>ENV 21 To assess agricultural developments and associated agricultural waste matters within the County in accordance with the European Union (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2017 for the purpose of preventing or eliminating the entry of polluting matters to waters.</p> <p>ENV 22 To encourage the use of catchment-sensitive farming practices, in order to meet Water Framework Directive targets and comply with the River Basin Management Plan.</p> <p>ENV 23 To implement the relevant provisions of the Planning and Development (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2011, and the European Communities (Amendment to Planning and Development) Regulations 2011, which require planning permission be sought where the area impacted by works relating to the drainage or reclamation of a wetland exceeds 0.1 hectares, or where such works may have a significant effect on the environment.</p> <p>Tourism and Infrastructure Capacity</p> <p>TOU 35 To consider the potential environmental effects of a likely increase in tourists/tourism-related traffic volumes in particular locations/along particular routes shall be considered and mitigated as appropriate. Such a consideration should include potential impacts on existing infrastructure (including drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) resulting from tourism proposals.</p>

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
Cultural Heritage	Potential effects on protected and unknown archaeology and protected architecture arising from construction and operation activities.	<p>Archaeological Heritage⁵, including Monuments, Zones of Potential and World Heritage Site</p> <p>BHC 1 To protect and enhance archaeological sites and monuments, underwater archaeology, and archaeological objects listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), and/or the Register of Historic Monuments and seek their preservation (i.e. presumption in favour of preservation in situ or in exceptional cases, at a minimum, preservation by record) through the planning process and having regard to the advice and recommendations of the National Monuments Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage the principles as set out in the 'Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage' (Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands 1999).</p> <p>BHC 2 To protect the built heritage assets of the county 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 and sustainable development.</p> <p>BHC 3 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.</p> <p>BHC 4 To promote awareness and knowledge of the archaeological resources of the County and support initiatives where appropriate that provide better access to the historic built environment.</p> <p>BHC 5 To protect all sites and features of archaeological interest discovered subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places (i.e. preservation in situ or in exceptional circumstances, at a minimum preservation by record) having regard to the advice and recommendations of the National Monuments Section of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.</p> <p>BHC 6 To ensure any development, either above or below ground, adjacent to or in the immediate vicinity of a recorded monument or a Zone of Archaeological Potential (including formerly walled towns) shall not be detrimental to or detract from the character of the archaeological site or its setting and be sited and designed to protect the monument and its setting. Where upstanding remains exist, a visual impact assessment may be required.</p> <p>BHC 7 To require applicants seeking permission for development within Zones of Archaeological Potential and other sites as listed in the Record of Monuments and Places to include an assessment of the likely archaeological potential as part of the planning application and the Council may require that an on-site archaeological assessment is carried out by trial work, prior to a decision on a planning application being taken.</p> <p>BHC 8 To protect and preserve in situ all surviving elements of medieval town defences (both upstanding and buried) and associated features in accordance with the Conservation and Management Plans as applicable and with 'National Policy on Town Defences' (Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government 2008).</p> <p>BHC 9 To retain the surviving medieval street pattern, building lines and burgage plot widths in historic walled towns.</p> <p>BHC 10 To require, as part of the development management process, archaeological impact assessments, geophysical surveys, test excavations and monitoring, as appropriate, where development proposals involve ground clearance of more than half a hectare or for linear developments over one kilometre in length or for developments in proximity to areas with a density of known archaeological monuments and history of discovery, as identified by a licensed archaeologist.</p> <p>BHC 11 To work in partnership with Meath County Council, relevant agencies and the public to promote, understand, conserve and sustainably manage the Battlefield site of the Battle of the Boyne whilst protecting and enhancing its cultural landscape.</p> <p>BHC 12 To propose a variation of the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027, if required, to make appropriate amendments to the Plan, as a result of any recommendations arising from the publication of 'The Irish Battlefields Project'.</p> <p>BHC 13 To seek to protect historic and archaeological landscapes including battlefields, from inappropriate development.</p> <p>BHC 14 To work in partnership with Meath County Council, relevant agencies and the public to promote, understand, conserve and sustainably manage the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne to maintain its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).</p> <p>BHC 15 To ensure no development which might have significant deleterious impacts upon the character of the World Heritage Site is permitted.</p> <p>BHC 16 To protect the northern ridgeline (Map 13.1, Chapter 13) which frames the views within and from the World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne from visually intrusive and inappropriate development, subject to the Development Management Assessment Criteria detailed in Chapter 13 and using view-shed analysis as a tool to guide and inform development management.</p> <p>BHC 17 To encourage the retention, appropriate re-use and conservation of vernacular buildings in Rural Policy Zone One in preference to their replacement or the construction of new buildings on green-field sites and require all development herein to be subject to the Development Management Assessment Criteria as detailed in Chapter 13.</p> <p>BHC 18 To prepare a Framework Plan for the protection, development and promotion of lands subject to Rural Policy Zone One (as applicable to the lands including the</p>

⁵ As identified in the Plan, archaeological heritage encompasses designated and unknown archaeological heritage including entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, underwater archaeology, entries to the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record and Northern Ireland Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest and Archaeological Potential. Also encompassed are intervisibility and interrelationships between archaeological heritage within the wider landscape, including cross-border intervisibility and interrelationships.

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
		<p>UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne, the Tentative World Heritage Site of Monasterboice, and the Battle of the Boyne Battlefield site).</p> <p>BHC 19 To maintain the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Tentative World Heritage Site of Monasterboice and support its nomination as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.</p> <p>Architectural Heritage⁶, including Protected Structures, Architectural Conservation Areas, Gardens and Designed Landscapes and Vernacular Heritage</p> <p>BHC 20 To ensure that any development, modification, alteration, or extension affecting a protected structure and / or its setting is sensitively sited and designed, is compatible with the special character and is appropriate in terms of the proposed scale, mass, density, layout, and materials of the protected structure.</p> <p>BHC 21 The form and structural integrity of the protected structure and its setting shall be retained and the relationship between the protected structure, its curtilage and any complex of adjoining buildings, designed landscape features, designed views or vistas from or to the structure shall be protected.</p> <p>BHC 22 To prohibit inappropriate development within the curtilage and/or attendant grounds of a protected structure. Any proposed development within the curtilage and/or attendant grounds must demonstrate that it is part of an overall strategy for the future conservation of the entire complex including the structures, demesne and/or attendant grounds.</p> <p>BHC 23 To require that all planning applications relating to protected structures contain the appropriate documentation as described in the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011) or any subsequent guidelines, to enable a proper assessment of the proposed works and their impact on the structure or area.</p> <p>BHC 24 To require the retention of original features such as windows, doors, renders, roof coverings, and other significant features which contribute to the character of protected structures and encourage the reinstatement of appropriately detailed features which have been lost, to restore the character of protected structures as part of development proposals.</p> <p>BHC 25 To promote best conservation practice and the use of skilled specialist practitioners in the conservation of and for any works to protected structures.</p> <p>BHC 26 To encourage the retention, sympathetic reuse and rehabilitation of protected structures and their settings where appropriate and where the proposal is compatible with their character and significance. In certain cases, development management guidelines may be relaxed in order to secure the conservation of the protected structure and architectural features of special interest.</p> <p>BHC 27 To permit the demolition or significant modification of a protected structure, only in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>BHC 28 To ensure the protection of architectural features of special interest as part of any proposed re-development where there is conflict with other development plan requirements such as open space, car parking etc.</p> <p>BHC 29 To review and update the Record of Protected Structures on an ongoing basis and to make additions and deletions as appropriate.</p> <p>BHC 30 To seek funding streams for specific priority projects and to assist owners with the repair and conservation of protected structures and aim to make the structure climate resilient.</p> <p>BHC 31 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. All development proposals shall have regard to the Architectural Conservation Area objectives in Appendix 11, Volume 3 and objectives contained in applicable Character Appraisals where available.</p> <p>BHC 32 To retain any building within an Architectural Conservation Area which makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area. Demolition of such structures, the removal of features and street furniture which contribute to the character of the area shall only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Applications for demolition shall be accompanied by a measured and photographic survey, condition report and architectural heritage assessment.</p> <p>BHC 33 To ensure any new service infrastructure (installed by the Local Authority or Public/Private Sector Utility Companies) shall not be located where it will be detrimental to the character of the Architectural Conservation Area.</p> <p>BHC 34 To ensure that the protection of architectural features of special interest within an Architectural Conservation Area are retained as part of any proposed re-development. In certain cases development management guidelines may be relaxed in order to secure their conservation.</p> <p>BHC 35 To require that any development on the periphery of an Architectural Conservation Area does not detract from the existing character of the designated Architectural Conservation Area.</p> <p>BHC 36 To ensure that new trading bays and all associated signage shall not be located where it will be detrimental to the character of the Architectural Conservation Area or any important building or vista in the Architectural Conservation Area.</p>

⁶ As identified in the Plan, architectural heritage encompasses that which is designated or included within the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH), NIAH Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes, Records of Protected Structures and Northern Ireland's Listed Buildings and Northern Ireland's Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes. Also encompassed are intervisibility and interrelationships between architectural heritage within the wider landscape, including cross-border intervisibility and interrelationships.

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
		<p>BHC 37 To retain surviving medieval plots and street patterns in the Architectural Conservation Areas and other towns and villages where in evidence and in the course of development, to record and mark evidence of ancient boundaries and layouts etc.</p> <p>BHC 38 To ensure new development will not adversely affect the site, setting or views to and from historic gardens and designed landscapes of heritage significance.</p> <p>BHC 39 To require proposals for new development in designed landscapes and demesnes include an appraisal of the landscape, designed views and vistas, and an assessment of significant trees or groups of trees, where appropriate, in order to inform site appropriate design proposals.</p> <p>BHC 40 To require that proposals for large scale developments within Designed Landscapes and Demesnes to utilise 3D Digital Survey Modelling tools or such other processes/tools acceptable to the Planning Authority, to demonstrate that the proposed development does not adversely affect the site or its setting.</p> <p>BHC 41 To have regard to the 'Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines' (2011) and the 'Guidance Notes for the 'Appraisal of Historic Gardens, Demesnes, Estates and their Settings' (2006) in the appraisal and description of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes, and any subsequent Guidelines.</p> <p>BHC 42 To promote, where feasible, the protection, retention, sympathetic maintenance and appropriate revitalisation and use of the vernacular built heritage, including thatched cottages and other structures in both urban and rural areas, which contribute to the streetscape and landscape character and deter the demolition of these structures.</p> <p>BHC 43 To maintain and refurbish stone kerbs and paving stones where feasible and where new kerbs are necessary, ensure they are of a high quality and in character with the existing.</p> <p>BHC 44 To encourage the re-use and adaption of existing historic buildings in a manner compatible with their character.</p>
Landscape	Occurrence of adverse visual impacts and conflicts with the appropriate protection of designations relating to the landscape.	<p>NBG 23 To ensure the preservation of the uniqueness of a landscape character type by having regard to its character, value and objectives in accordance with national policy and guidelines and the Louth Landscape Character Assessment and 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.</p> <p>NBG 24 To ensure development reflects and, where possible, reinforces the distinctiveness and sense of place of the landscape character types including the retention of important features or characteristics, taking into account the various elements, which contribute to their distinctiveness such as scenic quality, habitats, settlement pattern, historic heritage and land use.</p> <p>NBG 25 Where appropriate, require that landscape and visual impact assessments prepared by suitably qualified professionals be submitted with development applications, which may have significant impact on landscape character areas, especially in highly sensitive areas.</p> <p>NBG 26 To explore the designation of Landscape Conservation Areas as appropriate, in conjunction with the relevant Government Department and stakeholders to protect specific important landscapes and particularly in respect of Carlingford Mountain SAC.</p> <p>NBG 27 To review and update, if necessary the Louth Landscape Character Assessment 2002 on foot of a framework for regional and local landscape character assessments as outlined in the National Landscape Strategy 2015-2025.</p> <p>NBG 28 To co-operate with adjoining local authorities, both north and south of the border, to ensure that the environment is maintained in a sustainable manner and to support the coordinated designation of sensitive landscapes and policy approaches with adjoining areas and on all aspects of environmental protection, particularly where transboundary environmental vulnerabilities are identified.</p> <p>NBG 36 To protect the unspoiled natural environment of the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) from inappropriate development and reinforce their character, distinctiveness and sense of place, for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations.</p> <p>NBG 37 To protect the unspoiled rural landscapes of the Areas of High Scenic Quality (AHSQ) from inappropriate development for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations.</p> <p>NBG 38 Protect and sustain the established appearance and character of views and prospects listed in Tables 8.14 – 8.18 of this Plan that contribute to the distinctive quality of the landscape, from inappropriate development.</p> <p>NBG 39 To improve, where necessary, public access to viewing points, subject to availability of resources.</p> <p>NBG 40 To prohibit inappropriate development which would interfere with or adversely affect the Scenic Routes as identified in Table 8.19 and illustrated on Map 8.20.</p> <p>NBG 41 To support the green infrastructure network of County Louth and ensure its implementation in the assessment of all development proposals to prevent adverse impact on the ecological connectivity of County Louth's Core Areas.</p> <p>NBG 42 To require the use of and develop the green infrastructure network, and support re-establishing connectivity to ensure the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and as a supplementary guide for the protection and conservation of the European Sites in County Louth.</p> <p>NBG 43 To utilise all information available on the Louth Baseline Assessment as evidence based decision making in the Louth Core Strategy.</p> <p>NBG 44 To protect, maintain, and enhance the natural and organic character of the watercourses in the County, including opening up to daylight where safe and feasible. The creation and/or enhancement of riparian buffer zones will be required where possible. All proposed coastal walkways will be required to comply with the Habitats, EIA and SEA Directives</p>

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Plan, included in:
		<p>NBG 45 To prepare specific Green Infrastructure Strategies for the Regional Growth Centres of Drogheda and Dundalk and integrate into the local area plan for each settlement.</p> <p>NBG 46 To develop linear parks, particularly along waterways, and to link existing parks and open spaces in order to provide green chains that promote permeability for pedestrians and cyclists in the Regional Growth Centres of Drogheda and Dundalk.</p> <p>NBG 47 To support the existing features of interest in the Level 3 and 4 Settlements of County Louth and promote and facilitate any areas identified for green infrastructure enhancement.</p> <p>NBG 48 All future development proposals shall require within the overall design scheme the integration of environmental assets and existing biodiversity features including those identified in Table 9 of the Green Infrastructure Strategy Appendix 8, Volume 3, to enhance the quality, character and design of the proposal.</p> <p>NBG 49 To require the integration of green infrastructure and inclusion of native planting schemes in all development proposals in landscaped areas, open spaces and areas of public space.</p> <p>NBG 50 To incorporate all identified stone walls into development proposals. Where retention of the stone wall is not feasible there shall be a requirement to rebuild the stone wall at an alternative, suitable location.</p> <p>NBG 51 To require the integration of climate change mitigation measures in any future spatial plans and climate change adaptation measures in proposed developments.</p> <p>NBG 52 To develop and support the implementation of a Regional Green Infrastructure approach by working collaboratively and in partnership with the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly, adjoining local authorities and other key stakeholders to identify, protect, enhance and manage existing green infrastructure within the County and to provide additional GI where possible.</p> <p>NBG 53 To support and increase investment in the on-going maintenance of existing, and provision of additional green infrastructure by accessing relevant EU funding mechanisms and national funding opportunities, including tourism related funding.</p> <p>NBG 54 To ensure the protection, enhancement and maintenance of Green Infrastructure in recognition of its health benefits in addition to the economic, social, environmental and physical value of green spaces, through the integration of Green Infrastructure planning and development in the planning process.</p> <p>NBG 55 To create an integrated and coherent green infrastructure for County Louth by ensuring compliance with the objectives listed in the Green Infrastructure Strategy outlined in Appendix 8, Volume 3, to improve pedestrian and cycle access routes within this green infrastructure network while ensuring that ecosystem functions and existing amenity uses are not compromised and existing biodiversity and heritage is protected and enhanced.</p> <p>NBG 56 To focus on 'greening' key streets in the Regional Growth Centres of Drogheda and Dundalk and key towns and villages by way of higher standards for planning and amenity along key routes.</p> <p>NBG 57 To ensure that no development, including clearing or storage of materials, takes place within a minimum distance of 10m measured from each bank of any river, stream or watercourse.</p>

Section 3 Environmental Report and Submissions/ Observations

3.1 Introduction

This section details how both the Environmental Report and submissions and observations made to Louth County Council on the Environmental Report and SEA process have been taken into account during the preparation of the Plan and the SEA.

3.2 SEA Scoping Notices and Submissions

As part of the scoping process for preparation of the Plan, environmental authorities⁷ were notified that a submission or observation in relation to the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the Environmental Report could be made to the Council.

Five scoping submissions were made during the SEA scoping process. These submissions were taken into account during preparation of the SEA.

A submission from the Environmental Protection Agency provided specific comments and advice, covering issues including the following:

- Climate Action
- Coastal Zone Management
- Invasive Alien Species Control and Management
- Key Plans and Programmes
- Available Guidance & Resources
- Environmental Sensitivity Mapping (ESM) Webtool
- EPA SEA WebGIS Tool
- EPA WFD Application
- EPA AA GeoTool
- State of the Environment Report – Ireland's Environment 2016
- Environmental Authorities

A submission from the Geological Survey of Ireland (a division of the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications)

provided specific comments and advice, covering issues including the following:

- Geoheritage
- Natural Resources (Minerals/Aggregates)
- Geological Mapping
- Groundwater
- Geohazards
- Marine and Coastal Unit

A submission from Meath County Council provided advice on potential cross border issues including invasive species and the need to ensure consistency between the Meath and Louth County Development Plans.

A submission from the Monaghan County Council provided specific comments and advice, covering issues including the following:

- Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna
- Air
- Archaeological Heritage
- Landscape

The submission from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine identified that it had no observations to make at the time.

3.3 Submissions on the Environmental Report for the Draft Plan

Various submissions were made on the Draft Plan and/or associated environmental assessment documents while these documents were on public display. Certain submissions resulted in updates being made to the Plan.

Updates to the SEA/AA/SFRA documents made on foot of submissions include:

- To more clearly link the relevant legislative commitments referred to in the SEA Environmental Report and Strategic Environmental Objectives used in the assessment, the following text was included at SEOs relating to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with national targets: "Please also refer to relevant legislation and requirements under Section 4.10, Section 8.6, Section 8.8.12 and Appendix I. Targets under the national Climate Action Plan are reviewed and updated periodically and include those

⁷ The following authorities were notified: Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage; Department of Environment, Climate and Communications; Environmental Protection Agency; Meath County Council; and Monaghan County Council.

under the headings of Electricity, Built Environment, Transport, Agriculture, Forestry & Land Use and Enterprise.”

- In Section 4.18 of the SEA Environmental Report, to add reference to the EPA-funded Environmental Sensitivity Mapping Web Tool www.enviromap.ie, which could also assist in lower tier consideration of plans and projects.
- In Section 5 of the SEA Environmental Report, to update an indicator and target as follows: “Implementation of the objectives of the second cycle of the River Basin Management Plan by 2021 (and subsequent ~~objective~~ **iterations** as relevant)”; and “Avoid inappropriate zoning **and development** in areas at risk of flooding and areas that are vulnerable to current and future erosion”.
- In Section 8.2 of the SEA ER, to refer to the **EPA’s guidance note ‘Good Practice Guidance note on cumulative effects assessment in SEA’**, which has been considered in the assessment.
- To add additional measures for flood risk management into the Plan and to add detail on the Justification Test in the SFRA report.
- On foot of a submission from the Northern Ireland’s Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs for Northern Ireland a number of amendments to maps and additional reference to Northern Ireland datasets were made throughout the environmental baseline section.

3.4 SEA documents including SEA Environmental Report

The Draft Plan and accompanying documents (including SEA Environmental Report and AA and SFRA documents) were placed on public display, having integrated various recommendations arising from the SEA, AA and SFRA processes. Responses to submissions made during the period of public display of a Draft Plan were integrated into a **Chief Executive’s** Report and considered by Louth County Council.

A number of material alterations were proposed after public display of the Draft Plan. The Proposed Material Alterations were subject to Screening for SEA and AA and a selection of Alterations were subject to SEA and Stage 2 AA.

On adoption of the Plan, the Environmental Report that had been placed on public display alongside the Draft Plan was updated to become a final Environmental Report that is consistent with the adopted Plan, taking into account all changes that were made to the original Draft Plan that was placed on public display.

Section 4 Summary of Alternatives considered

4.1 Introduction

The SEA Directive requires that reasonable alternatives (taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme) are identified, described and evaluated for their likely significant effects on the environment.

Whether or not alternatives for the County Development Plan are available has been identified by Louth County Council.

4.2 Limitations in Available Alternatives

The Plan is required to be prepared by the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), which specifies various types of objectives that must be provided for by the Plan.

The alternatives available for the Plan are limited by the provisions of higher-level planning objectives, including those of the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland Region. These documents set out various requirements for the content of the Plan including on topics such as settlement typology, land use zoning and the sustainable development of rural areas.

4.3 Alternatives for Settlement Hierarchy

Description of Alternatives for Ardee and Dunleer

- (A) Designate Ardee and Dunleer as Self-Sustaining Growth Towns
- (B) Designate Dunleer as Self-Sustaining Towns

Summary of Assessment

Both Ardee and Dunleer are two towns which display many attributes including a good level of jobs and services catering for both the resident population but also a wider catchment area, a broad range of services and facilities and transport links. They have the capacity for continued commensurate growth in terms of population and employment and to become more self-sustaining. Both towns have opportunities to accommodate compact growth within their development envelopes in accordance with national and regional policy.

By facilitating population and employment growth commensurate to the attributes of Ardee and Dunleer, Alternative A would provide for a more sustainable Settlement Hierarchy and a greater level of sustainable development at a County level. Alternative A would help to facilitate a more compact form of development at these settlements that would help to maximise benefits from infrastructural investment. Alternative A would not increase pressure in lower level settlements, which are generally less well-serviced and less-well connected, and the open countryside— and would, as a result, avoid potential adverse significant effects on various environmental components.

By limiting population growth in the two towns, Alternative B would fail to provide viable alternatives to the large towns of Drogheda and Dundalk as a place to live and work and would result in increased pressure in the lower level settlements and the open countryside. It would also militate against the future compact growth of the settlements. As a result, Alternative B would be likely to result in a greater extent of significant effects on various environmental components and would not be as sustainable as Alternative A.

Selected Alternative

- (A) Designate Ardee and Dunleer as Self-Sustaining Growth Towns

Description of Alternatives for Dromiskin

- (A) Designate Dromiskin as a Small Town and Village
- (B) Designate Dromiskin as a Self-Sustaining Town

Summary of Assessment

Alternative A would focus on localised sustainable growth and employment related development that would strengthen and support the local base and reduce commuting to and from Dromiskin. It would also provide a realistic and suitable alternative to one off housing in the countryside.

By facilitating population and employment growth commensurate to its attributes, Alternative A would provide for a more sustainable Settlement Hierarchy and a greater level of sustainable development at a County level and at a town level in Dromiskin. Alternative A would help to prevent further linear sprawl at this settlement which would not

be adequately serviced by the town. As a result, Alternative A would avoid potential adverse significant effects on various environmental components.

Designating Dromiskin as per Alternative B, would not be in line with the remainder of the settlements identified as **Self Sustaining towns as although Dromiskin's population is higher than many of the other settlements in this category**, it is characterised by elongated, linear development along a north-south axis, with very limited services, a weak employment base and displaying a lack of compact growth. A greater level of sprawl and higher dependence on outbound commuting for employment means that Alternative B would be likely to result in a greater extent of significant effects on various environmental components and would not be as sustainable as Alternative A.

Selected Alternative

- (A) Designate Dromiskin as a Small Town and Village

Description of Alternatives for 2 Potential "Rural Nodes"

- (A) **Designate 24 (no.) Level 5 Settlements, "Rural Nodes" dispersed throughout the County to meet rural generated housing needs.**
- (B) Do not designate 24 (no.) Level 5 Settlements, settlements to remain in the Open Countryside
- (C) **Designate 21 (no.) "Rural Nodes" but designate Tinure, Lordship and Greenore as "Small Towns and Villages"**

Summary of Assessment

The 24 Level 5 settlements are primarily residential in nature. Some of these villages are served by public mains water and/or waste water supply, whilst there are others that are unserved. The purpose of these settlements is to assist in satisfying rural generated housing needs within a low-density environment as an alternative to scattered one of housing in the open countryside. In accordance with the Settlement Typology as identified in the Eastern and Midland RSES, it is considered appropriate that these settlements are identified as Rural Nodes. As part of the strategy of strengthening the fabric of villages and creating sustainable communities, the Plan has identified the lands within these settlements as suitable to meet rural generated housing needs.

Alternative A, by providing focus to and targeted policies/objectives for the Rural Nodes, would facilitate a viable alternative to one-off housing in the open countryside. Development within these settlements would be more likely to be served by infrastructure (including water services infrastructure) and more likely to protect the environment including the status of ground and surface waters, water used for drinking water, human health, biodiversity and flora and fauna and the landscape. Development would be required to be subject to siting, design, protection of residential amenities and normal development management criteria, subject to the satisfactory provision of infrastructure and services and in keeping with the character of the settlement.

Not designating a wide selection of rural nodes throughout the County would result in a consequential increase in the unsustainable provision of one-off housing in the open countryside. This would further erode these small settlement centres and diminish the opportunity to provide for focused, compact development within small rural nodes and which would in turn threaten community cohesion and quality of life. Alternative B, by not providing a focus to and targeted policies/objectives for Rural Nodes would be less likely to provide a viable alternative to one-off housing in the open countryside. Development within the open countryside would be less likely to be served by infrastructure (including water services infrastructure) and less likely to protect the environment including the status of ground and surface waters, water used for drinking water, human health, biodiversity and flora and fauna and the landscape. Alternative B would be the least sustainable of all alternatives and would be most harmful to the environment.

The settlements of Tinure and Lordship, albeit displaying a higher resident population and Greenore with a strong economic base are very limited in terms of services and capacity to absorb additional development. Some of the rural nodes do have water services in place while others are not fully serviced. Including these villages in the higher tier would not be sustainable and would be harmful to the environment, resulting in adverse environmental impacts associated with the absence of waste water treatment in a number of instances (including effects on water, drinking water, human health). Designating the other 21 (no.) settlements as Rural Village would result in the positive environmental effects as detailed under Alternative A.

4.4 Alternatives for Population Allocations

Description of Alternatives

- (A) Concentrate future growth in the settlements in the upper tiers of the settlement hierarchy, in particular the Regional Growth Centres of Drogheda and Dundalk and the Self-Sustaining Growth Towns of Ardee and Dunleer, with a more limited level of growth in the smaller settlements and open countryside.
- (B) Continued growth of Drogheda and Dundalk with dispersed pattern of growth across the smaller settlements and the open countryside.

Summary of Assessment

The concentration of growth in the larger settlements in the County i.e. Drogheda, Dundalk, Ardee, and Dunleer will ensure there are settlements suitably located in the County with the capacity to grow at a sustainable level where there are opportunities to consolidate development in the existing urban footprint through infill and brownfield development. These settlements have a number of positive attributes including a broad range of services, transport links, a strong employment base, and capacity to facilitate population and economic growth. By providing for a concentration in the larger settlements in the County, Alternative A would result in lower levels of commuting, benefiting efforts to improve sustainable mobility and meet greenhouse gas emission reduction targets the most. Development in these centres would be better serviced and there would be a reduced need for greenfield

development (and associated adverse environmental effects) in less well-serviced, less-well connected and more sensitive locations in the County, including the open countryside and smaller settlements.

A more dispersed pattern of development as identified in Alternative B that would result in the expansion of the smaller towns and villages in the County. Development is more likely to be on greenfield lands as there are few infill and brownfield sites available. Services and public transport are more limited and there would be a greater dependence on commuting for employment. Alternative B would result in higher levels of commuting, conflicting with efforts to improve sustainable mobility and meet greenhouse gas emission reduction targets the most. Alternative B would provide for higher levels of greenfield development (and associated adverse environmental effects) in less well-serviced, less-well connected and more sensitive locations in the County, including the open countryside and smaller settlements. This type of development would result in a higher adverse environmental impact, including effects on water, drinking water, human health, ecology and landscape designations. Alternative B would not be sustainable and would conflict with environmental protection and management.

Selected Alternative

- (A) Concentrate future growth in the settlements in the upper tiers of the settlement hierarchy, in particular the Regional Growth Centres of Drogheda and Dundalk and the Self-Sustaining Growth Towns of Ardee and Dunleer, with a more limited level of growth in the smaller settlements and open countryside.

4.5 Alternatives for Rural Areas

Description of Alternatives

- (A) Retain the 6 Development Control Zones for the County as set out in the CDP 2015-2021
- (B) **Consolidate the 6 Development Control Zones into 2 'Rural Policy Zones' as follows:**
- Rural Policy Zone 1 – Area under strong urban influence and of significant landscape value;
 - Rural Policy Zone 2 – Area under strong urban influence
- (C) Have a single Rural Policy Zone for the entire County as follows: Rural Policy Zone – Area under strong urban influence

Summary of Assessment

An analysis of data from the Census 2016 identified a strong relationship between large urban centres and the rural areas in Louth with high volumes of commuting to Dundalk, Drogheda, and the Dublin Metropolitan Area. Based on **this analysis the entire County has been identified as an 'Area Under Strong Urban Influence.'**

Restricting development in rural areas that are under strong urban influence would positively impact upon the protection and management of the environment and sustainable development. The restrictions would help to both reduce levels of greenfield development in areas immediately surrounding existing centres and encourage brownfield development within existing centres.

Rural development would be directed towards appropriate rural areas and urban development would be directed towards established settlements. This approach would prevent low density urban sprawl and associated adverse effects upon sustainable mobility, climate emission reduction targets and various environmental components.

In the 2015-2021 County Development Plan, 6 'Development Control Zones' in the County were identified. The qualifying criteria varied in each Control Zone, and was based on the environmental sensitivities of each Zone, with a more stringent criteria in the more environmentally sensitive locations. Alternative A involves the retention of these 6 zones. Although these zones contribute towards the protection and management of the environment, they do not provide as coherent or as universally interpretable an approach as would be the case with Alternative B.

Alternative B condenses the 6 Control Zones into 2 'Rural Policy Zones' and reduces any confusion regarding the qualifying criteria in each of the Zones. This assists in interpreting and implementing the qualifying criteria whilst also ensuring the policy is sufficiently robust to protect the most sensitive landscapes in the County. Alternative B provides the most coherent approach to environmental protection and management and sustainable development.

Option 3 proposes a single Rural Policy Zone for the County 'Rural Area Under Strong Urban Influence'. Whilst this policy zone would take account of the pressures the countryside is under from potential urban generated development this option does not differentiate between the more sensitive rural landscapes in the County and therefore could potentially result in the erosion of such sensitive landscapes.

Selected Alternative

- (B) **Consolidate the 6 Development Control Zones into 2 'Rural Policy Zones' as follows:**
- Rural Policy Zone 1 – Area under strong urban influence and of significant landscape value;
 - Rural Policy Zone 2 – Area under strong urban influence

4.6 Alternatives for Densities

Descriptions of Density Alternatives for Ardee and Dunleer

- (A) Densities applicable to the Settlements are min 35/ha in the town centre and min 25/ha at the edge of centre
- (B) Densities in line with the larger settlements of Drogheda and Dundalk
- (C) Densities in line with the lower Level settlements

Summary of Assessment

Within the Settlement Hierarchy, Ardee and Dunleer occupy a lower level than the two towns of Drogheda and Dundalk but still provide the opportunity for higher densities. The densities provided for allow for securing compact growth and consolidating development within the town centre commensurate with the existing pattern of development and the character of the area, while the lower densities on the more peripheral areas allows for a variety in residential development to cater for a wide range of needs and desires.

Densities in line with Drogheda and Dundalk might lead to over-development and detract from the character and pattern of development established within these more moderate sized towns.

Lower densities within these towns would undoubtedly fail to realise compact growth, would generate urban sprawl and fail to maximise the return on infrastructure investment.

Selected Alternative

- (A) Densities applicable to the Settlements are min 35/ha in the town centre and min 25/ha at the edge of centre

Descriptions of Density Alternatives for Sustaining Towns and Small Towns and Villages

- (A) The density of development will be reflective of the character of the settlement and the existing pattern of development in the area
- (B) A defined density applicable to all the designated settlements

Summary of Assessment

Whilst all developments should strive to achieve recommended densities it is acknowledged that there will be cases where there are specific constraints (such as topography) that will restrict the scale of development that can be delivered. It is essential in these settlements that the character of the settlement and the existing pattern of development is considered in future proposed development. In such cases a lower density than that prescribed may be considered acceptable.

Selected Alternative

- (A) The density of development will be reflective of the character of the settlement and the existing pattern of development in the area

4.7 Alternatives for Land Use Zoning

Land use zoning has been applied in a way that primarily seeks to achieve sustainable and compact growth, taking into account the various requirements set out in the higher-level NPF and Eastern and Midlands RSES. The Council have identified realistic alternatives for certain settlements, where these are available taking into account the various requirements set out in the higher-level NPF and Eastern and Midlands RSES. These realistic alternatives are described on **Error! Reference source not found.** with a summary of assessment provided.

Table 4.1 Land Use Zoning Alternatives and Summary Assessment

Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Summary of Assessment
Dundalk (Set 1)	New Residential Zoning: A. North, to the north of Castletown River	Alternative A does not provide for sequential development of the town and is not linked as well as Alternative B for movement to and from services.
	New Residential Zoning: B. Along Mount Avenue	Alternative B provides for sequential development of the town, close to the existing town centre. Funding has been secured for movement infrastructure
	New Residential Zoning: C. South, to the south of Oriel Park	Alternative C does not provide for sequential development of the town and is not linked as well as Alternative B for movement to and from services.
Dundalk (Set 2)	General Employment Zoning: A. Northern site, along N52	Alternative A provides access to the Motorway through the Inner Relief Road – this issue would not hinder the sustainable development of these lands and the town.
	General Employment Zoning: B. North Western site along R177	There is no direct access to the Motorway from this site. As a result, development of the site could be hindered and pressures may present elsewhere in the County, on less well-serviced, less-well connected, more sensitive lands – and associated adverse environmental effects.
Drogheda (Set 1)	A. Site (within Flood Zone A) along the Boyne zoned as New Residential	New Residential would be an inappropriate use for these lands and would be unlikely to be in compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. Due to the elevated flood risk, the development of this site would be hindered and development pressures may present elsewhere in the County, on less well-serviced, less-well connected, more sensitive lands – and associated adverse environmental effects.
	B. Site (within Flood Zone A) along the Boyne zoned as Open Space	Open Space would be an appropriate use for these lands and would be to be in compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. New Residential lands could be zoned elsewhere in the settlement on lands with low levels of flood risk. Such residential development would reduce the need for development elsewhere in the County, on less well-serviced, less-well connected, more sensitive lands – and associated adverse environmental effects.
Drogheda (Set 2)	Westgate Area Zoning A. Town or Village Centre	The regeneration of Westgate is essential to the sustainable development of Drogheda. Development of this area would be more likely to occur and receive funding under Alternative A – less likely under Alternative B.
	Westgate Area Zoning B. Regeneration	The purpose of the 'Regeneration' zoning is to encourage and facilitate opportunities for regeneration and place making. The lands or areas are strategically located within settlements and consist of vacant or under-utilised buildings or land with significant potential to stimulate the rejuvenation of an area or neighbourhood. The primary objective is to support regeneration, make a positive contribution to urban spaces, and improve quality of life for all. Development of Westgate would reduce the need for development elsewhere in the County, on less well-serviced, less-well connected, more sensitive lands – and associated adverse environmental effects.
Drogheda (Set 3)	Site to the north west of the M1/R168 roundabout A. Tourism and Leisure	There is a planning need identified for Tourism and Leisure Uses on an adequately sized site. Placing such uses at this location would not provide for the sequential development of the town and would not provide for the compact development of the town – this site is removed from the existing development envelope and is the other side of the Motorway.
	Site to the north west of the M1/R168 roundabout B. Retail Park	There is no established planning need for such a retail development as would be provided by Alternative B. Placing a retail park at this location would not provide for the sequential development of the town and would not provide for the compact development of the town – this site is removed from the existing development envelope and is the other side of the Motorway. A retail park would undermine and reduce the viability of the existing retail offering in the town centre.
	Site to the north west of the M1/R168 roundabout C. Do not include in the settlement plan boundary	Not developing this site would help to ensure that compact and sequential development of Drogheda is achieved.
Drogheda (Set 4)	Site to the north west of the N51/R132 roundabout	There is a planning need identified for Tourism and Leisure Uses on an adequately sized site. Although the development of such a site would have potential adverse impacts, it would contribute to the overall sustainable development and available service offering in Drogheda. Although this site is removed from

Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Summary of Assessment
	A. Tourism and Leisure	the existing development envelope, it is adjacent to planned residential uses in an area where there is limited services available.
	Site to the north west of the N51/R132 roundabout B. Retail Park	There is no established planning need for such a retail development as would be provided by Alternative B. A retail park would undermine and reduce the viability of the existing retail offering in the town centre.
	Site to the north west of the N51/R132 roundabout C. Do not include in the settlement plan boundary	There is a planning need identified for Tourism and Leisure Uses on an adequately sized site. Although the development of such a site would have potential adverse impacts, it would contribute to the overall sustainable development and available service offering in Drogheda. Although this site is removed from the existing development envelope, it is adjacent to planned residential uses in an area where there is limited services available.
Ardee (Set 1)	Zoning for sites in the north of the settlement: A. New Residential for eastern site (with open space provided in flood areas), Strategic Reserve for western site	Alternative A provides for sequential development of the town and is better linked than Alternative B to and from the existing town centre and development envelope.
	Zoning for sites in the north of the settlement: B. Strategic Reserve for eastern site (with open space provided in flood areas), New Residential for western site	Alternative B does not provide for sequential development of the town and is not linked as well as Alternative A to and from the existing town centre and development envelope.
Dunleer (Set 1)	General Employment Zoning: A. Site adjoining the south west of the existing settlement envelope	This is adjacent to the Motorway providing the potential for easy and efficient access. Employment uses are appropriate to this location which is likely to experience elevated levels of noise.
	General Employment Zoning: B. Site adjoining the north east of the existing settlement envelope	This site is further out from the town centre and more detached from the Motorway.
Baltray (Set 1)	A. Sites (within Flood Zone A) along the Boyne Estuary zoned as New Residential	New Residential would be an inappropriate use for these lands and would be unlikely to be in compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. Due to the elevated flood risk, the development of this site would be hindered and development pressures may present elsewhere in the County, on less well-serviced, less-well connected, more sensitive lands.
	B. Sites (within Flood Zone A) along the Boyne Estuary zoned as Open Space	Open Space would be an appropriate use for these lands and would be in compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. New Residential lands could be zoned elsewhere in the settlement on lands with low levels of flood risk. Such residential development would reduce the need for development elsewhere in the County, on less well-serviced, less-well connected, more sensitive lands.
Carlingford (Set 1)	A. Site (within Flood Zone A) along Carlingford Lough zoned as New Residential	New Residential would be an inappropriate use for these lands and would be unlikely to be in compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. Due to the elevated flood risk, the development of this site would be hindered and development pressures may present elsewhere in the County, on less well-serviced, less-well connected, more sensitive lands.
	B. Site (within Flood Zone A) along Carlingford Lough zoned as Open Space	Open Space would be an appropriate use for these lands and would be to be in compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. New Residential lands could be zoned elsewhere in the settlement on lands with low levels of flood risk. Such residential development would reduce the need for development elsewhere in the County, on less well-serviced, less-well connected, more sensitive lands.
Clogherhead (Set 1)	General Employment Zoning: A. Site adjoining the west of the existing settlement envelope	Site Alternative A has less sensitivities than site alternative B – including flood risk, ecological and visual sensitivities.
	B. Site adjoining the south of the existing settlement envelope and coast	Site Alternative B has more sensitivities than site alternative A – including flood risk, ecological and visual sensitivities.
Tallanstown (Set 1)	A. Site (within Flood Zone A) adjacent to centre zoned as New Residential	New Residential would be an inappropriate use for these lands and would be unlikely to be in compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. Due to the elevated flood risk, the development of this site would be hindered and development pressures may present elsewhere in the County, on less well-serviced, less-well connected, more sensitive lands.
	B. Site (within Flood Zone A) adjacent to centre zoned as Open Space	Open Space would be an appropriate use for these lands and would be in compliance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. New Residential lands could be zoned elsewhere in the settlement on lands with low levels of flood risk. Such residential development would reduce the need for development elsewhere in the County, on less well-serviced, less-well connected, more sensitive lands.

4.8 Reasons for choosing the alternatives for the Plan in the light of the other reasonable alternatives

The selected alternatives were developed by the Planning Team, placed on public display and adopted by the Council having regard to both:

1. The environmental effects which were identified by the SEA and are summarised above; and
2. Planning - including social and economic - effects that also were considered by the Council.

Section 5 Monitoring Measures

5.1 Introduction

The SEA Directive requires that the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes are monitored. This section details the measures which will be used in order to monitor the likely significant effects of implementing the Plan.

Monitoring can both demonstrate the positive effects facilitated by the Plan and can enable, at an early stage, the identification of unforeseen adverse effects and the undertaking of appropriate remedial action.

The occurrence of significant adverse environmental effects not predicted and mitigated by this assessment, which are directly attributable to the implementation of the Plan, would necessitate consideration of these effects in the context of the Plan and potential remediation action(s) and/or review of part(s) of the Plan.

5.2 Indicators and Targets

Monitoring is based around indicators which allow quantitative measures of trends and progress over time relating to the Strategic Environmental Objectives identified in the main SEA Environmental Report and used in the evaluation. Each indicator to be monitored is accompanied by the target(s) which were identified with regard to the relevant strategic actions. Given the position of the Development Plan in the land use planning hierarchy beneath the Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), the measures identified in that RSES SEA have been used – as they are or having been slightly modified – in most instances. This consistency across the hierarchy of land use plans will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of future monitoring programmes.

Table 5.1 overleaf shows the indicators and targets which have been selected for monitoring the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan, if unmitigated.

Monitoring is an ongoing process and the programme allows for flexibility and the further refinement of indicators and targets. The Monitoring Programme may be updated to deal with specific environmental issues – including unforeseen effects – as they arise.

5.3 Sources

The Plan will form part of the wider land use planning framework comprising a hierarchy of policies, plans, programmes, etc. This wider framework, including the National Planning Framework and the Eastern and Midlands RSES, is subject to its own SEA (and associated monitoring) requirements. At lower tiers of the hierarchy, Local Area Plans and individual projects will be subject to their own monitoring requirements as relevant.

In implementing the Monitoring Programme the Council will take into account this hierarchy of planning and environmental monitoring.

Sources for indicators may include existing monitoring databases (including those maintained by planning authorities and national/regional government departments and agencies) and the output of lower-tier environmental assessment and decision making (including a review of project approvals granted and associated documents and the output of any EIA monitoring programmes).

Internal monitoring of the environmental effects of grants of permission in the Council would provide monitoring of certain indicators on a *grant of permission*⁸ basis. Where significant adverse effects as a result of the development to be permitted are identified, such effects could be identified, recorded and used to inform monitoring evaluation.

⁸ The likely significant effects of development proposals on environmental sensitivities are further determined during the development management process. Documenting any identified effects as a result of a development to be permitted can help to fulfill monitoring requirements.

5.4 Reporting and Responsibility

A stand-alone Monitoring Report on the significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan will be prepared in advance of the beginning of the review of the Plan. This report should address the indicators set out on Table 5.1. The Council is responsible for the ongoing review of indicators and targets, collating existing relevant monitored data, the preparation of monitoring evaluation report(s), the publication of these reports and, if necessary, the carrying out of remedial action

Table 5.1 Indicators, Targets, Sources and Remedial Action

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	BFF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Condition of European sites Number of spatial plans that have included ecosystem services content, mapping and policy to protect ecosystem services when their relevant plans are either revised or drafted SEA and AA as relevant for new Council policies, plans, programmes etc. Status of water quality in the County's water bodies Compliance of planning permissions with Plan measures providing for the protection of Biodiversity and flora and fauna – see Chapter 8 "Natural Heritage, Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require all local level land use plans to include ecosystem services and green/blue infrastructure provisions in their land use plans and as a minimum, to have regard to the required targets in relation to the conservation of European sites, other nature conservation sites, ecological networks, and protected species Implement and review, as relevant, Louth Heritage Plan and the Louth Biodiversity Plan For planning permission to be only granted when applications demonstrate that they comply with all Plan measures providing for the protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna – see Chapter 8 "Natural Heritage, Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage report of the implementation of the measures contained in the Habitats Directive - as required by Article 17 of the Directive (every 6 years). Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage National Monitoring Report for the Birds Directive under Article 12 (every 3 years) Internal monitoring of preparation of local land use plans Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant). Consultations with the NPWS (at monitoring evaluation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where condition of European sites is found to be deteriorating this will be investigated with the Regional Assembly and the DCHG (and the DHLGH for water) to establish if the pressures are related to Plan actions / activities. A tailored response will be developed in consultation with these stakeholders in such a circumstance. Where water bodies are failing to meet at least good status this will be investigated with the DHLGH Water Section, the Regional Assembly, the EPA Catchment Unit and, as relevant, Irish Water to establish if the pressures are related to Plan actions / activities. A tailored response will be developed in consultation with these stakeholders in such a circumstance.
Population and Human Health	PHH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of Plan measures relating to the promotion of economic growth as provided for by Chapter 5 "Economy and Employment" Number of spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors resulting from development permitted under the Plan Proportion of people reporting regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures Number of spatial plans that include specific green infrastructure mapping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For review of progress on implementing Plan objectives to demonstrate successful implementation of measures relating to the promotion of economic growth as provided for by Chapter 5 "Economy and Employment" No spatial concentrations of health problems arising from environmental factors as a result of implementing the Plan Increase in the proportion of people reporting regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures. Implementation of Green Infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal review of progress on implementing Plan objectives Consultations with the Health Service Executive and EPA CSO data Internal monitoring of preparation of local land use plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where planning applications in key growth towns are rejected due to insufficient capacity in the waste water treatment plant or failure of the waste water treatment plant to meet Emission Limit Values, the Council will contribute towards a response with the Regional Assembly, EPA and Irish Water to achieve the necessary capacity. Where proportion of population shows increase in private car use above CSO 2016 figures, the Council will coordinate with the Regional Assembly, the DHLGH, DCCAE and NTA to develop a tailored response.
Soil (and Land)	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of population growth occurring on infill and brownfield lands compared to greenfield Volume of contaminated material generated from brownfield and infill development Number of AA determinations and environmental assessments undertaken to support applications for brownfield and infill development prior to planning permission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain built surface cover nationally to below the EU average of 4%. Achieve the 40% target for growth on infill as per NPF. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Geoportal Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the proportion of growth on infill and brownfield sites is not keeping pace with the targets set in the NPF and the RSES, the Council will liaise with the Regional Assembly to establish reasons and coordinate actions to address constraints to doing so.
Water	W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Status of water bodies as reported by the EPA Water Monitoring Programme for the WFD Indicators for descriptors as reported under Article 11 of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive Number of incompatible developments permitted within flood risk areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not to cause deterioration in the status of any surface water or affect the ability of any surface water to achieve 'good status' Implementation of the objectives of the second cycle of the River Basin Management Plan by 2021 (and subsequent objectives as relevant) Minimise developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPA Monitoring Programme for WFD compliance Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant) Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, Marine and Foreshore Section 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where water bodies are failing to meet at least good status this will be investigated with the DHLGH Water Section, the EPA Catchment Unit, the Regional Assembly and, as relevant, Irish Water to establish if the pressures are related to Plan actions / activities. A tailored response will be developed in consultation with these stakeholders in such a circumstance. Where marine water bodies are failing to meet good ecological status this will be interrogated with the Marine Institute, the DHLGH Water Section and the Regional Assembly to establish if the pressures are related to Plan

SEA Statement for the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action
					<p>actions/activities. A tailored response will be developed in consultation with these stakeholders in such a circumstance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where planning applications in key growth towns are rejected due to insufficient capacity in the Waste water treatment Plant or failure of the plant to meet Emission Limit Values, the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly will coordinate a response between the relevant local authority, EPA and Irish Water to achieve the necessary capacity. The Council will engage, as relevant, with the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly and the OPW with respect to planning applications for development in areas of elevated flood risk.
Material Assets	MA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programmed delivery of Irish Water infrastructure for all key growth towns in line with Irish Water Investment Plan and prioritisation programme to ensure sustainable growth can be accommodated Number of new developments granted permission which can be adequately and appropriately served with waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan Proportion of population within who report regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To map brownfield and infill land parcels across the County. All new developments granted permission to be connected to and adequately and appropriately served by waste water treatment over the lifetime of the Plan Where septic tanks are proposed, for planning permission to be only granted when applications demonstrate that the outfall from the septic tank will not – in- combination with other septic tanks– contribute towards any surface or ground water body not meeting the objective of good status under the Water Framework Directive Increased budget spends on water and waste water infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant) CSO data Consultations with Irish Water (at monitoring evaluation) Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in conjunction with Local Authorities Department of Environment, Climate and Communications Department of Public Expenditure and Reform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where planning applications in key growth towns are rejected due to insufficient capacity in the waste water treatment plant or failure of the waste water treatment plant to meet Emission Limit Values, the Council will coordinate a response between the Regional Assembly, EPA and Irish Water to achieve the necessary capacity. Where proportion of population shows increase in private car use above CSO 2016 figures, the Council will coordinate with the Regional Assembly, DHLGH and NTA to develop a tailored response.
Air	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of journeys made by private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 National Travel Survey levels of 74% NO_x, SO_x, PM10 and PM2.5 as part of Ambient Air Quality Monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decrease in proportion of journeys made by private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 National Travel Survey levels. Improvement in Air Quality trends, particularly in relation to transport related emissions of NO_x and particulate matter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSO data Data from the National Travel Survey EPA Air Quality Monitoring Consultations with Department of Transport, Transport Trends and Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (at monitoring evaluation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where proportion of population shows increase in private car use above CSO 2016 figures, Council will coordinate with the Regional Assembly, DHLGH, DCCAE and NTA to develop a tailored response. See also entry under Population and human health above
Climatic Factors	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of Plan measures relating to climate reduction targets as provided for by Plan provisions including those provided for and referenced in Chapter 12 "Climate Action" Proportion of journeys made by private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 levels Proportion of people reporting regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For review of progress on implementing Plan objectives to demonstrate successful implementation of measures climate reduction targets as provided for by Plan provisions including those provided for and referenced in Chapter 12 "Climate Action" Increase in the proportion of people resident in the County reporting regular cycling / walking to school and work above 2016 CSO figures Decrease in the proportion of journeys made by residents of the County using private fossil fuel-based car compared to 2016 levels Contribute towards transition to a competitive, low-carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050 Contribute towards the target of the Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC), for all Member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPA Annual National Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory reporting Climate Action Regional Office Consultations with Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (at monitoring evaluation) CSO data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where trends toward carbon reduction are not recorded, the Council will liaise with the Regional Assembly to establish reasons and develop solutions Where proportion of population shows increase in private car use above CSO 2016 figures, the Council will coordinate with the Regional Assembly, DHLGH and NTA to develop a tailored response

SEA Statement for the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action
			<p>States to reach a 10% share of renewable energy in transport by 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute towards the target of aggregate reduction in carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions of at least 80% (compared to 1990 levels) by 2050 across the electricity generation, built environment and transport sectors To promote reduced energy consumption and support the uptake of renewable options and a move away from solid fuels for residential heating 		
Cultural Heritage	CH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, and the context these entries within the surrounding landscape where relevant, protected from adverse effects resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan Percentage of entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context protected from significant adverse effects arising from new development granted permission under the Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, and the context of these entries within the surrounding landscape where relevant, from adverse effects resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan Protect entries to the Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas and their context from significant adverse effects arising from new development granted permission under the Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant) Consultation with Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (at monitoring evaluation). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where monitoring reveals visitor pressure is causing negative effects on key tourist features, the Council will work with Regional Assembly, Fáilte Ireland and other stakeholders to address the pressures through additional mitigation
Landscape	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of developments permitted which result in avoidable adverse visual impacts on the landscape, especially with regard to landscape and amenity designations included in Land Use Plans, resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No developments permitted which result in avoidable adverse visual impacts on the landscape, especially with regard to landscape and amenity designations included in Land Use Plans, resulting from development which is granted permission under the Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where monitoring reveals developments permitted which result in avoidable adverse visual impacts on the landscape, the Council will re-examine Plan provisions and the effectiveness of their implementation