

SEA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

FOR

RELEVANT PROPOSED MATERIAL ALTERATIONS

TO THE

DRAFT LOUTH COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2027

for: Louth County Council

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Millennium Centre
Dundalk
County Louth



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List of Abbreviations

AA	Appropriate Assessment
ACA	Architectural Conservation Area
ASSIs	Areas of Special Scientific Interest
AONB	Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
CAFE	Cleaner Air for Europe
CFRAM	Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management
CORINE	Co-ordinated Information on the Environment
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DAFM	Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine
DCCAE	Department of Communication, Climate Action and Environment
DCHG	Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
DEHLG	Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
DHPLG	Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EQS	Environmental Quality Standard
EU	European Union
FPO	Flora Protection Order
GSI	Geological Survey of Ireland
NHA	Natural Heritage Area
NIAH	National Inventory of Architectural Heritage
NTA	National Transport Authority
OPW	Office of Public Works
pNHA	proposed Natural Heritage Area
PAS	Priority Action Substance
RAL	Remedial Action List
RBD	River Basin District
RMP	Record of Monuments and Places
RPA	Register of Protected Areas
RSES	Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEO	Strategic Environmental Objective
SI No.	Statutory Instrument Number
SPA	Special Protection Area
TPOs	Tree Preservation Orders
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WHO	World Health Organisation
WFD	Water Framework Directive

Glossary

Appropriate Assessment

The obligation to undertake Appropriate Assessment (AA) derives from Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. AA is a focused and detailed impact assessment of the implications of a strategic action (such as a plan or programme) or project, alone and in combination with other strategic actions and projects, on the integrity of a European Site in view of its conservation objectives.

Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

Biodiversity is the variability among living organisms from all sources including inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are a part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems' (United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity 1992).

Flora is all of the plants found in a given area.

Fauna is all of the animals found in a given area.

Environmental Problems

Annex I of 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 (the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive) requires that information is provided on 'any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme', thus, helping to ensure that the proposed strategic action does not make existing environmental problems worse.

Environmental problems arise where there is a conflict between current environmental conditions and ideal targets. If environmental problems are identified at the outset they can help focus attention on important issues and geographical areas where environmental effects of the plan or programme may be likely.

Environmental Vectors

Environmental vectors are environmental components, such as air, water or soil, through which contaminants or pollutants, which have the potential to cause harm, can be transported, coming into contact with human beings.

Mitigate

To make or become less severe or harsh.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures are measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse impacts on the environment of implementing a human action, be it a plan, programme or project. Mitigation involves ameliorating significant negative effects. Where there are significant negative effects, consideration should be given in the first instance to preventing such effects or, where this is not possible, to lessening or offsetting those effects. Mitigation measures can be roughly divided into those that: avoid effects; reduce the magnitude or extent, probability and/or severity of effects; repair effects after they have occurred; and compensate for effects, balancing out negative impacts with other positive ones.

In the context of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, mitigation measures are clearly distinguished from compensatory measures. Compensatory measures are intended to offset the negative effects of the plan or project so that the overall ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 Network is maintained.

Natural Heritage

The Heritage Act (1995) defines natural heritage as including flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, inland waterways, heritage gardens and parks.

Protected Structure

Protected Structure is the term used in the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and associated Regulations (as amended) to define a structure included by a planning authority in its Record of Protected Structures. Such a structure shall not be altered or demolished in whole or part without obtaining planning permission or confirmation from the planning authority that the part of the structure to be altered is not protected.

Recorded Monument

A monument included in the list and marked on the map which comprises the Record of Monuments and Places that is set out county by county under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland. The definition includes Zones of Archaeological Potential in towns and all other monuments of archaeological interest which have so far been identified. Any works at or in relation to a recorded monument requires two months' notice to the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994.

Scoping

Scoping is the process of determining what issues are to be addressed, and setting out a methodology in which to address them in a structured manner appropriate to the plan or programme. Scoping is carried out in consultation with appropriate environmental authorities.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt it.

Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO)

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are methodological measures developed from policies which generally govern environmental protection objectives established at International, Community or Member State level and are used as standards against which the provisions of the Draft Plan and the alternatives can be evaluated in order to help identify which provisions would be likely to result in significant environmental effects and where such effects would be likely to occur, if - in the case of adverse effects - unmitigated.

Section 1 SEA: Introduction and Benefits

1.1 Introduction

This is the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report for relevant Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027. It has been undertaken by CAAS Ltd. on behalf of Louth County Council. The purpose of this report is to provide a clear understanding of the likely environmental consequences of decisions regarding the Proposed Material Alterations.

Environmental assessment is a procedure that ensures that the environmental implications of decisions are taken into account before such decisions are made. *Environmental Impact Assessment*, or EIA, is generally used for describing the process of environmental assessment for individual projects, while *Strategic Environmental Assessment* or SEA is the term which has been given to the environmental assessment of plans and programmes, which help determine the nature and location of individual projects taking place. SEA is a systematic process of predicting and evaluating the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a proposed plan or programme, in order to ensure that these effects are adequately addressed at the earliest appropriate stages of decision-making in tandem with economic, social and other considerations.

The SEA is being undertaken in order to comply with Section 12 of the Planning and Development Act, as amended.

1.2 Implications for the Planning Authority

The Proposed Material Alterations were screened for the need to undertake SEA. Certain Proposed Material Alterations were determined as requiring full SEA. The SEA Screening Determination accompanies this SEA Environmental Report and the Proposed Material Alterations document. Appendix III to this SEA Environmental Report comprises the SEA Screening Report that was prepared to inform the SEA Screening Determination.

This SEA Environmental Report provides the findings of the assessment and will be placed

on public display alongside the Proposed Material Alterations. The Elected Members will be required to take account of this document, the Proposed Material Alterations and any submissions received on these after public display.

1.3 Why SEA? The Benefits

SEA is the planning authority's and the public's guide to what are generally the best areas for development in the County.

SEA enables the planning authority to direct development towards robust, well-served and connected areas in the County – thereby facilitating the general avoidance of incompatible areas in the most sensitive, least well-served and least well-connected areas.

SEA provides greater certainty to the public and to developers. Plans are more likely to be adopted without delays or challenges and planning applications are more likely to be granted permission. Environmental mitigation is more likely to cost less.

An overlay of environmental sensitivities in County Louth are shown on Figure 1.1.

Most of the County is identified as having low to moderate levels of sensitivity. The most sensitive areas in the County include:

- Upland areas, including Cooley Mountains - on account of ecological and land cover sensitivities, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Areas of High Scenic Quality designations and extreme groundwater vulnerability;
- Coastal and marine areas within the County - on account of ecological designations, sensitive land cover sensitivities, shellfish production areas and/or nutrient sensitivity in surface waters;
- Individual rivers throughout the County;
- Areas throughout the County on account of areas of elevated groundwater vulnerability.

The Draft Plan to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate directs incompatible development away from the most sensitive areas in the County and focuses on directing: compact, sustainable development within the existing envelopes of the County's towns and villages; and sustainable development

elsewhere, including in rural areas. Development of these generally more robust, well-serviced and well-connected areas of the County will contribute towards environmental protection and sustainable development, including climate mitigation and adaptation.

Compact development can be accompanied by placemaking initiatives to enable the County's towns and villages to become more desirable places to live – so that they maintain populations and services.

Compatible sustainable development in the County's sensitive areas is also provided for, subject to various requirements relating to environmental protection and management being met.

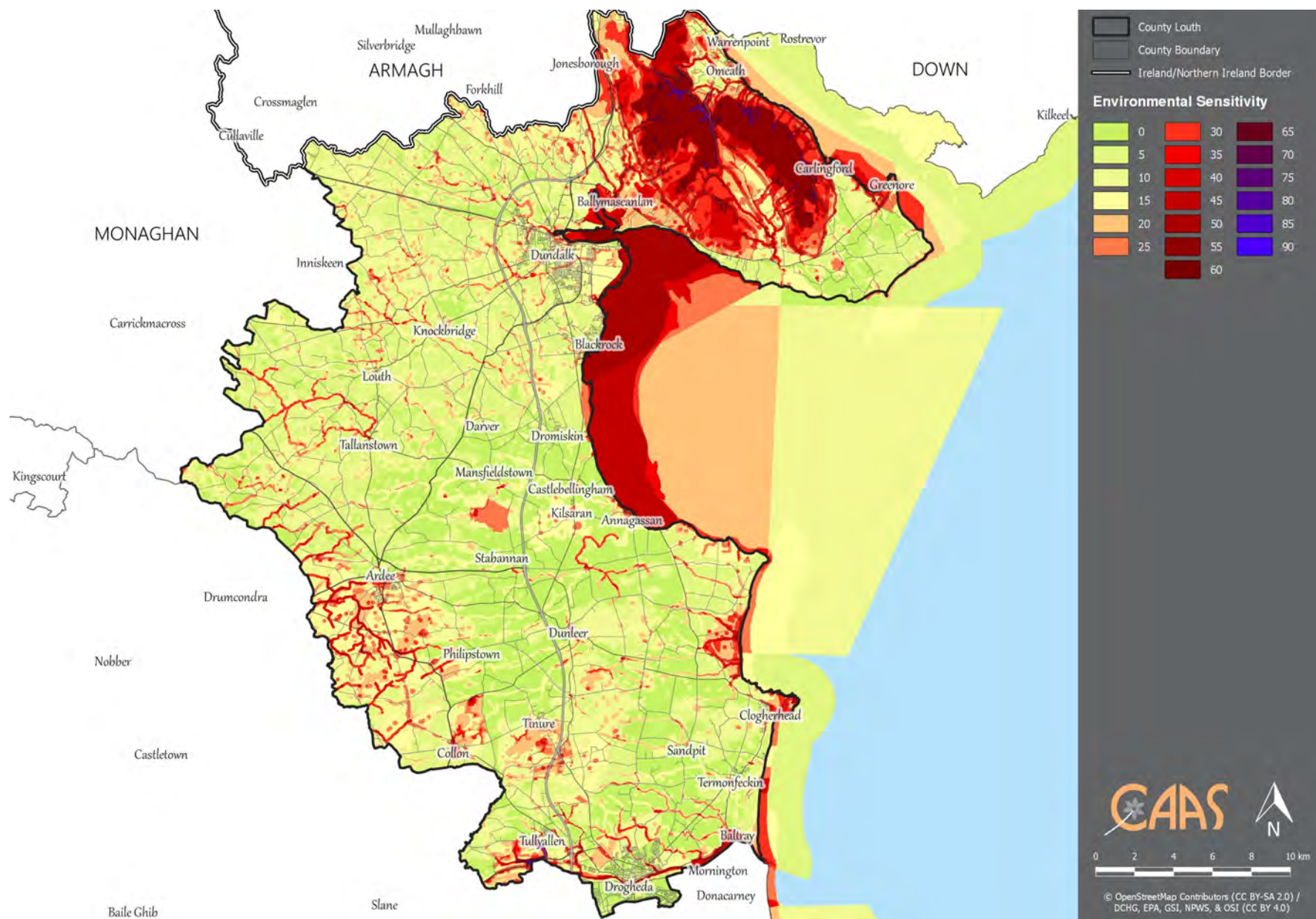


Figure 1.1 Environmental Sensitivities that the County Development Plan directs incompatible development away from

Section 2 The Draft Plan and associated Proposed Material Alterations

2.1 Introduction

The Louth County Development Plan is a land use plan and overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the functional area of County Louth over the six-year period 2021-2027. Not later than four years after the adoption of the Plan, the Council is required to review it and commence the preparation of a new Plan.

The implementation of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 introduced legislative amendments, resulting in the abolition of town and borough councils. Consequently, the County Development Plan incorporates the functional area of the entire county including the areas formerly within the Drogheda Borough Council, Dundalk Town Council and Ardee Town Council. When adopted, the County Development Plan will replace the Drogheda and Dundalk Development Plans, and Urban Area Plans will be prepared for these towns during the lifetime of this Plan, in addition to a Local Area plan for Ardee.

2.2 Content of the Plan

The Plan includes a Written Statement, that provides the development policies, Core Strategy and mandatory and discretionary objectives for different policy areas addressed by the Development Plan. The Written Statement is divided into 14 separate chapters setting out various policies and objectives under the headings of:

1. Introduction
2. Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy
3. Housing
4. Social and Community
5. Economy and Employment
6. Tourism
7. Movement
8. Natural Heritage, Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure
9. Built Heritage and Culture
10. Infrastructure and Public Utilities
11. Environment, Natural Resources and the Coast
12. Climate Action
13. Development Management Guidelines
14. Implementation and Monitoring

2.3 Strategic Vision

The Plan's Strategic Vision is to:

Promote County Louth, in particular the regional growth centres of Drogheda and Dundalk, as uniquely attractive places in which to live, work, visit, and do business and where the quality of employment and educational opportunities, natural and built environment, cultural experiences and provision of inclusive communities are to the highest standards.

2.4 Strategic Objectives

The Vision for County Louth will be achieved through realisation of the following Strategic Objectives:

- SO 1 Realise the potential and promote the development and growth of County Louth through harnessing the economic and employment potential of the competitive advantages of the County. This includes its strategic location, connectivity and accessibility to external markets and having regard in particular to the role of Drogheda and Dundalk as Regional Growth Centres located on the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor.
- SO 2 Support and promote the role of Drogheda and Dundalk as key designated Regional Growth Towns with high levels of self-sustaining employment and services, to act as regional economic drivers, playing a significant role for a wide catchment area and to help achieve a more coordinated and sustainable settlement and travel pattern across the region.
- SO 3 Direct new development in accordance with the Core and Settlement Strategies, which will provide for the sustainable development of the County for the period 2021-2027 and beyond and in accordance with the principles of compact growth, consolidation and regeneration.
- SO 4 Transition to a low carbon and climate resilient County supporting energy efficiency and reducing energy demand, through a combination of mitigation and adaptation responses to climate change. This includes for increased usage of renewable energy through developing indigenous energy resources supporting the transition to a low carbon economy by 2050 and ensuring flood risk management.
- SO 5 Ensure a more sustainable and integrated concept of development with regard to land use, transportation, water services, energy supply and waste management over the lifetime of the Plan.
- SO 6 Conserve and enhance the County's Green Infrastructure and ecosystem services supporting the sustainable management of

natural assets and the biodiversity of the County's protected habitats and species to provide a wide range of environmental, social and economic benefits to communities.

- SO 7 Protect and enhance the built, cultural and natural heritage assets of Louth, the intrinsic value of which helps to define the character of both urban and rural areas, contributes to the attractiveness, vibrancy and sense of place for residents, tourists and visitors, including improved access to the countryside through the development of greenways, walking trails and blueways in support of and advancing sustainable communities.
- SO 8 Develop and support vibrant, inclusive, sustainable and healthy communities in Louth where people can live, work, invest and visit, enjoying access to a wide range of community, health and educational facilities and amenities, suitable for all ages and needs, in both urban and rural areas, thereby supporting a high quality of life for all to enjoy.
- SO 9 Protect and enhance the unique character and identity of Louth's towns and villages and improve quality of life and well-being through the application of Healthy Place-making, underpinned by good urban design with the creation of attractive public spaces that are vibrant, distinctive, safe and accessible and which promote and facilitate positive social interaction.
- SO 10 Support implementation of the objectives and actions for strengthening economic and community development in the County in accordance with the Louth Local Economic and Community Plan.
- SO 11 Support the further development of a resilient economic base in Louth and promote both enterprise and entrepreneurship, underpinned by innovation and talent resulting in the delivery of sustainable jobs and economic growth.
- SO 12 Support improvements in and access to education and training as central to skills, knowledge, innovation and quality job creation which will underpin future prosperity for all and aid in achieving a more sustainable, balanced and inclusive society.
- SO 13 Support the sustainable development of rural areas that are under strong urban influence to avoid over-development, while sustaining vibrant rural communities.
- SO 14 Reverse rural decline in small towns and villages through sustainable, targeted measures addressing vacancy and delivering sustainable reuse and regeneration outcomes.
- SO 15 Ensure the proper integration of transportation and land use planning through the increased use of sustainable transport modes and the minimisation of travel demand to achieve a sustainable, integrated and low carbon transport system with excellent connectivity both within and beyond the County.
- SO 16 Ensure the efficient and sustainable use and development of water and waste water service infrastructure throughout the County in a manner that supports a healthy society, economic development and a cleaner environment.
- SO 17 Facilitate the development of infrastructural projects, which will underpin sustainable development throughout the County during the period of the Plan.

- SO 18 Afford suitable protection to the environment and natural resources of the County and ensure the fulfilment of environmental responsibilities.
- SO 19 Provide a framework for the management and regulation of development and use of land that will guide day to day planning decisions, thus ensuring a more sustainable and integrated concept of development with regard to all forms of land use.

2.5 Growth Strategy

The Development Plan identifies the following focus for its growth strategy:

- Prioritise targeted population and economic growth to the designated Regional Growth Centres of Drogheda and Dundalk. Promote their continued sustainable and compact growth as regional drivers to city scale, with a target population of 50,000 by 2031 supported by improvements to sustainable transport links and the requisite infrastructure to enable the towns grow to their full potential by becoming more attractive to live and invest in;
- Capitalise on the strategic location of both Drogheda and Dundalk along the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor, to drive linkages and synergies between the north and south of Ireland;
- Contribution of urban regeneration lands and development of infill sites to the revitalisation of settlements and sustainable compact urban growth (in Louth a minimum 30% of new homes to be in the built-up footprint of the urban area) facilitated by investment in services, transport, infrastructure etc.;
- Support Self Sustaining Growth Towns of Ardee and Dunleer, which are regionally important local drivers providing a moderate level of jobs and services for the resident population and surrounding catchments. Growth will be balanced and at sustainable levels including brownfield and infill development with a focus on the commensurate delivery of employment and services and improving the quality of life for all in these towns;
- Support Self Sustaining Towns requiring contained growth, focusing on investment in services, employment and infrastructure whilst balancing housing delivery;
- Having regard to the viability and vibrancy of small towns and villages, promotion of regeneration and support for local employment whilst offering a viable alternative to single housing in the open countryside; and
- Management of urban generated growth in Rural Areas Under Urban Influence by ensuring single houses in the open countryside is based on the core consideration of demonstrable economic or social need to live in a rural area in addition to compliance with statutory guidelines, plans and having regard to ensuring the viability of the aforementioned small towns and villages.

2.6 Proposed Material Alterations

The Proposed Material Alterations are outlined in detail in the accompanying Proposed Material Alteration document. The “Alteration References” provided in this report can be used to locate this detail in the accompanying Proposed Material Alteration document.

Alterations proposed include those relating to maps, including land use zoning, and text.

The Proposed Material Alterations were screened for the need to undertake SEA and the alterations below were determined as requiring full SEA. The SEA Screening Determination accompanies this SEA Environmental Report and the Proposed Material Alterations document. Appendix III to this SEA Environmental Report comprises the SEA Screening Report that was prepared to inform the Determination. Proposed Material Alterations requiring SEA and consideration in this SEA Environmental Report¹ are as follows:

Alteration Ref.	Alteration Ref.
23	L3-2
25	L3-5
44	L3-6
DROG2	L3-7
DLK1	L4-9
DLK4	L5-1
DLK7	L5-2
DLK13	L5-3
DLK14	L5-4
DLK15	L5-5
DLK16	L5-6
DLK17	L5-7
DLK18	L5-8
ARD1	L5-9
ARD3	L5-11
DLR1	L5-12
DLR2	L5-13
DLR3	

2.7 Strategic work undertaken by the Council to ensure contribution towards environmental protection and sustainable development

Far in advance of both the submission of the pre-Draft Plan to the Elected Members for approval and the placing of the Draft Plan on public display, Louth County Council undertook various works in order to inform the preparation of the Plan.

The findings of this strategic work have been integrated into the Plan and will contribute towards both environmental protection and management and sustainable development within the County.

Strategic work undertaken by the Council includes background work in relation to Plan Strategies and other provisions for a variety of sectors, including:

- Strategic Environmental Assessment;
- Appropriate Assessment;
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment;
- Core Strategy;
- Housing Strategy;
- Retail Strategy;
- Infrastructure Strategy;
- Green Infrastructure Strategy;
- Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas;
- Landscape Designations;
- Economic Development;
- Energy and Utilities;
- Climate Action; and
- Movement.

The undertaking of this SEA process and associated Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment processes were part of this strategic work and contributed towards the integration of environmental considerations into individual Plan provisions as detailed in Section 9 of this report.

¹ For detail please refer to Proposed Material Alterations document.

2.8 Relationship with other relevant Plans and Programmes

It is acknowledged that many of the major issues affecting the County's development are contingent on national policy and government funding.

The Draft Plan, to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate, sits within a hierarchy of statutory documents setting out public policy for, among other things, land use planning, infrastructure, sustainable development, tourism, environmental protection and environmental management. The Plan must comply with relevant higher-level strategic actions and will, in turn, guide lower level strategic actions. These documents include plans and programmes such as those detailed in Appendix I² (see also, Section 4 "Environmental Baseline", Section 5 "Strategic Environmental Objectives", Section 6 "Description of Alternatives" and Section 9 "Mitigation Measures"). These documents have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out Ireland's planning policy direction for the next 20 years. The NPF is to be implemented through Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSESs) and lower tier Development Plans and Local Area Plans. The RSES for the Eastern and Midlands Region sets out objectives for land use planning, tourism, infrastructure, sustainable development, environmental protection and environmental management that have been subject to environmental assessment and must be implemented through the County Development Plan.

As required by the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, the Draft County Development Plan is consistent with and conforms with national and regional policies, plans and programmes, including the NPF and the RSES for the Eastern and Midlands Region. The County Development Plan may, in turn, guide lower level strategic actions, such as the

Local Area Plans that will be subject to their own lower-tier environmental assessments.

In order to be realised, projects included in the County Development Plan (in a similar way to other projects from any other sector) will have to comply, as relevant, with various legislation, policies, plans and programmes (including requirements for lower-tier Appropriate Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and other licencing requirements as appropriate) that form the statutory decision-making and consent-granting framework.

² Appendix I is not intended to be a full and comprehensive review of EU Directives, the transposing regulations or the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The information is not exhaustive and it is recommended to consult the Directive, Regulation, Plan or Programme to become familiar with the full details of each.

Section 3 SEA Methodology

3.1 Introduction to the Iterative Approach

Figure 3.1 provides an overview of the integrated Plan preparation, SEA, Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) processes. The preparation of the Plan, SEA, AA and SFRA have taken place concurrently and the findings of the SEA, AA and SFRA have informed the Plan. The process is currently at a stage where the findings of this report will be placed on public display as part of the required statutory public consultations. AA and SFRA documents will also accompany the Plan on public display. Submissions made on the Plan and associated documents, including

SEA and AA documents, will be responded to and updates made to the documents where relevant.

Submissions made on the Plan will be responded to and the Plan will be updated as appropriate. When the Plan is finalised, the SEA, AA and SFRA documents will be finalised. Final documents will include an SEA Statement, which will include information on how environmental considerations were integrated into the Plan, and an AA Conclusion Statement. The Plan will be implemented and environmental monitoring – as well as planning and project development and associated environmental assessments and administrative consent of projects – will be undertaken.

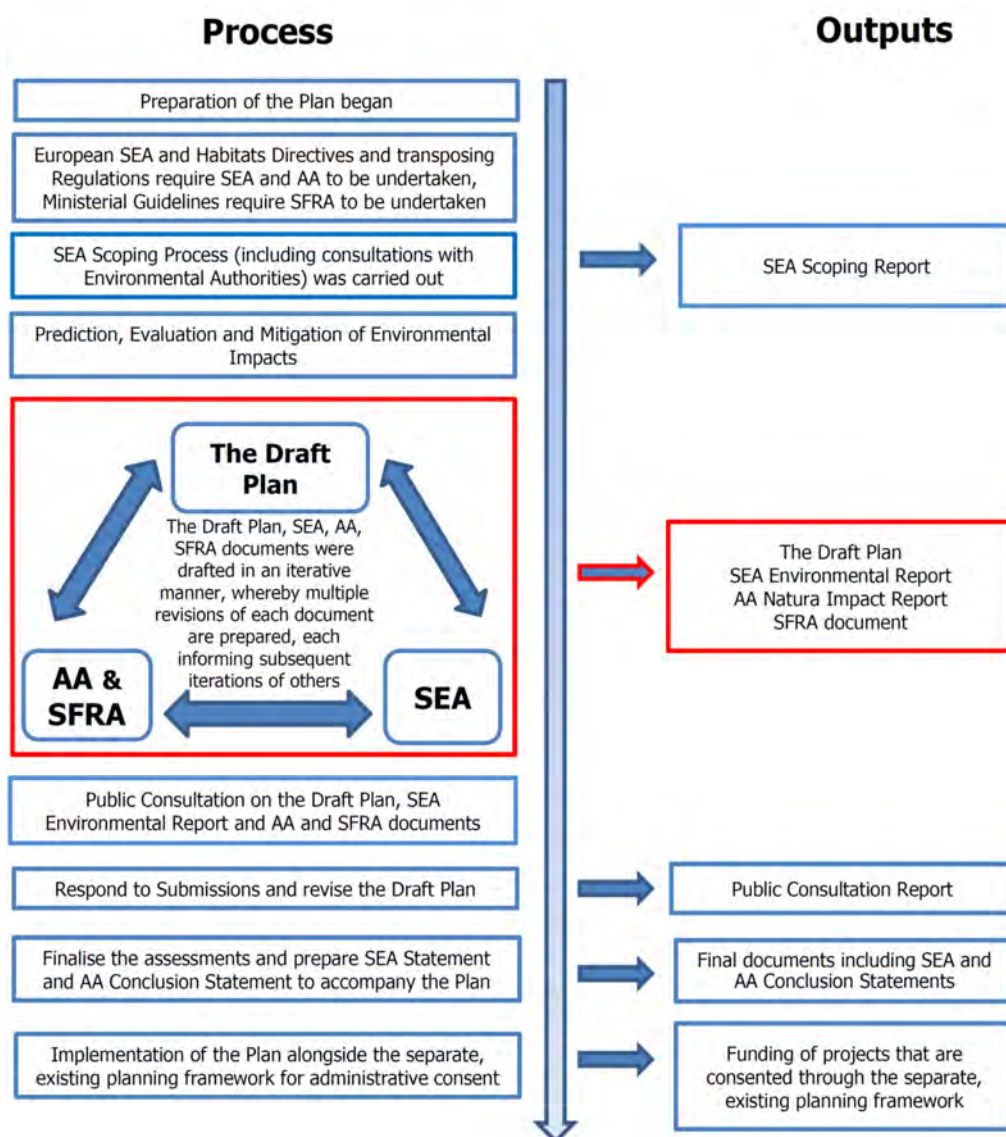


Figure 3.1 Overview of the SEA/AA/SFRA Plan-preparation Processes

3.2 Appropriate Assessment and Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment

3.2.1 Appropriate Assessment

Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening and Stage 2 AA are being undertaken alongside the Draft Plan and Proposed Material Alterations. The requirement for AA is provided under the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 1992/43/EEC).

The emerging 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.³

The Proposed Material Alterations are accompanied by an AA Natura Impact Report, which has informed this SEA Environmental Report.

3.2.2 Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment

Many elements of Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment as detailed in the EPA's (2013) Practitioner's Manual have been aligned with in the undertaking of the SEA for the Plan. These include:

Scoping

- Biodiversity-relevant issues were identified for consideration at scoping stage and these are now detailed in Section 4.
- Reference to a zone of influence is provided at Section 4.

Baseline

- Biodiversity data sources relevant for this local level assessment have been identified and datasets collated/gathered.
- The biodiversity baseline addresses designated sites and other habitats and species of ecological value.
- AA information has been incorporated into the SEA baseline.

Alternatives

- Impacts upon biodiversity are considered under each of the alternatives and potential conflicts can be mitigated.

Impact assessment

- Effects on biodiversity are identified and assessed and the AA considers the interrelationship between biodiversity and potential effects on European Sites.

Mitigation and monitoring

- Taking into account all measures contained within the Plan, all the proposed mitigation measures deriving from the various processes were generally consistent and compatible.
- Indicators and associated targets have been included in SEA for monitoring European Sites.

Reporting

- This SEA ER addresses all biodiversity-related considerations relevant for this level of assessment.
- This SEA ER contains all biodiversity-relevant information, data, figures and maps relevant for this level of assessment.
- This SEA ER has been informed by the AA findings.

Communication and consultation

- Submissions received have been taken on board.
- The preparation of the Plan, SEA and AA have taken place concurrently and the findings of the AA have informed the SEA.

3.3 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

SFRA is being undertaken to inform the preparation of the Draft Plan and the Proposed Material Alterations. The SFRA process has informed this report.

The SFRA has considered the Proposed Material Alterations and finds that all Proposed Material Alterations, apart from one, comply with "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities" (DEHLG/OPW, 2009). Proposed Material Alteration Reference 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.

3.4 Scoping

The scope of environmental issues to be dealt with by the SEA of the Plan together with the level of detail to which they are addressed was broadly decided upon taking into account the collection of environmental baseline data and

³ 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.

input from environmental authorities. Scoping allowed the SEA to become focused upon key issues relevant to the environmental components that are specified under the SEA Directive⁴.

All relevant environmental authorities identified under the SEA Regulations as amended, were sent SEA scoping notices by the Council (as part of the SEA scoping process at pre-Draft Plan stage) 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 Council⁵.

Submissions made by the Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, Meath County Council, Monaghan County Council, and Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine influenced the scope of the assessment undertaken, the findings of which are included in this report.

3.5 Alternatives

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. In accordance with this requirement, alternatives for the Plan are identified and assessed in Sections 6 and 7.

3.6 Environmental Report

This SEA Environmental Report predicts and evaluates the likely significant effects of the Proposed Material Alterations and the alternatives.

The Environmental Report provides Louth County Council, stakeholders and the public with a clear understanding of the likely environmental consequences of implementing the Proposed Material Alterations.

⁴ These components comprise biodiversity, fauna, flora, population, human health, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors.

⁵ The following authorities were notified: Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Department of Culture,

Mitigation measures to prevent or reduce significant adverse effects posed by the Draft Plan, to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate, are identified in Section 9 – these have been integrated into the Plan.

This Environmental Report has been informed by recommendations contained in submissions to date. The SEA Environmental Report prepared for the Draft Plan will be finalised in advance of adoption of the Plan taking into account, among other things, the content of this SEA Environmental Report.

The Environmental Report is required to contain the information specified in Schedule 2B of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004), as amended (see Table 3.1).

No significant difficulties have been encountered during the undertaking of the assessment to date. There was limited water services information available for some settlements within the County however objectives requiring the provision of appropriate levels of water services alongside new development have been integrated into the Draft Plan.

There is a data gap relating to WFD surface water status data. There are a number of waterbodies within the Plan area with overall status currently not assigned to them and the term “unassigned status” applies in respect of these waterbodies. The SEA ensured that the Plan contains measures that will contribute towards the maintenance and improvement of status of all water bodies within the zone of influence.

3.7 SEA Statement

On finalisation of the Plan, an SEA Statement will be prepared that will include information on:

- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan, highlighting the main

Heritage, and the Gaeltacht; Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government; Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment; Environmental Protection Agency; Meath County Council; and Monaghan County Council.

changes to the Plan that resulted from the SEA process;

- How the SEA Environmental Report and consultations have been taken into account, summarising the key issues raised in consultations and in the Environmental Report indicating what action was taken in response;
- The reasons for choosing the Plan in the light of the other alternatives, identifying the other alternatives considered, commenting on their potential effects and explaining why the Plan as adopted was selected; and
- The measures decided upon to monitor the significant environmental effects of implementing of the Plan.

Table 3.1 Checklist of Information included in this Environmental Report

Information Required to be included in the Environmental Report	Corresponding Section of this Report
(A) Outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	Sections 2, 5 and 8
(B) Description of relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the evolution of that environment without implementation of the plan or programme	Section 4
(C) Description of the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	Sections 4, 7 and 8
(D) Identification of any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme, particularly those relating to European protected sites	Section 4
(E) List environmental protection objectives, established at international, EU or National level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and describe how those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account when preparing the Plan	Sections 5, 7, 8, 9 and Appendix I
(F) Describe the likely significant effects on the environment	Sections 7 and 8
(G) Describe any measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse environmental effects of implementing the plan or programme	Section 9
(H) Give an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives considered, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken (including any difficulties)	Sections 3, 6, 7, 8 and Appendix II
(I) A description of proposed monitoring measures	Section 10
(J) A non-technical summary of the above information	Appendix IV Non-Technical Summary
(K) Interrelationships between each environmental topic	Addressed as it arises within each Section

Section 4 Environmental Baseline

4.1 Introduction

Reflecting the specifications in the SEA Directive, the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment for the following environmental components are described in this section: biodiversity and flora and fauna, population and human health, soil, water, air and climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors.

This description includes information that is relevant to lower tier planning, environmental assessments and decision-making⁶.

Given the potential for impacts beyond the County boundary, the spatial scope of the SEA takes into account the zone of influence (15km or greater where relevant) of the Plan area.

4.2 National Reporting on the Environment

The EPA's "*Ireland's Environment – An Assessment 2016*" report provides an integrated assessment of the overall quality of Ireland's environment, the pressures being placed on it and the societal responses to current and emerging environmental issues. This report has informed various parts of the environmental baseline provided below. The key environmental challenges or messages identified by the report are:

Environment and Health and Wellbeing

Recognising the benefits of a good quality environment to health and wellbeing.

Climate Change

Accelerating mitigation actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and implement adaptation measures to increase resilience in dealing with adverse climate impacts.

Implementation of Legislation

Improving the tracking of plans and policies and the implementation and enforcement of environmental legislation to protect the environment.

Restore and Protect Water Quality

Implementing measures that achieve ongoing improvement in the environmental status of water bodies from source to the sea.

Sustainable Economic Activities

Integrating environmental sustainability ideas and performance accounting across economic sectors and sectoral plans should be a key policy for growth.

Nature and Wild Places

Protecting pristine and wild places that act as biodiversity hubs, contributing to health and wellbeing, and providing tourism opportunities

Community Engagement

Informing, engaging and supporting communities in the protection and improvement of the environment.

The report highlights that high-quality green and blue spaces are not just for nature but are for peoples' health and wellbeing, particularly in the context of an increasingly urban society and increasing settlement densities.

4.3 Sustainable Development Goals

Implementation of the Plan will contribute towards efforts to achieve a number of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which were adopted by world leaders in 2015 at a United Nations Summit and came into force in 2016. These Goals include:

- Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
- Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
- Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
- Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
- Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

⁶ Note that Article 5 of the SEA Directive, in accordance with the established European principle of subsidiarity, requires that the Environmental Report includes the information that may reasonably be required taking into account, inter alia,

the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that process in order to avoid duplication of the assessment.

- Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

4.4 Likely Evolution of the Environment in the Absence of a new Plan including Material Alterations

In the absence of a new Plan it is uncertain how permission for new development would be applied for and considered.

The 2015-2021 Plan has contributed towards environmental protection within County Louth. If the 2015-2021 Plan was to expire and not be replaced by the 2021-2027 Plan, this would result in a deterioration of the County's planning and environmental protection framework. Although higher level environmental protection objectives – such as those of various EU Directives and transposing Irish Regulations – would still apply, the deterioration of this framework would mean that new development would be less coordinated and controlled.

As a result, there would be a decreased likelihood in the extent, magnitude and frequency of positive effects occurring, including:

- Contribution towards protection of ecology (including designated sites, ecological connectivity, habitats) by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.
- Contribution towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and associated ecosystem services, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats.
- Contribution towards protection and/or maintenance of biodiversity and flora and fauna by contributing towards the protection of natural capital including the environmental vectors of air, water and soil. Biodiversity and flora and fauna includes biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites, Wildlife Sites and Areas of Special Scientific Interest) and Annexed habitats and species (including birds and bats), listed/protected species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats (including terrestrial

and aquatic habitats), and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna – including terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity and flora and fauna.

- Sustains existing sustainable rural management practices – and the communities who support them – to ensure the continuation of long-established managed landscapes and the flora and fauna that they contain.
- Promotion of economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable development and environmental protection and management.
- Contribution towards appropriate provision of infrastructure and services to existing population and planned growth by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond
- Contribution towards the protection of human health by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.
- Contributes towards protection of human health as a result of contributing towards the protection of natural capital including environmental vectors, including air and water.
- Contribution towards the protection of soils (including those used for agriculture) and designated sites of geological heritage by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.
- Contribution towards the protection of the environment from contamination the highest standards of remediation, and where appropriate consultations with the EPA and other relevant bodies, will be required to resolve any instances of environmental pollution created by contaminated land.
- Contribution towards the protection of water by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.
- Contributions towards the protection of water resources including the status of surface and groundwaters and water-based designations.
- Contribution towards flood risk management and appropriate drainage.
- Contribution towards appropriate provision of infrastructure and services to existing population and planned growth by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are

served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.

- Contribution towards compliance with national and regional water services and waste management policies.
- Contribution towards increase in renewable energy use by facilitating renewable energy and electricity transmission infrastructure developments.
- Contribution towards limits in increases in energy demand from the transport sector by facilitating sustainable compact growth.
- Contribution towards reductions in average energy consumption per capita including promoting energy efficient buildings, retrofitting, smart buildings, cities and grids.
- Contribution towards climate mitigation and adaptation by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.
- In combination with other plans, programmes etc., contribution towards the objectives of the wide policy framework relating to climate mitigation and adaptation, and associated contribution towards maintaining and improving air quality and managing noise levels, including through measures relating to:
 - o Sustainable compact growth;
 - o Sustainable mobility, including walking, cycling and public transport;
 - o Drainage, flood risk management and resilience;
 - o Sectors including agriculture, residential heating and infrastructure;
- Sustainable infrastructure design solutions including energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure).
- Contributes towards protection of cultural heritage elsewhere in the County by facilitating development within existing settlements.
- Contributes towards protection of cultural heritage within existing settlements by facilitating brownfield development and regeneration.
- Contributes towards protection of wider landscape and landscape designations by facilitating development within existing settlements.

As a result, there would be an increased likelihood in the extent, magnitude and frequency of adverse effects on all environmental components occurring, including:

- Arising from both construction and operation of development and associated infrastructure:
 - o Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites, Wildlife Sites and Areas of Special Scientific Interest) and Annexed habitats and species, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats; and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna;

- o Habitat loss, fragmentation and deterioration, including patch size and edge effects; and
- o Disturbance (e.g. due to noise and lighting along transport corridors) and displacement of protected species such as birds and bats.
- Potential adverse effects arising from flood events.
- Potential interactions if effects arising from environmental vectors.
- Potential adverse effects on the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource, including as a result of development on contaminated lands.
- Potential for riverbank and coastal erosion.
- 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.
- Increase in flood risk and associated effects associated with flood events.
- 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 development with adequate drinking water (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts).
- 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.
- 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 adaptation measures including those relating to flood risk management.
- Potential effects on protected and unknown archaeology and protected architecture arising from construction and operation activities.
- Occurrence of adverse visual impacts and conflicts with the appropriate protection of designations relating to the landscape.

4.5 Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services⁷

County Louth's **natural capital** comprises its renewable and non-renewable resources (e.g. plants, animals, air, water, soils, minerals) that combine to yield a flow of ecosystem services that provide benefits to people. These benefits can include clean air and water, a stable climate, protection from floods, food, resources for fuel, building materials, clothes and medicines, recreation. Managing natural capital so that it can continue to deliver the ecosystem services that give us these benefits is important in order to ensure sustainable development. Unmanaged natural capital risks the continued degradation and depletion of these assets, and in turn, of their capacity to provide the economy and society with the ecosystem benefits that they depend on. These services also regulate climate, regulate water flows (e.g. through wetlands and forests), sequester and store carbon in peatlands and improve soil quality for crops.

In recognition of the need to manage natural capital, provisions have been integrated into the Plan that will contribute towards management of air quality, noise pollution, light pollution, water quality and integrated catchment management.

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. There are four main types; provisioning, regulating, supporting and cultural services. Provisioning services are the products obtained from ecosystems such as food, fresh water, wood, fibre, genetic resources and medicines. Regulating services are defined as the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem processes such as climate regulation, natural hazard regulation, water purification and waste management, pollination or pest control. Support services highlight the importance of ecosystems to provide habitat for migratory species and to maintain the viability of gene-pools. Cultural services include non-material benefits that people obtain from ecosystems

such as spiritual enrichment, intellectual development, recreation and aesthetic values⁸.

In preparing the Draft Plan and developing policy objectives, the Council have followed these ecosystem services 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 following natural capital and ecosystem services issues are relevant to this SEA and have been taken into account in the provisions of the Draft Plan:

- Air quality;
- Noise pollution;
- Light pollution;
- Water quality and integrated catchment management including interactions with soil;
- Soil and vegetation carbon, which helps to regulate greenhouse gas emissions;
- Soil/geological storage of water, contributing towards flood control;
- Land supporting food production; and
- Natural resources supporting energy production and recreation.

County Louth shares a border with Northern Ireland and the potential for likely significant transboundary environmental effects will be considered by the SEA. For this purpose, environmental baseline information at and across the border in Northern Ireland relating to each of the environmental components detailed below have been considered.

⁷ This section includes content taken from the Eastern and Midlands Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly, 2019)

⁸ <https://biodiversity.europa.eu/topics/ecosystem-services>

4.6 Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna

4.6.1 Overview

Information on biodiversity and flora and fauna which is relevant to project planning and development and associated environmental assessment and administrative consent of projects includes available information on designated ecological sites and protected species, ecological connectivity (including stepping stones and corridors) and non-designated habitats.

Ecologically sensitive areas in Louth include: the Cooley Mountains and the Peninsula; Carlingford Mountain; the coastline from Carlingford Lough to the Boyne Estuary; Dundalk Bay; the Rivers Boyne and Blackwater; woodlands; grasslands; trees; and hedgerows. These habitats support a variety of species and ecosystems that contribute to the unique biodiversity of County Louth.

Ecological designations in County Louth include:

- Special Protection Areas⁹;
- Special Areas of Conservation¹⁰;
- Proposed Natural Heritage Areas¹¹;
- Certain entries to the Water Framework Directive Register of Protected Areas¹²;
- RAMSAR sites¹³;
- OSPAR Sites¹⁴;
- Shellfish Waters¹⁵;
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage Site¹⁶ and Tentative UNESCO World Heritage Site¹⁷;
- Wildfowl Sanctuaries (see S.I. 192 of 1979)¹⁸;
- Salmonid River Regs (S.I. 293 only)¹⁹;
- Flora Protection Order (FPO)²⁰ sites;
- Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)²¹;
- Champion Trees²²
- Ecological connectivity and networks;
- CORINE Landcover²³;
- Watercourses, wetlands and peatlands data; and
- Other sites of high biodiversity value or ecological importance²⁴.

Relevant ecological designations in Northern Ireland include:

- European Sites (see description above);
- Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs)²⁵;

⁹ For more detail refer to Section 4.6.2.

¹⁰ For more detail refer to Section 4.6.2.

¹¹ For more detail refer to Section 4.6.3.

¹² For more detail refer to Sections 4.6.6 and 4.9.7.

¹³ For more detail refer to Section 4.6.5.

¹⁴ Under the OSPAR Convention to Protect the Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic, Ireland committed to establishing marine protected areas to protect biodiversity (OSPAR MPAs). There are currently 19 OSPAR MPAs in Ireland, which established a number of its cSACs as OSPAR MPAs for marine habitats. **There is one OSPAR Site designated adjacent to the Plan area: Dundalk Bay MPA (O-IE-0002971).**

¹⁵ In order to protect existing shellfish waters and to ensure the future protection of these areas, the European Union introduced the Shellfish Waters Directive (2006/113/EC). The purpose of this Directive is to put in place concrete measures to protect waters, including shellfish waters, against pollution and to safeguard certain shellfish populations from various harmful consequences, resulting from the discharge of pollutant substances into the sea. The Directive applies to the aquatic habitat of bivalve and gastropod molluscs only (includes oysters, mussels, cockles, scallops and clams). It does not include crustaceans such as lobsters, crabs and crayfish. **Carlingford Lough and Dundalk Bay, within or partially within the Plan area, are designated as Shellfish Waters (as shown on Figure 4.6).**

¹⁶ UNESCO World Heritage List comprises sites of outstanding universal value: cultural, natural or mixed. There are two UNESCO sites in Ireland; **Brú na Bóinne (UNESCO World Heritage Site) is located partially within the Plan area.**

¹⁷ A Tentative List is an inventory of properties which a country intends to consider for nomination to the World Heritage List. **One site in Louth has been included on the Tentative List: Early Medieval Monastic Sites (including Monasterboice).**

¹⁸ Wildfowl Sanctuaries are areas that have been excluded from the 'Open Season Order' so that game birds can rest and feed undisturbed. There are 68 sanctuaries in the State. Shooting of game birds is not allowed in these sanctuaries. **There are two Wildfowl Sanctuaries within or partially within the Plan area: Ballymascanlan Estuary (WFS-35); and Lurgan Green (WFS-36).**

¹⁹ Salmonid waters are designated and protected as under the European Communities (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations 1988 (SI No. 293 of 1988). Designated Salmonid Waters are capable of supporting salmon (*Salmo salar*), trout (*Salmo trutta*), char (*Salvelinus*) and whitefish (*Coregonus*). **A section of the River Boyne immediately upstream of the Plan area is designated as a Salmonid Water under these regulations.**

²⁰ The Flora (Protection) Order, 2015 (S.I. No. 356 of 2015) gives legal protection to 65 species of bryophytes in the Republic of Ireland (25 liverworts and 40 mosses). **There are four locations within the Plan area with the FPOs: The Windy Gap (*Hedwigia integrifolia*); Slievenaglogh (*Hedwigia integrifolia*); Castlecoo Hill (*Didymodon acutus*); and Baltray (*Didymodon acutus*).**

²¹ For more detail refer to Section 4.6.7.

²² For more details refer to Section 4.6.7.

²³ Land cover is the observed physical cover, as seen from the ground or through remote sensing, including for example natural or planted vegetation, water and human constructions which cover the earth's surface.

²⁴ For more detail refer to Section 4.6.7.

²⁵ Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) are protected areas that represent the best of Northern Ireland's wildlife and geological sites that make a considerable contribution to the conservation of Northern Ireland's most valuable natural places. **The relevant ASSIs include: Clemont and Anglesey Mountain (ASSI1409); Carlingford Lough (ASSI103); Rostrevor Wood (ASSI178);**

- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)²⁶;
- Nature Reserves²⁷; and
- Ramsar Sites (for more refer to Section 4.6.5).

The zone of influence of the Plan beyond the County area with respect to impacts upon ecology via surface waters upon ecological resources – including designated ecology – can be estimated to be areas within 15km of the County boundary and all downstream areas of catchments which drain the County.

Potential overlaps in designations and settlements/zoning (e.g. at Dundalk, Drogheda, Tullyallen, Baltray, Clogherhead, Annagassan, Gyles Quay, Ballagan, Greenore, Carlingford and Omeath) and sites of importance to birds associated with the zoning of lands adjacent to these sites have been also considered by the SEA and AA.

4.6.2 European Sites

European Sites in the County occur in the greatest concentrations in upland areas. European Sites comprise:

- Special Areas of Conservation²⁸ (SACs); and

White Water River (ASSI352); Western Mournes and Kilfeagan Upper (ASSI351); and Kilkeel Steps (ASSI346).

²⁶ Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in Northern Ireland were designated originally under the Amenity Lands (NI) Act 1965 and subsequently under the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (NI) Order 1985. It protects the land to conserve and enhance its natural beauty. **Relevant AONBs in Northern Ireland include: Ring of Gullion and Mourne.**

²⁷ Nature reserves are chosen from among the very best examples of Northern Ireland's wildlife, habitats and geology. They contain a wide range of species, communities and geology and their designation is a public recognition of their importance.

²⁸ SACs have been selected for protection under the European Council Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (92/43/EEC) due to their conservation value for habitats and species of importance in the European Union. The Habitats Directive seeks to establish Natura 2000, a network of protected areas throughout the EU. It is the responsibility of each member state to designate SACs to protect habitats and species, which, together with the SPAs designated under the 1979 Birds Directive, form Natura 2000. The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 consolidate the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 to 2005 and the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) (Control of Recreational Activities) Regulations 2010. The Regulations have been prepared to address several judgments of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) against Ireland, notably cases C-418/04 and C-183/05, in respect of failure to transpose elements of the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive into Irish law.

²⁹ SPAs have been selected for protection under the 1979 European Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild

- Special Protection Areas²⁹ (SPAs).

The SEA uses the same zone of influence cited in the AA; a 15 km buffer around the County (see sites within this zone mapped on Figure 4.1). The AA review of all sites within this zone has allowed a determination to be made that in the absence of significant hydrological links the characteristics of the Plan will not impose effects beyond the 15 km buffer.

There are six SACs and five SPAs designated within and adjacent to the County, including:

- Boyne Coast and Estuary SAC (001957)³⁰;
- Carlingford Mountain SAC (000453)³¹;
- Carlingford Shore SAC (002306)³²;
- Clogher Head SAC (001459)³³;
- Dundalk Bay SAC (000455)³⁴;
- River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC (002299)³⁵;
- Boyne Estuary SPA (004080)³⁶;
- Carlingford Lough SPA (004078)³⁷;
- Dundalk Bay SPA (004026)³⁸;
- River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA (004232)³⁹; and
- Stabannan-Braganstown SPA (004091)⁴⁰.

Relevant European Sites in Northern Ireland (also shown on Figure 4.1) include:

Birds (79/409/EEC) - referred to as the Birds Directive - due to their conservation value for birds of importance in the EU.

³⁰**Sensitive features include:** estuaries; tidal mudflats and sandflats; annual vegetation of drift lines; Atlantic salt meadows; embryonic shifting dunes; marram dunes (white dunes); and fixed dunes (grey dunes).

³¹**Sensitive features include:** wet heath; dry heath; Alpine and Sub-Alpine heaths; species-rich grassland; transition mires; alkaline fens; siliceous scree; calcareous rocky slopes; and siliceous rocky slopes.

³²**Sensitive features include:** annual vegetation of drift lines; and perennial vegetation of stony banks.

³³**Sensitive features include:** vegetated sea cliffs; and dry heath.

³⁴**Sensitive features include:** estuaries; tidal mudflats and sandflats; perennial vegetation of stony banks; salicornia mud; Atlantic salt meadows; and Mediterranean salt meadows.

³⁵**Sensitive features include:** alkaline fens; alluvial forests; river lamprey; Atlantic salmon; and otter.

³⁶**Sensitive features include:** shelduck; oystercatcher; golden plover; grey plover; lapwing; knot; sanderling; black-tailed godwit; redshank; turnstone; little tern; and wetland and water birds.

³⁷**Sensitive features include:** light-bellied brent goose; and wetland and waterbirds.

³⁸**Sensitive features include:** great crested grebe; greylag goose; light-bellied brent goose; shelduck; teal; mallard; pintail; common scoter; red-breasted merganser; oystercatcher; ringed plover; golden plover; grey plover; lapwing; knot; dunlin; black-tailed godwit; bar-tailed godwit; curlew; redshank; black-headed gull; common gull; herring gull; and wetland and waterbirds.

³⁹**Sensitive features include:** kingfisher.

⁴⁰**Sensitive features include:** greylag goose.

- Carlingford Lough SPA (UK9020161)⁴¹;
- Rostrevor Wood SAC (UK0030268)⁴²;
- Eastern Mournes SAC (UK0016615)⁴³;
- Derryleckagh SAC (UK0016620)⁴⁴; and
- Slieve Gullion SAC (UK0030277)⁴⁵.

For more detail on European Sites please refer to the AA Natura Impact Report that accompanies the Proposed Material Alterations and this SEA Environmental Report.

4.6.3 Natural Heritage Areas and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas

Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) are designated due to their national conservation value for ecological and/or geological/geomorphological heritage. They cover nationally important semi-natural and natural habitats, landforms or geomorphological features, wildlife plant and animal species or a diversity of these natural attributes. NHAs are designated under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. Proposed NHAs (pNHAs) were published on a non-statutory basis in 1995, but have not since been statutorily proposed or designated.

There are 24 pNHAs⁴⁶ designated within or adjacent to the County. These sites are mapped on Figure 4.2.

4.6.4 Land Cover Mapping

CORINE⁴⁷ land cover mapping for the County is shown on Figure 4.3. The most dominant land cover types are pastures and agricultural lands.

Peat bogs, moors and heaths and coniferous forests are mainly found on Cooley Peninsula, in the north-east of the Plan area.

Categories from CORINE mapping that may indicate areas likely to contain Annex I habitats (see Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3), include:

- Peat bogs;
- Inland marshes;
- Salt marshes;
- Intertidal flats;
- Estuaries;
- Natural grassland;
- Water bodies;
- Mixed forests;
- Coniferous forest;
- Broad-leaved forests;
- Stream courses;
- Moors and heaths;
- Water courses;
- Transitional woodland and scrub; and
- Land principally occupied by agriculture with areas of natural vegetation.

4.6.5 Other Designations

Other designations mapped on Figure 4.2 include Ramsar sites.

The Convention of Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Water Fowl Habitat, was established at Ramsar in 1971 and ratified by Ireland in 1984. The main aim of the Convention is to secure the designation by each contracting state of wetlands in its territory for inclusion in a list of wetlands of international importance for waterfowl. This entails the commitment of each contracting state to a policy of protection and management of the designated wetlands, and of formulating and implementing planning so as to promote the conservation of designated wetlands and, as far as possible, the wise use of wetlands in its

⁴¹ **Sensitive features include:** light-bellied brent geese; common tern; oystercatcher; ringed plover; grey plover; dunlin and redshank.

⁴² **Sensitive features include:** old sessile oak woods.

⁴³ **Sensitive features include:** blanket bogs; European dry heaths; Alpine and Boreal heaths; Northern Atlantic wet heaths; siliceous alpine and boreal grasslands.

⁴⁴ **Sensitive features include:** transition mires; quaking bogs; and old sessile oak woods.

⁴⁵ **Sensitive features include:** European dry heaths.

⁴⁶ Carlingford Lough (000452); Carlingford Mountain (000453); Dundalk Bay (000455); Stabannan-Braganstown (000456); Blackhall Woods (001293); Liscarragh Marsh (001451); Ardee Cutaway Bog (001454); Castlecoo Hill (001458); Clogher Head (001459); Darver Castle Woods (001461); Drumcah, Toprass and Cortial Loughs (001462); Mellifont Abbey Woods (001464); Woodland at Omeath Park (001465); Trumpet Hill (Louth) (001468); Louth Hall and Ardee Woods (001616); Barmeath Woods (001801);

Stephenstown Pond (001803); King William's Glen (001804); Ravensdale Plantation (001805); Kildemock Marsh (001806); Reaghstown Marsh (001828); Dunany Point (001856); Boyne River Islands (001862); and Boyne Coast and Estuary (001957).

⁴⁷ The CORINE (Coordinated Information on the Environment) land cover data series was devised as a means of compiling geo-spatial environmental information in a standardised and comparable manner. CORINE has become a key data source for informing environmental and planning policy on a national and European level. The main land cover type in Ireland is agricultural land including forestry, which accounts for two-thirds of the national landmass. Most of this is permanent grassland pastures. Peatlands and wetlands are the second most widespread land cover type, covering almost one-fifth of the country. While forested areas cover about one-tenth of the country. Despite rapid development in the past two decades, Ireland's landscape is predominantly rural and agricultural.

territory. Ireland presently has 45 sites designated as Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Wetlands), with surface areas of 66,994 hectares. Dundalk Bay in County Louth is designated as a Ramsar site due to its international importance for supporting numerous species of waterbirds. An open sea bay with extensive saltmarshes, intertidal sand and mudflats support a rich a fauna of bivalve molluscs, marine worms and crustaceans that provide main food source for waterbirds.

Relevant Ramsar sites designated in Northern Ireland include Carlingford Lough.

4.6.6 Register of Protected Areas

In response to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive a number of water bodies or parts of water bodies that must have extra controls on their quality by virtue of how their waters are used by people and by wildlife have been listed on Register of Protected Areas (RPAs). These are mapped on Figure 4.4, Figure 4.5 and Figure 4.6. These designations include:

- WFD Nutrient Sensitive Areas⁴⁸ in the County including sections of rivers (such as: Castletown River; River Proules Lower; and River Boyne) and estuaries (such as: Inner Dundalk Bay and Boyne Estuary) as shown on Figure 4.4;
- WFD Surface Water in Nutrient Sensitive Areas⁴⁹ in the County including various coastal, lake, transitional and river waterbodies as shown on Figure 4.4;
- WFD Groundwater in Nutrient Sensitive Areas⁵⁰ in the County as shown on Figure 4.4;
- WFD Drinking Water Surface Water Bodies⁵¹ (including rivers such as Ballymascanlan; Knocknagoran; Big; Fane; Glyde; Dee; and Tullyeskar) as shown on Figure 4.5. Groundwater

beneath the entire County is also included;

- WFD Salmonid River Regs (S.I. 293 only) - the River Boyne, directly adjacent to the south of the Plan area, is designated as a Salmonid River under SI No. 293, and associated WFD Surface Waters and Groundwater in Salmonid Regs, as shown on Figure 4.5;
- WFD Bathing Waters in the County and associated WFD Surface Waters in Bathing Locations, including a number of bathing locations such as: Shelling Hill/Templetown; Port, Lurganboy; Clogherhead; and Seapoint, as shown on Figure 4.5; and
- WFD Shellfish Areas in the County including Carlingford Lough and Dundalk Bay, and associated WFD Surface and Groundwater in Shellfish Areas, as shown on Figure 4.6.

There are a number of water dependent habitats in the County which have been listed on the Register – these relate to designated SACs and SPAs (see Section 4.6.2).

Relevant designations in Northern Ireland include areas of Marine Economically Significant Species, Bathing Areas and Groundwater for Drinking Water.

4.6.7 Other Sites of Biodiversity Value⁵²

Other sites of biodiversity value include: Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs); Trees of Special Amenity Value and Heritage Trees (also known as Champion Trees), as shown on Figure 4.18.

TPOs are a planning mechanism whereby individual trees or groups of trees can be identified as important and protected by a TPO. There are five trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders in County Louth. Project 'Champion Trees Register of Ireland' identified 21 trees in County Louth that are considered of significant environmental value to the County

⁴⁸ Nutrient sensitive areas are those waterbodies listed in accordance with the Urban Waste Water Treatment (UWWT) Directive 91/271/EEC on Urban Waste Water Treatment and transposing Regulations. The waterbody containing the sensitive area is used to represent the nutrient sensitive area.

⁴⁹ Areas designated as sensitive under the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC) and and transposing Regulations.

⁵⁰ Groundwater bodies that intersect with areas designated as sensitive under the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC) and and transposing Regulations.

⁵¹ Various water bodies are used for drinking water abstraction in accordance with European Communities (Drinking Water) (No. 2) Regulations 2007 (SI No. 278/2007).

⁵² Draft Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027

and that such trees should be protected from development where necessary. Trees and Groups of Trees that Contribute to Amenity are considered by the Council as groups of trees of significant value to environment that should be protected where necessary and in recognition of the value of the trees, their conservation, as part of any grant of planning permission will be required. There are 141 'Trees and Woodlands of Special Amenity Value' in County Louth. See also Section 4.13.6.

County Louth contains a number of rivers, lakes, wetlands and coastal areas that are of national and international importance including marshes, fens, heathland, cutaway bog, coastal and estuarine salt marshes and dune slacks. These are areas of high biodiversity value, supporting various species and habitats such as Dundalk Bay, one of Ireland's top locations for wintering wading birds. These areas also provide flood control and contribute to climate change mitigation. Louth County Council undertook a Wetland Survey in 2011, 2012 and 2014 which identified the status 308 sites likely to contain wetland habitats.

4.6.8 Existing Problems

Ireland's Article 17 report on the Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland (DCHG, 2019) identifies various Irish, EU-protected habitats and species to be of unfavourable status and many to be still declining, although it also identifies that a range of positive actions are underway. Categories for pressures and threats on Ireland's habitats and species identified by the report comprise:

- Agriculture;
- Forestry;
- Extraction of resources (minerals, peat, non-renewable energy resources);
- Energy production processes and related infrastructure development;
- Development and operation of transport systems;
- Development, construction and use of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational infrastructure and areas;
- Extraction and cultivation of biological living resources (other than agriculture and forestry);
- Military action, public safety measures, and other human intrusions;
- Alien and problematic species;
- Mixed source pollution;
- Human-induced changes in water regimes;
- Natural processes (excluding catastrophes and processes induced by human activity or climate change);
- Geological events, natural catastrophes;
- Climate change; and

- Unknown pressures, no pressures and pressures from outside the Member State.

The Plan includes measures to contribute towards the protection of biodiversity and flora and fauna and associated ecosystem services.

Previous changes in land uses arising from human development have resulted in a loss of biodiversity and flora and fauna however, legislative objectives governing biodiversity and fauna were not identified as being conflicted with.

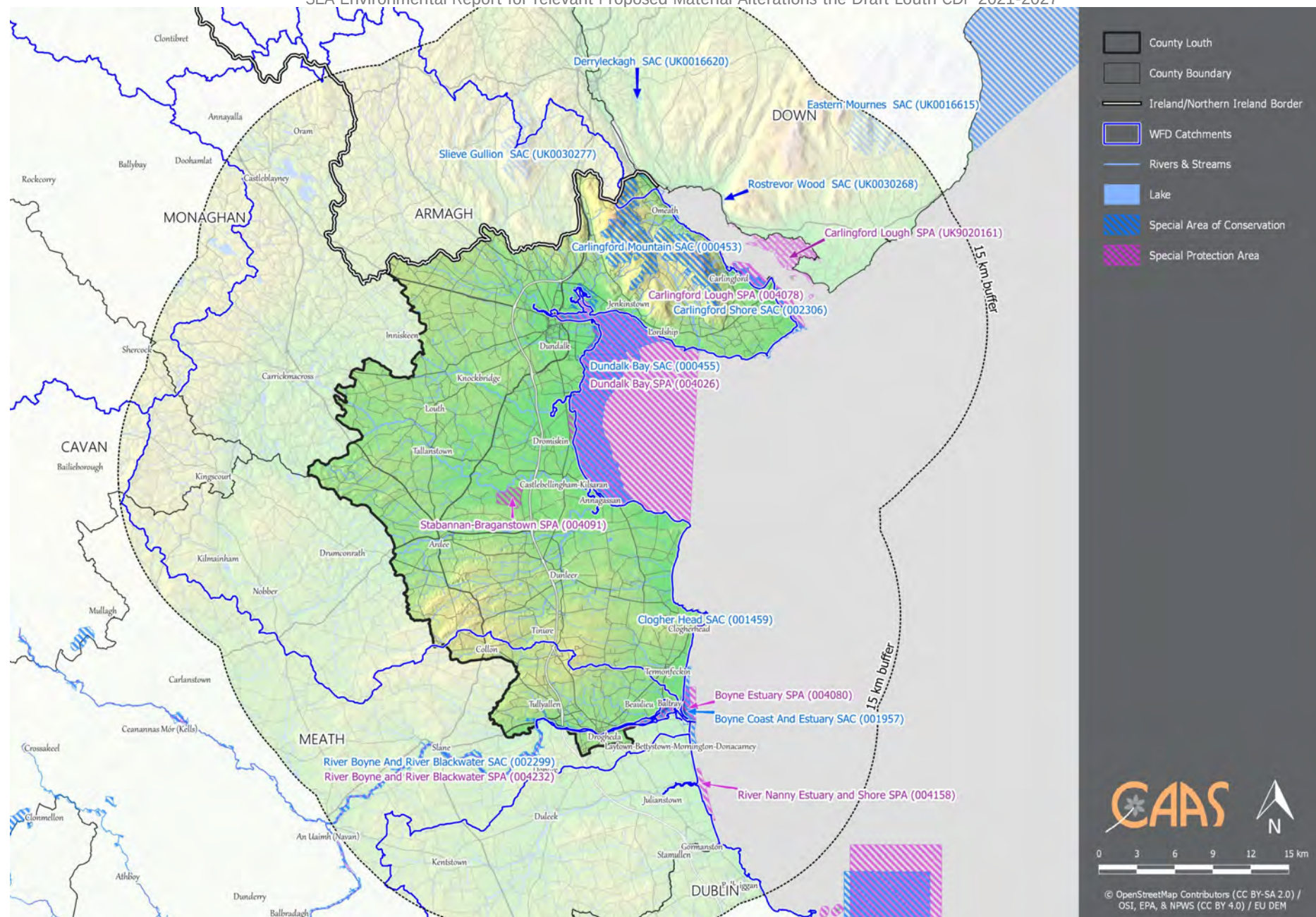


Figure 4.1 European Sites within and within 15 km of the County

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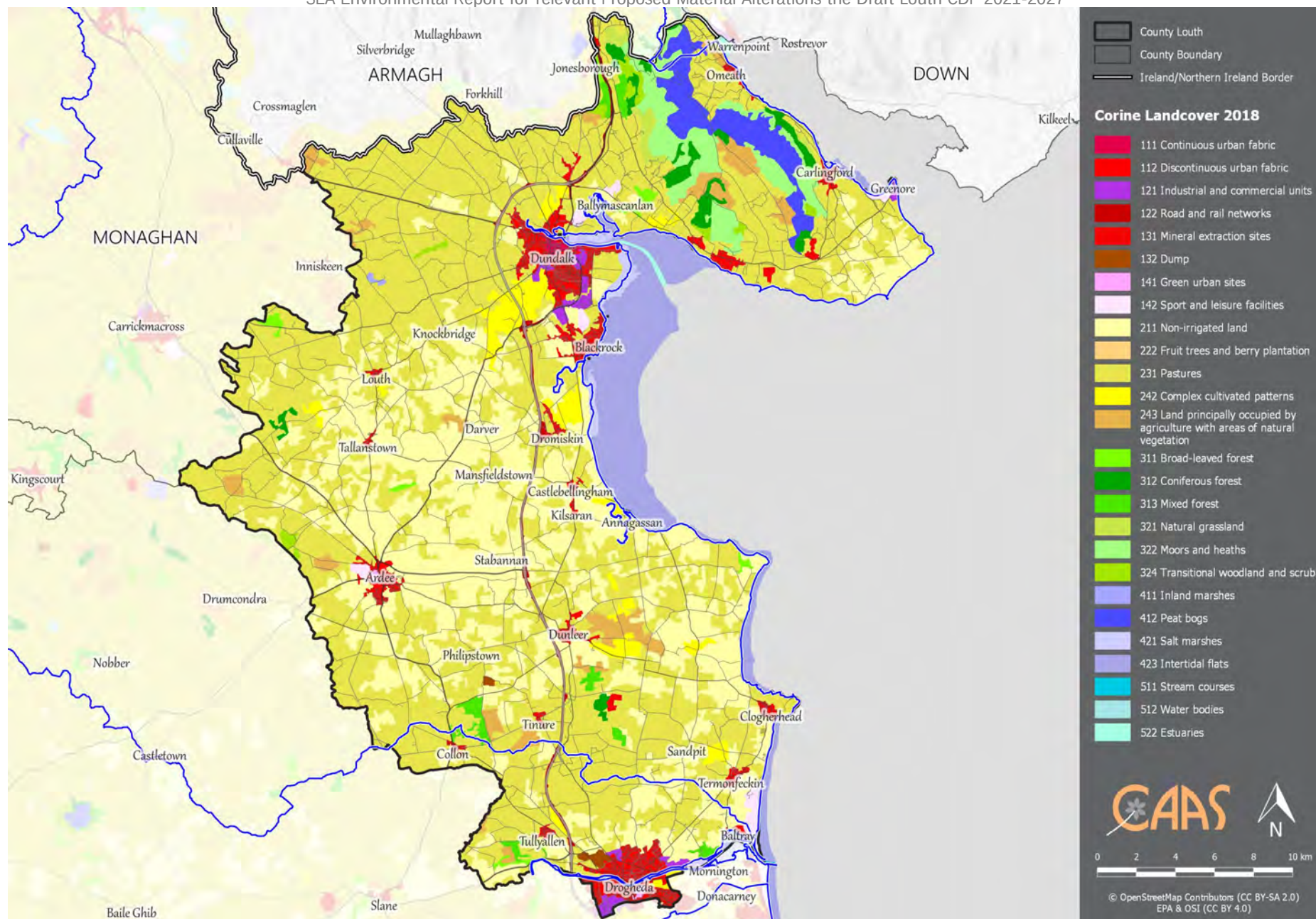


Figure 4.3 CORINE Land Cover 2018

CAAS for Louth County Council

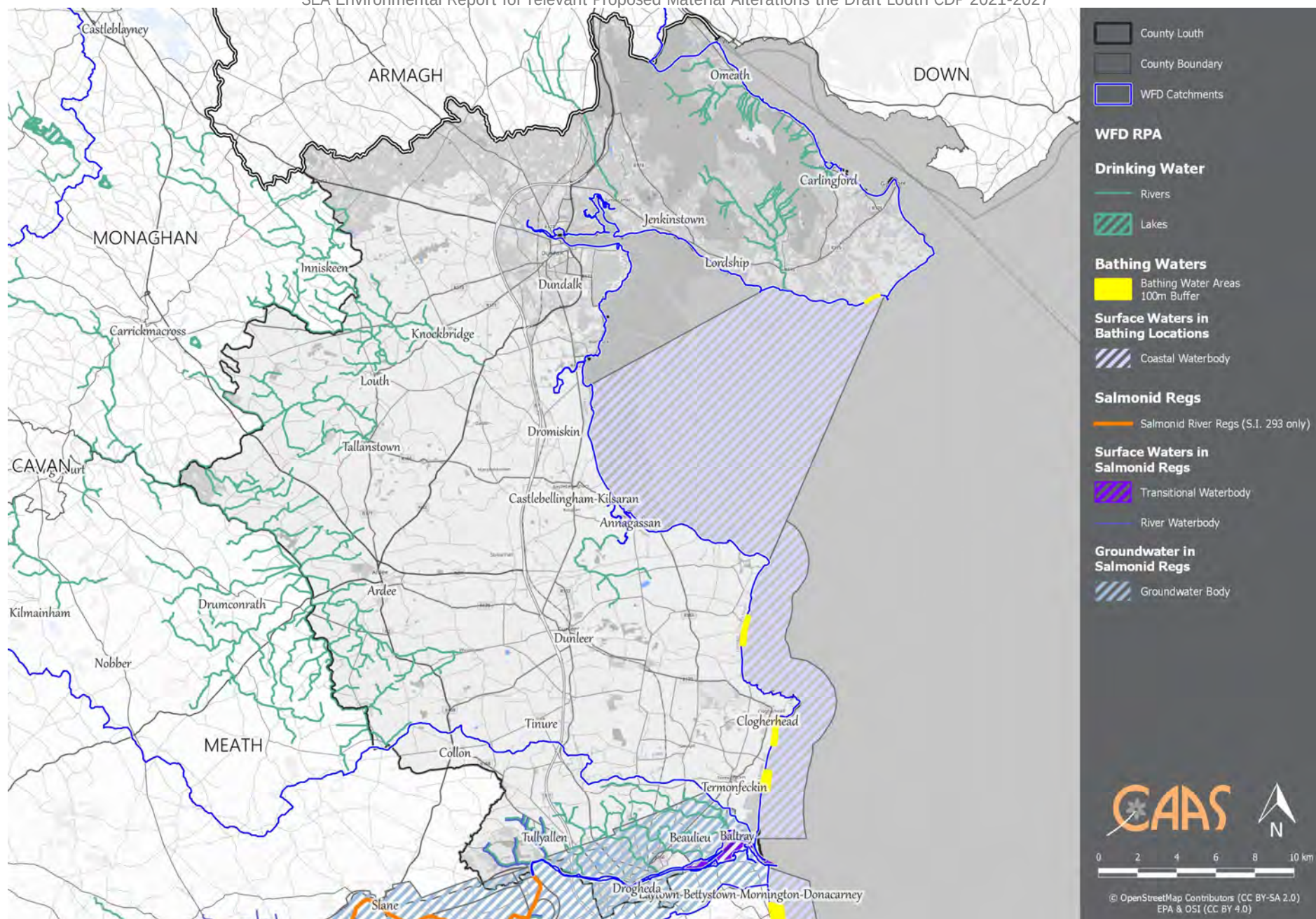


Figure 4.5 WFD Register of Protected Areas Drinking Waters, Bathing Waters and Salmonid Waters

CAAS for Louth County Council

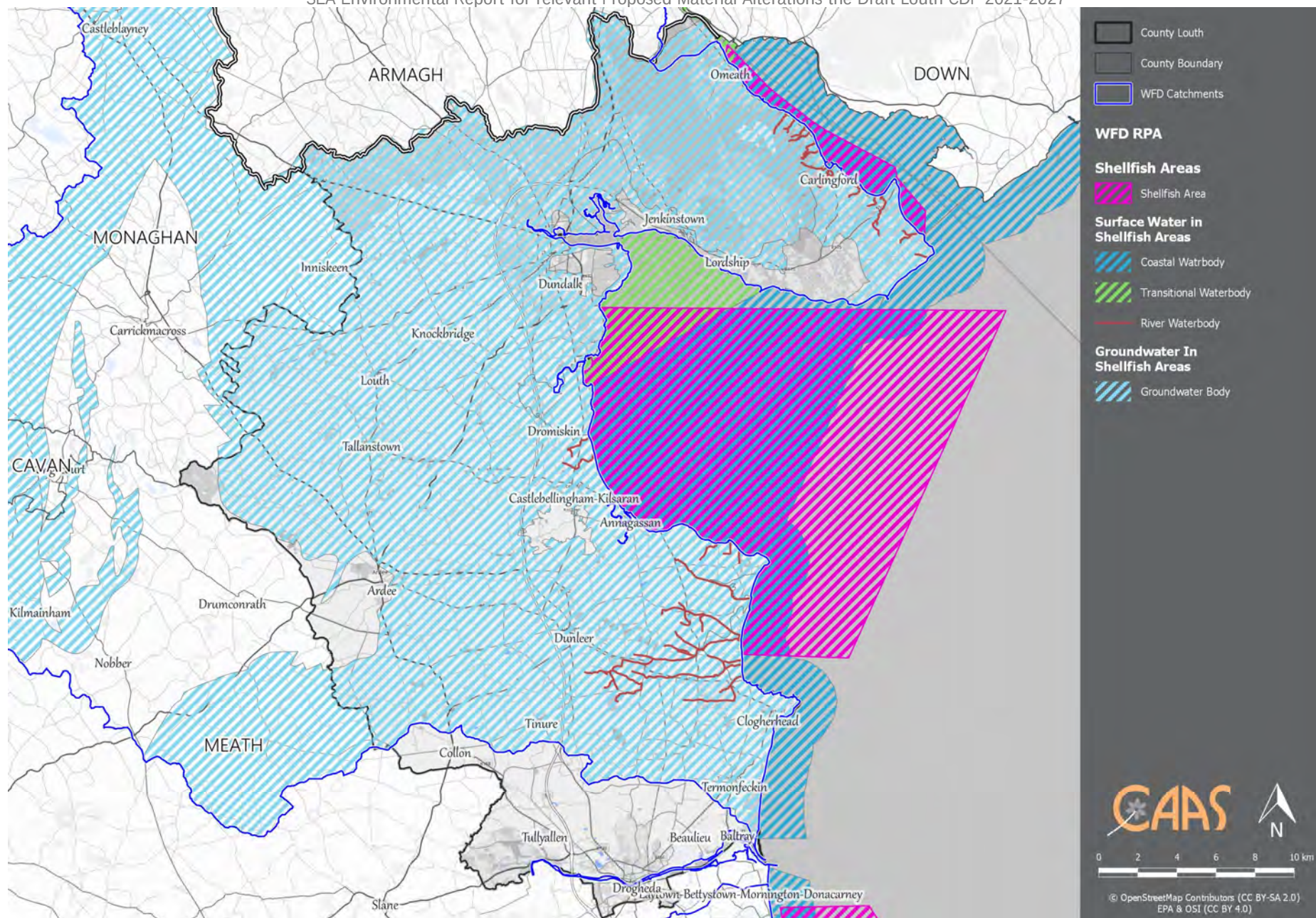


Figure 4.6 WFD Register of Protected Areas Shellfish Areas

4.7 Population and Human Health

4.7.1 Population

In the 2016 Census the total population of County Louth was identified as being 128,884 persons, showing the trends of an increase in total population in the County by c. 4.6% (5,987 persons) since the previous Census.

The provision of additional housing over the Plan period is dictated by the Core Strategy that guides where new development should be allocated in accordance with national and regional strategies and policies, including the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for Eastern and Midland Region.

The Draft Plan designates a hierarchy of the County's settlements as follows:

- Regional Growth Centres (Drogheda and Dundalk);
- Self-Sustaining Growth Towns (Ardee and Dunleer);
- Self-Sustaining Towns (Carlingford, Castlebellingham, Clogherhead, Termonfeckin and Tullyallen);
- Small Towns and Villages (Annagassan, Baltray, Collon, Dromiskin, Knockbridge, Louth Village, Omeath and Tallanstown); and
- Rural Villages and the Wider Rural Area (Bellurgan, Ballagan, Ballapousta, Darver, Dromin, Faughart, Glenmore, Grange, Grangebellew, Greenore, Gyles Quay, Kilcurry, Kilkerley, Lordship, Mountbagnal, Muchgrange, Philipstown (Collon), Ravensdale, Reaghstown, Sandpit, Sheelagh, Stabannon, Tinure, and Willville).

Dundalk and Drogheda are the biggest settlements in the County and are identified in the RSES for Eastern and Midland Region as Regional Growth Centres. Regional Growth Centres are large towns with a high level of self-sustaining employment and services that act as regional economic drivers and play a significant role for a wider catchment area.

Drogheda was the largest town in Ireland in 2016, with a total population of almost 41,000 persons. The town is located within the

administrative areas of Louth and Meath County Councils. The town centre and urban core is located in Louth with the southern fringes extending into Meath. In 2016 approximately 84% of the population (34,199 people) lived within the administrative area of Louth.

Dundalk with the population of 39,004 persons is the County town and administrative centre for Louth. It is a multi-modal settlement that benefits from its strategic location along the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor and excellent connectivity with Dublin and Belfast.

The population concentration in Drogheda and Dundalk in combination with its small landmass makes Louth the County with the highest percentage of an urban population outside of Dublin, with 66.1% of the population living in urban areas in 2016⁵³.

The population projection for the County is 149,966 persons, representing an increase in population of 21,082 from the 2016 Census figure.⁵⁴

The new population provided for in the Draft Plan will interact with various environmental components. Potential interactions include:

- Increase in demand for waste water treatment at the municipal level;
- Recreational and development pressure on habitats and landscapes;
- Increase in demand for water supply and associated potential impact of water abstraction from the rivers;
- Potential interactions in flood-sensitive areas; and
- Potential effects on water quality.

There are a number of settlements located along and near the County border with Northern Ireland, including: Newry; Forkhill; Johannesburg; Warrenpoint; Rostrevor and Kilkeel.

4.7.2 Human Health

Human health has the potential to be impacted upon by environmental vectors (i.e. environmental components such as air, water or soil through which contaminants or pollutants, which have the potential to cause harm, can be transported so that they come

permitted 25% headroom, will be in the range of 141,500-148,375 persons by 2026. The new CDP uses the higher projected growth rate, factoring into the equation that the plan runs from 2021 to 2027.

⁵³ Draft Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027

⁵⁴ Draft Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027: The NPF's Implementation Roadmap provides that Louth's projected population, in conjunction with the

into contact with human beings). Hazards or nuisances to human health can arise as a result of exposure to these vectors arising from incompatible adjacent land uses for example. These factors have been considered with regard to the description of: the baseline of each environmental component; and the identification and evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Plan.

4.7.3 Existing Problems

There is historic and predictive evidence of flooding in various locations across the County (see information on Strategic Flood Risk Assessment at Section 4.9.9).

The greatest health risk from radiation in Ireland is caused by radon. The presence of radon gas, a naturally occurring radioactive gas that originates from the decay of uranium in rocks and soils, occurs across the country. It accounts for more than half of the total radiation dose received by the Irish population. As a known carcinogen, in the same category as tobacco smoke and asbestos it is a cause of lung cancer. Exposure to radon for long periods or at high concentrations can lead to lung cancer. The number of homes within the County with radon levels above the reference level is within the normal range experienced in other locations across the country⁵⁵.

Information on the status of groundwaters and surface waters is provided under Section 4.9 while compliance issues in relation to water services are detailed under Section 4.11.9.

4.8 Soil

Soil is the top layer of the earth's crust. It is formed by mineral particles, organic matter, water, air and living organisms. Soil can be considered as a non-renewable natural resource because it develops over very long timescales. It is an extremely complex, variable and living medium and performs many vital functions including: food and other biomass

production, storage, filtration and transformation of many substances including water, carbon, and nitrogen. Soil has a role as a habitat and gene pool, serves as a platform for human activities, landscape and heritage and acts as a provider of raw materials. Such functions of soil are worthy of protection because of their socio-economic as well as environmental importance. Soils in any area are the result of the interaction of various factors, such as parent material, climate, vegetation and human action.

To date, there is no legislation which is specific to the protection of soil resources. Although a proposal for a Soil Framework Directive was withdrawn in 2014, the importance of sustainable soil management was recognised in the Seventh Environment Action Programme, where sustainable land management is to be achieved by 2020.

The majority of the Plan area is underlain by brown earths⁵⁶ and surface water gleys⁵⁷. Other soil types identified include (as shown on Figure 4.7):

- Lithosol soils⁵⁸ (in the upland and coastal areas);
- Alluvial soils⁵⁹ (in the flood plains of the rivers and streams); and
- Luvisol soils⁶⁰ (in the east of the County).

There are many areas of peat across the Plan area, with concentrations of these in the west and north-west. Rain-fed (ombrotrophic) and groundwater-fed (minerotrophic) peat soils occurring in the County are subject to ecological designations (see Section 4.6). Outcropping rock is identified in a number of upland locations.

The peat soils are also occurring in Northern Ireland, along the northern border of County Louth.

Coastal areas, marine waters and associated aquatic ecology within the County provide for

⁵⁵ Mapping available at <http://www.epa.ie/radiation/radonmap>

⁵⁶ Brown earths are well drained mineral soils, associated with high levels of natural fertility.

⁵⁷ Surface Water Gleys are wetland soils with slowly permeable horizons resulting in seasonal waterlogging.

⁵⁸ Lithosols are shallow non-calcareous soils, commonly overlying hard rock or skeletal and gravelly material. They

tend to be stony soils, or with shattered bedrock and are associated with frequent rock outcrops.

⁵⁹ These are associated with alluvial (clay, silt or sand) river deposits.

⁶⁰ Luvisol soils are generally fertile, widely used for agriculture and associated with significant accumulation of clay.

high habitat diversity. Tidal marsh⁶¹ (along the northern coastline) supports important rare plant and animal species that are also subject to ecological designations (see Section 4.6).

The GSI have a suite of data sources available that would be useful in planning and assessing individual projects with regard to the environmental topic(s) of soil and/or material assets. These include:

- Bedrock mapping;
- Quaternary and Physiographic mapping;
- National Aquifer and Recharge mapping; and
- Marine and Coastal Unit datasets.

4.8.1 Sites of Geological Interest

Geological Survey Ireland coordinate the Irish Geological Heritage Programme, whereby an objective has been set to identify and select sites of geological interest within each county across the country. The audit of County Geological Sites in County Louth was completed in 2013. There are 33 Sites of Geological Interest in County Louth⁶², as mapped on Figure 4.8, with a concentration of these in the upland and coastal areas⁶³. Many of these County Geological Sites include quarries.

4.8.2 Potentially contaminated lands and landfill sites

In the absence of mitigation, contaminated materials have the potential to adversely impact upon human health, water quality and habitats and species.

As is the case with other urban and semi-urban areas across the country, there is potential for contamination at sites within County Louth, especially where land uses occurred in the past in the absence of environmental protection legislation.

4.8.3 Source Protection Areas

Source Protection Area delineation provides an assessment of the land area that contributes groundwater to a borehole or spring. Source reports have been undertaken by the GSI on behalf of Local Authorities since the mid-1990s. The Public Supply Source Protection Areas comprises Source Protection Areas around groundwater abstraction points that are managed by Irish Water to supply Public Water Supply Schemes across Ireland. The objective of the Source Protection Areas is to provide protection by placing tighter controls on activities within all or part of the zone of contribution of the source. The Zone of Contribution is the land area that contributes water to the well or spring. The Inner Protection Area (SI) is designed to protect against the effects of human activities that might have an immediate effect on the source and, in particular, against microbial pollution. The Outer Protection Area (SO) is encompassing the remainder of the zone of contribution to the groundwater abstraction point (e.g. borehole or spring). The Group Scheme Preliminary Source Protection Areas comprises Zones of Contribution to groundwater abstraction points that supply Group Water Schemes across Ireland that are affiliated to the National Federation of Group Water Schemes and that supply more than 15 people. The Zones of Contribution are preliminary protection areas around groundwater abstractions, but are not full Source Protection Areas.

Public Supply Source Protection Areas in County Louth are shown on Figure 4.8.

4.8.4 Landslides

The term "landslide" describes a wide variety of processes that result in the downward and outward movement of materials such as rock, debris, earth, mud and peat under the force of gravity. Issues such as existing ground conditions, slope stability and storage of excavated material have the potential to influence susceptibility to landslides/bog bursts. The potential impacts of landslides include loss

⁶¹ Salt and brackish water tidal marshes are productive wetlands that provide ecosystem services including habitat, food energy for the estuarine food web, maintenance of water quality, storage of storm water, buffering storm waves and reducing shoreline erosion, carbon sequestration, and socioeconomic benefits.

⁶² NHA sites are those considered to be worthy of designation as Natural Heritage Areas by the NPWS. CGS refers to sites of lesser importance which should still be protected as County Geological Sites.

⁶³ Individual audited site reports for County Louth are available from the GSI (www.gsi.ie).

of human life/injury, flooding, pollution of watercourses and impacts upon aquatic biodiversity.

The Plan area has several locations with a history of landslide events⁶⁴, as shown on Figure 4.9. These events include Rosehall in the townland of Mell (year not identified in data source) and Drumad on M1 for Jonesborough (2013).

The GSI have identified various upland and coastal areas across the area to which the Plan relates that are of high and moderately high levels of landslide susceptibility, as shown Figure 4.9.

4.8.5 Existing Problems

Legislative objectives governing soil were not identified as being conflicted with.

⁶⁴ Over 2,500 landslide events are recorded in the National Landslides Database available from GSI (www.gsi.ie). This dataset also includes Landslide Susceptibility Mapping to

assist in the identification of areas that are likely to experience land sliding.

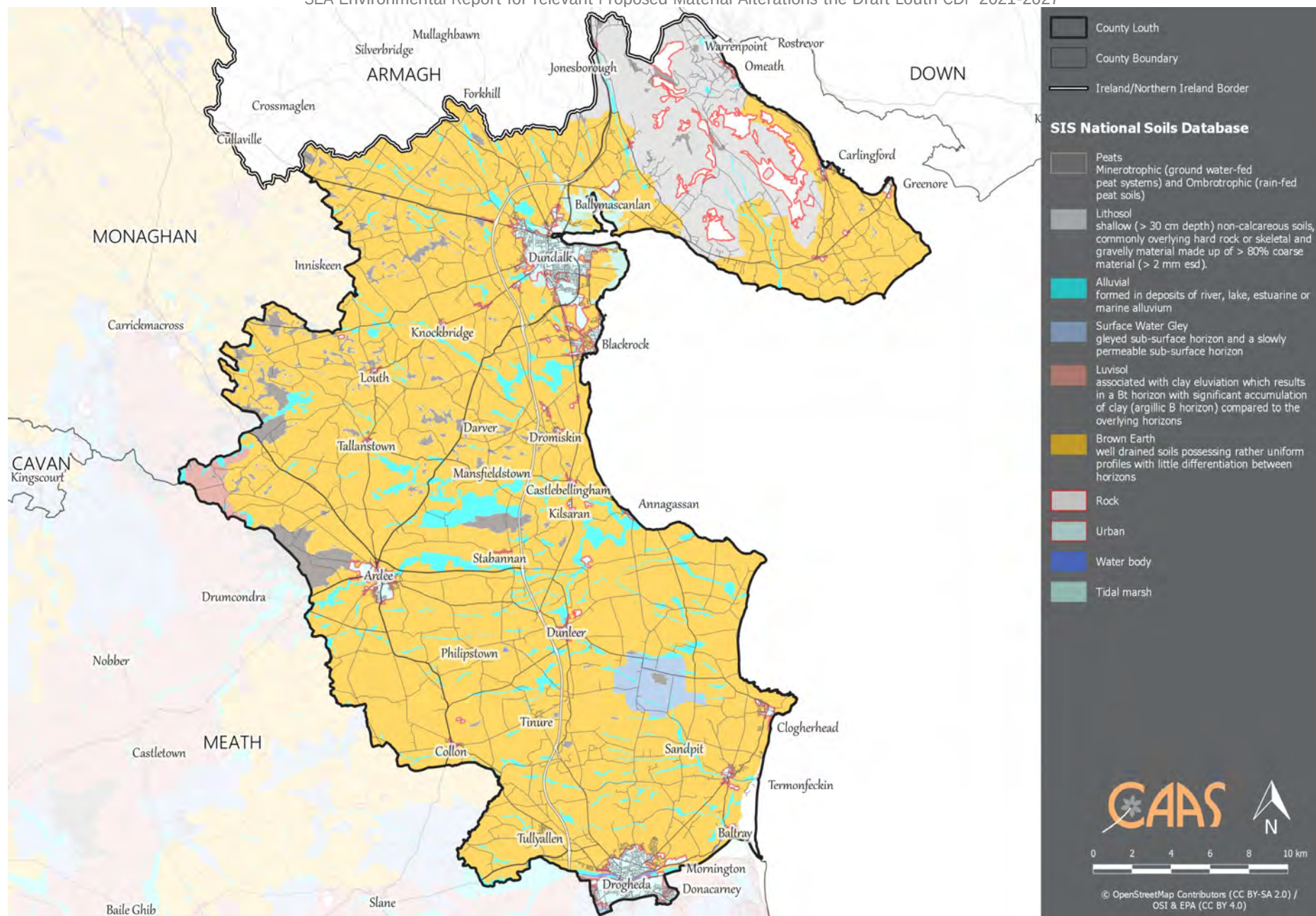
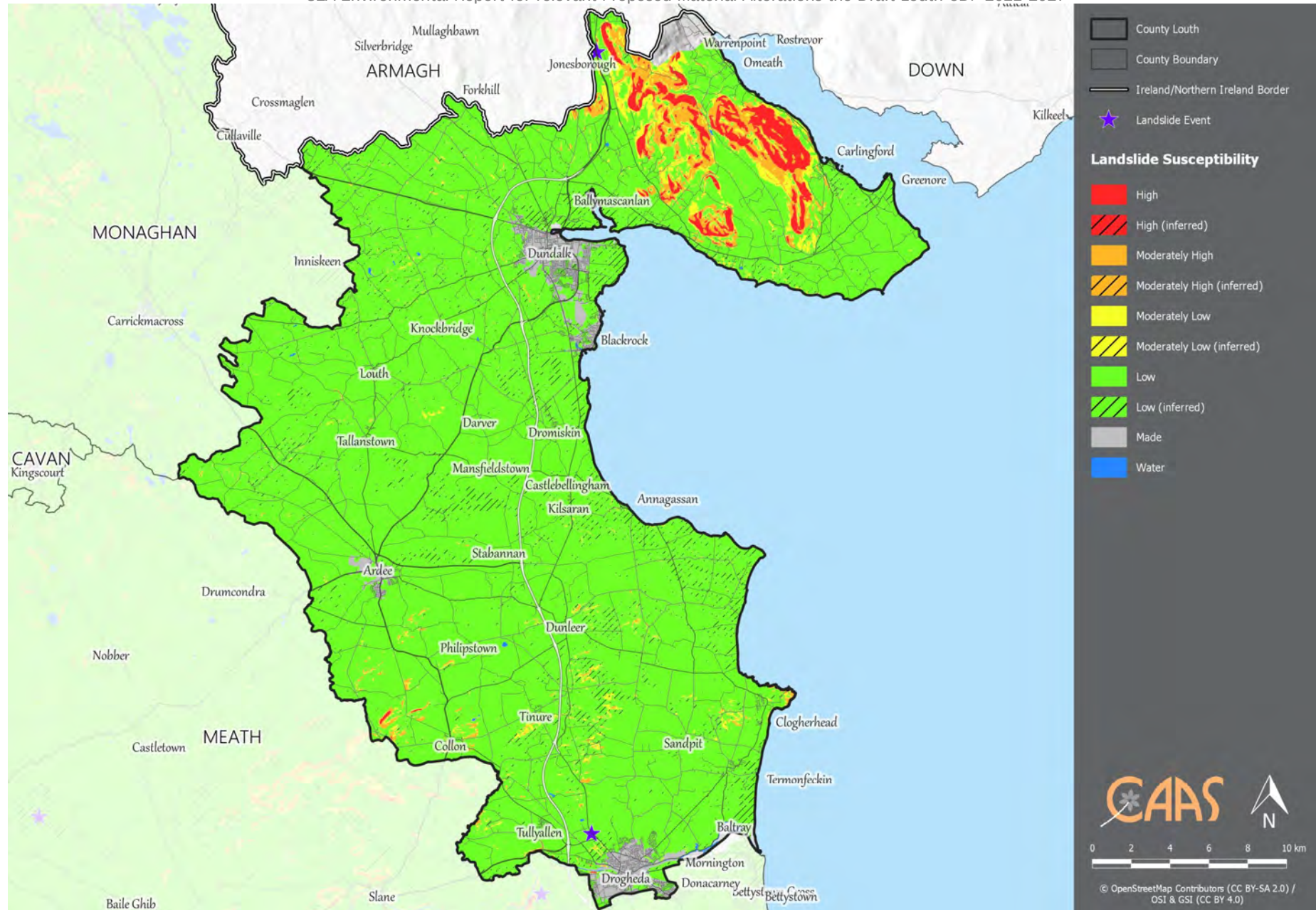


Figure 4.7 Soil Type

CAAS for Louth County Council



4.9 Water

4.9.1 The Water Framework Directive

Since 2000, Water Management in the EU has been directed by the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (WFD). The WFD requires that all Member States implement the necessary measures to prevent deterioration of the status of all waters - surface, ground, estuarine and coastal - and protect, enhance and restore all waters with the aim of achieving good status. All public bodies are required to coordinate their policies and operations so as to maintain the good status of water bodies which are currently unpolluted and improve polluted water bodies to good status.

Article 4 of the WFD sets out various exemptions for deterioration in status caused as a result of certain physical modifications to water bodies. This is provided: all practicable mitigation measures are taken; there are reasons of overriding public interest or the benefits to human health, safety or sustainable development outweigh the benefits in achieving the WFD objective; there are no better alternatives; and the reasons for the physical modification are explained in the River Basin Management Plan.

The EU's Common Implementation Strategy Guidance Documents No. 20 and 36 provide guidance on exemptions to the environmental objectives of the WFD.

For the purpose of assessment, reporting and management, water is divided into groundwater, rivers, lakes, estuarine waters and coastal waters that are in turn divided into specific, clearly defined water bodies.

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (Northern Ireland) publish an annual Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report which includes information on the status of waterbodies. The 2019⁶⁵ report identifies that:

- In 2018, 31.3% of NI river waterbodies were classified as “high” or “good” quality;

- In 2018, five of the 21 lake waterbodies in Northern Ireland were classified as having a “good” status; and
- In 2018, ten of the 25 marine water bodies around Northern Ireland's shores are classified as ‘high’ or ‘good’.

4.9.2 Zone of Influence

The zone of influence of the Plan beyond the County boundary, with respect to impacts upon waters can be estimated to be all bodies of groundwater and all surface waters downstream areas of catchments which drain Plan area.

4.9.3 Surface Water Drainage

A catchment is an area of land contributing to a waterbody, with all the water ultimately running off to a single outlet. The WFD requires water quality management to be based on natural river catchments i.e. by reference to the natural, environmental unit rather than by reference to administrative or legal boundaries, which often fragment river catchments.

Most of the County is located within the Newry, Fane, Glyde and Dee catchments. Part of the south-east of the County is located within the Boyne catchment.

4.9.4 Surface Water Status

The WFD defines ‘overall surface water status’ as the general expression of the status of a body of surface water, determined by the poorer of its ecological status and its chemical status. Thus, in order to achieve ‘good surface water status’ both the ecological status and the chemical status of a surface water body need to be at least ‘good’.

Ecological status is an expression of the structure and functioning of aquatic ecosystems associated with surface waters. Such waters are classified as of ‘good ecological status’ when they meet Directive requirements.

Chemical Status is a pass/fail assignment with a failure defined by a face-value exceedance of an Environmental Quality Standards (EQS) for one or more Priority Action Substances (PAS) listed in Annex X of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). The EQS values for individual

⁶⁵ <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk>

PAS substances are set at European level. Good surface water chemical status means that concentrations of pollutants in the water body do not exceed the environmental limit values specified in the Directive.

The WFD surface water status (2013-2018) for rivers, coastal and transitional waterbodies, within and surrounding the County is shown on Figure 4.10. Table 4.1. In addition, there are a number of *unassigned*⁶⁶ rivers, coastal and transitional waterbodies across the County.

The WFD status of most of the surface waters in the County is classified as *moderate* or *good*, however sections⁶⁷ of the rivers, including Ballymascanlan, Dee, Termonfeckin and Flurry and transitional waters of Castletown Estuary are identified as *poor* due to unsatisfactory ecological/biological and/or physio-chemical status.

In addition to this, many water bodies are identified as being at risk of not achieving their water quality objectives due to the damage being caused by significant pressures.⁶⁸ Significant pressures, those pressures which need to be addressed in order to improve water quality, have been identified for waterbodies that are 'At Risk' of not meeting their water quality objectives under the WFD. Significant pressures for surface water bodies within or adjacent to County Louth are identified on Table 4.1.

The WFD status of rivers, lakes and coastal waterbodies in Northern Ireland⁶⁹, along the border with Louth, ranges from *poor* (including River County Water and Fane River-Ballynacarry) to *moderate* (including Carlingford Lough, Moygannon River, Cully Water, Cregan River and Fane River- Cullaville) and *good* (including Mourne Coast, White Water River, Cassy Water, Kilbroney River, Ghann River, Newry Canal and Forkhill River).

4.9.5 Ground Water

Groundwater is stored in the void spaces in underground layers of rock, or aquifers. These aquifers are permeable, allowing both the infiltration of water from the soils above them and the yielding of water to surface and coastal waters. Groundwater is the part of the

subsurface water that is in the saturated zone - the zone below the water table, the uppermost level of saturation in an aquifer at which the pressure is atmospheric, in which all pores and fissures are full of water.

For groundwater bodies, the approach to classification is different from that for surface water. For each body of groundwater, both the chemical status and the quantitative must be determined. Both have to be classed as either *good* or *poor*. The WFD sets out a series of criteria that must be met for a body to be classed as good chemical and quantitative status.

The WFD status (2013-2018) of most of groundwater underlying the County is identified as being of *good status*, meeting the objectives of the WFD, as shown on Figure 4.11. The area underlying industrial facility (Licence Number: P0784-01) to the north-east of Drogheda is identified as being of *poor* groundwater body status.

4.9.6 Aquifer Vulnerability and Productivity

The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) rates groundwaters according to both their productivity and vulnerability to pollution.

Aquifer vulnerability refers to the ease with which pollutants of various kinds can enter into groundwater. The vulnerability of aquifers underlying the County are mapped on Figure 4.12 and generally classified as being of:

- *High and Moderate vulnerability*, in most of the County;
- *Extreme vulnerability* and *Extreme (Rock at or near surface or karst)*, in many locations throughout the County, but mainly in the north-east and south of the County; and
- *Low vulnerability*, mainly in the south and south-east of the County.

⁶⁶ There is a data gap relating to WFD surface water status data. There are a number of waterbodies within the Plan area with overall status currently not assigned to them and the term "unassigned status" applies in respect of these waterbodies.

⁶⁷ As per EPA classification system (gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps)

⁶⁸ EPA (2019): Report on Water Quality in Ireland 2013-2018

⁶⁹ Mapping available at: <https://gis.daera-ni.gov.uk>

Table 4.1 WFD Surface Waterbody Status and Pressures⁷⁰

Waterbody Name (EPA Identification Code) ⁷¹	Waterbody Type	WFD Surface Waterbody Status (2013 -2018) and Pressures ⁷²
Ballymascanlan (_010)	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status and failed physio-chemical/nutrient conditions. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from urban run-off sources ⁷³ .
Dee (_060)	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural ⁷⁴ and hydromorphological/anthropogenic sources ⁷⁵ .
Dee (_090)	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status and failed physio-chemical/nutrient conditions. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and hydromorphological/anthropogenic sources .
Flurry (_010)	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural and urban run-off sources .
Flurry (_030)	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status. No pressures identified.
Termonfeckin (_010)	River	Poor - due to poor ecological/biological status and failed physio-chemical/nutrient conditions. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from agricultural sources .
Castletown Estuary	Transitional	Poor - due to poor biological status. This waterbody is also identified to be under significant pressure from urban waste water sources ⁷⁶ .
Big (Louth) (_020)	River	Moderate . This waterbody is identified to be under pressure from industrial sources ⁷⁷ .
Castletown (_030)	River	Moderate . This waterbody is identified to be under pressure from agricultural sources .
Dee (_050)	River	Moderate . This waterbody is identified to be under pressure from agricultural and hydromorphological/anthropogenic sources .
Dee (_070)	River	Moderate . No pressures identified.
Dee (_080)	River	Moderate . This waterbody is identified to be under pressure from agricultural sources .
Flurry (_020)	River	Moderate . No pressures identified.
Glyde (_050)	River	Moderate . This waterbody is identified to be under pressure from urban waste water sources .
Glyde (_070)	River	Moderate . This waterbody is identified to be under pressure from urban waste water sources .
Mattock (_010)	River	Moderate . No pressures identified.
Proules (_030)	River	Moderate . No pressures identified.
Termonfeckin (_020)	River	Moderate . This waterbody is identified to be under pressure from agricultural sources .
White (Louth) (_010)	River	Moderate . No pressures identified.
White (Louth) (_020)	River	Moderate . This waterbody is identified to be under pressure from urban waste water sources .
White (Louth) (_030)	River	Moderate . This waterbody is identified to be under pressure from agricultural sources .
Boyne Estuary	Transitional	Moderate . This waterbody is identified to be under pressure from agricultural sources .
Inner Dundalk Bay	Transitional	Moderate . This waterbody is identified to be under pressure from urban waste water sources .
Boyne Estuary Plume Zone	Coastal	Moderate . This waterbody is identified to be under pressure from anthropogenic/ hydromorphological sources .
Big (Louth) (_010)	River	Good . No pressures identified.
Boyne (_180)	River	Good . No pressures identified.
Castletown (_010)	River	Good . This waterbody is identified to be under pressure from urban run-off sources .
Castletown (_020)	River	Good . No pressures identified.
Cully Water (_010)	River	Good . No pressures identified.
Fane (_050)	River	Good . No pressures identified.
Glyde (_030)	River	Good . No pressures identified.
Glyde (_040)	River	Good . No pressures identified.
Glyde (_060)	River	Good . This waterbody is identified to be under pressure from urban waste water sources .
Kilcurry (_010)	River	Good . No pressures identified.
Mattock (_020)	River	Good . This waterbody is identified to be under pressure from agricultural sources .
Outer Dundalk Bay	Coastal	Good . This waterbody is identified to be under pressure from anthropogenic/ hydromorphological sources .

⁷⁰ Source: <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/> and <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/Water>⁷¹ The number at the end of each river water body name indicates where the water body is located along the main river channel. For example, the water body at the source is coded ' _010', the next water body downstream is coded ' _020' and the final water body before the river becomes transitional is ' _180'.⁷² There is a data gap relating to WFD surface water status data. There are a number of waterbodies within the Plan area with overall status currently not assigned to them and the term "unassigned status" applies in respect of these waterbodies. These are not included on the table.⁷³ **Urban run-off pressures** can include: leaking sewers and run-off from paved and unpaved areas and misconnections where private foul connections are connected to storm sewers instead of the foul sewer network.⁷⁴ **Agricultural pressures** can include: issues related to farming including loss of excess nutrients and sediment loss to surface waters from diffuse sources such as spreading of fertilisers and manures. Excess phosphorous and sediment are typically issues for rivers and lakes, and too much nitrogen is the main issue for estuaries and coastal waters.⁷⁵ Hydromorphological and Anthropogenic pressures are identified together in many instances. **Hydromorphological pressures** can include: modifications to the physical habitat conditions or the natural functioning of a waterbody which can impact on ecology, caused by dredging and straightening of rivers (chanellisation), land drainage or hard infrastructure such as dams, weirs, culverts or other obstructions. **Anthropogenic pressures** can include: water abstractions; invasive species; agriculture; use of fertilizers, manures and pesticides; animal husbandry activities; inefficient irrigation practices; deforestation of woods; aquaculture; pollution due to industrial effluents and domestic sewage; mining; and recreational activities.⁷⁶ **Urban waste water pressures** can include: direct discharge of nutrients from urban waste water treatment plants and discharge from combined storm overflows or storm water overflows. Discharges of elevated concentrations of phosphorus, ammonium and nitrogen impact on the ecology of surface waters.⁷⁷ **Industrial pressures** can include: discharges and emissions from industrial and commercial facilities.

The GSI also rates aquifers based on the hydrogeological characteristics and on the value of the groundwater resource. This is referred to as aquifer productivity and is mapped on Figure 4.13. Productivity is generally classified as being:

- *Poor aquifer bedrock, which is generally unproductive except for local zones*, across most of the County;
- *Poor aquifer bedrock which is generally unproductive*, in the south of the County;
- *Locally important aquifer bedrock which is generally moderately productive*, in the north-east, east and south-east of the County.
- *Regionally important aquifer karstified* in the east and south of the County;
- *Bedrock aquifer fault*, in the north-east and south of the County; and
- *Locally important gravel aquifer*, along the coastal areas in the east of the County.

4.9.7 WFD Registers of Protected Areas

The WFD requires that Registers of Protected Areas (RPAs) are compiled for a number of water bodies or part of water bodies which must have extra controls on their quality by virtue of how their waters are used by people and by wildlife.

The WFD requires that these RPAs contain: areas from which waters are taken for public or private water supply schemes; designated shellfish production areas; bathing waters; areas which are affected by high levels of substances most commonly found in fertilizers, animal and human wastes - these areas are considered nutrient sensitive; areas designated for the protection of habitats or species e.g. Salmonid areas; Special Areas of Conservation (SACs); and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

Entries to the RPAs within and adjacent to the County include:

- All groundwater and surface waters sustaining areas designated as SACs and SPAs (these European sites are mapped on Figure 4.1);
- A number of rivers, lakes and estuaries are designated as Nutrient Sensitive Areas (as shown on Figure 4.4);
- A number of coastal, lake, transitional, river and groundwater waterbodies are included on the RPA as Surface Water and Groundwater in Nutrient Sensitive Areas (see Figure 4.4);
- Groundwater across the County is included on the RPA for Groundwater Drinking Water (see Figure 4.5);

- A number of rivers are included on the RPA for Drinking Water Rivers (see Figure 4.5);
- The River Boyne directly adjacent to the Plan area is designated as Salmonid River Regs (SI No. 293 of 1988) as shown on Figure 4.5;
- A number of transitional, river and groundwater waterbodies are designated as Surface Waters and Groundwater in Salmonid Regs, as shown on Figure 4.5;
- Carlingford Lough to the north and Dundalk Bay in the centre of the Plan area are listed on the RPA for Shellfish Waters (as shown on Figure 4.6);
- A number of coastal, transitional, river and waterbodies are designated as Surface Water and Groundwater in Shellfish Areas; (see Figure 4.6);
- Shelling Hill/Templetown, Port, Lurganboy, Clogherhead and Seapoint are included on the RPA for bathing waters, as shown on Figure 4.5; and
- The coastal waterbody from the south of the Plan area to Shelling Hill is listed on the RPA for Surface Waters in Bathing Locations (see Figure 4.5).

It is noted that Source Protection Areas are described in Section 4.8.3 and mapped on Figure 4.8.

4.9.8 Bathing Waters

For bathing waters, Mandatory and Guide Values are set out for bathing waters in the 2006 EU Bathing Water Directive and transposing Regulations. Mandatory Values are values that must be observed if the bathing area is to be deemed compliant with the Directive. Compliance with Guide Values exceeds guidance with Mandatory Values and can be regarded as quality objectives which bathing sites should endeavour to achieve.

Bathing waters are now classed into four quality categories; 'excellent', 'good', 'sufficient', or 'poor' with a minimum target of 'sufficient' required to be achieved for all bathing waters. The most recent available data from the EPA⁷⁸ shows that bathing waters within the Plan area reported on are of 'excellent' water quality⁷⁹.

Further to this information on bathing water quality, the Blue Flag award is given to beaches and marinas that have excellent water quality and maintain other standards including effective and appropriate management to ensure the protection of the natural environment and safety standards. The bathing locations at Shellinghill/Templetown,

⁷⁸ EPA Report on *Bathing Water Quality in Ireland 2018*

⁷⁹ Bathing locations at: Seapoint; Clogherhead; Port/Lurganboy; and Shelling Hill/Templetown.

Port/Lurganboy and Clogherhead was also awarded with the Blue Flag in 2020.

A bathing location at Cranfield Beach in Northern Ireland, adjacent to Louth County border, is also of *excellent* bathing water quality and was awarded with the Blue Flag in 2019.

4.9.9 Flooding

Certain areas across the County are at risk from groundwater, coastal⁸⁰, estuarial⁸¹, pluvial⁸² and fluvial⁸³ flooding. There are various historic and predictive indicators of flood risk in the County, including along the coastline, surrounding estuaries and along the Rivers Boyne, Slieveboy, Dee, Glyde, Fane, Ramparts and Castletown.

Predictive flood risk mapping is available from the Office of Public Works (OPW) for the County's rivers and coastline.

Eight settlements in the County were identified by the OPW in 2012 as requiring detailed assessment of flood risk (Areas for Further Assessment): Annagassan; Ardee; Baltray; Carlingford; Greenore; Dundalk and Blackrock; Termonfeckin; and Drogheda.

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), as required by 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DEHLG and OPW, 2009), is being undertaken alongside the preparation of the SEA and the preparation of the Plan and Proposed Material Alterations. This assessment considers available and emerging information on flood risk indicators including the OPW's Flood Hazard and Risk Mapping.

Flood risk mapping for Northern Ireland is available from Northern Ireland's Department of Infrastructure.

4.9.10 Existing Problems

Subject to exemptions provided for by Article 4 of the WFD, based on available water data, certain surface and groundwater bodies will

need improvement in order to comply with the objectives of the WFD.

The Draft Plan includes provisions that will contribute towards improvements in the status of waters.

There is historic and predictive evidence of elevated levels of flood risk from fluvial sources at various locations across the County.

⁸⁰ Resulting from higher sea levels than normal causing the sea to overflow onto land. Such flooding is influenced by high tide level, storm surges and wave action.

⁸¹ A combination of high tide and high river flows prevents water from flowing out to sea causing water levels inland to flood river banks.

⁸² Resulting from high intensity rainfall events where run-off volume exceeds capacity of surface water network.

⁸³ Watercourse capacity is exceeded or the channel is blocked and excess water spills from the channel onto adjacent floodplains.

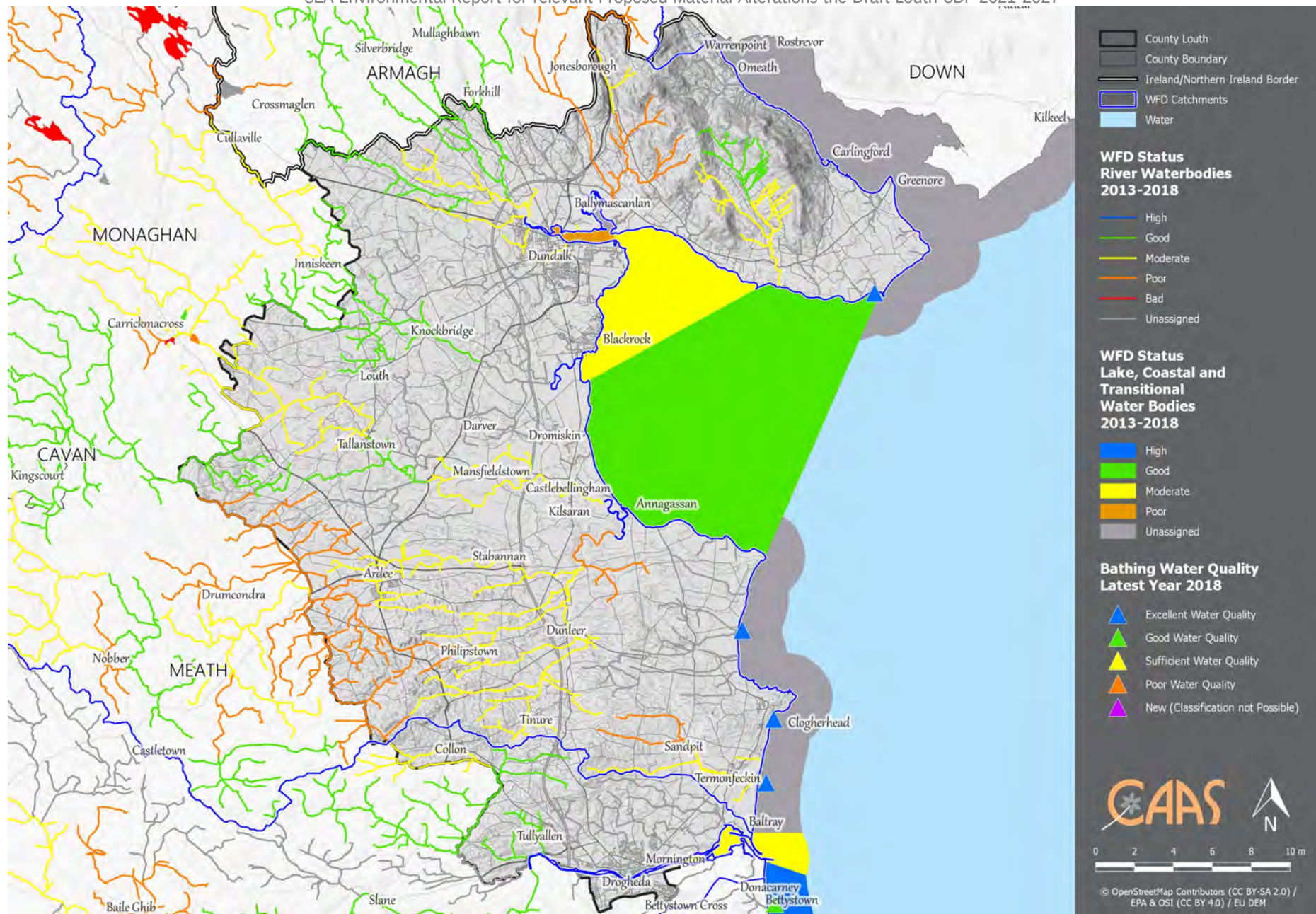


Figure 4.10 WFD Surface Water Status (2013-2018)

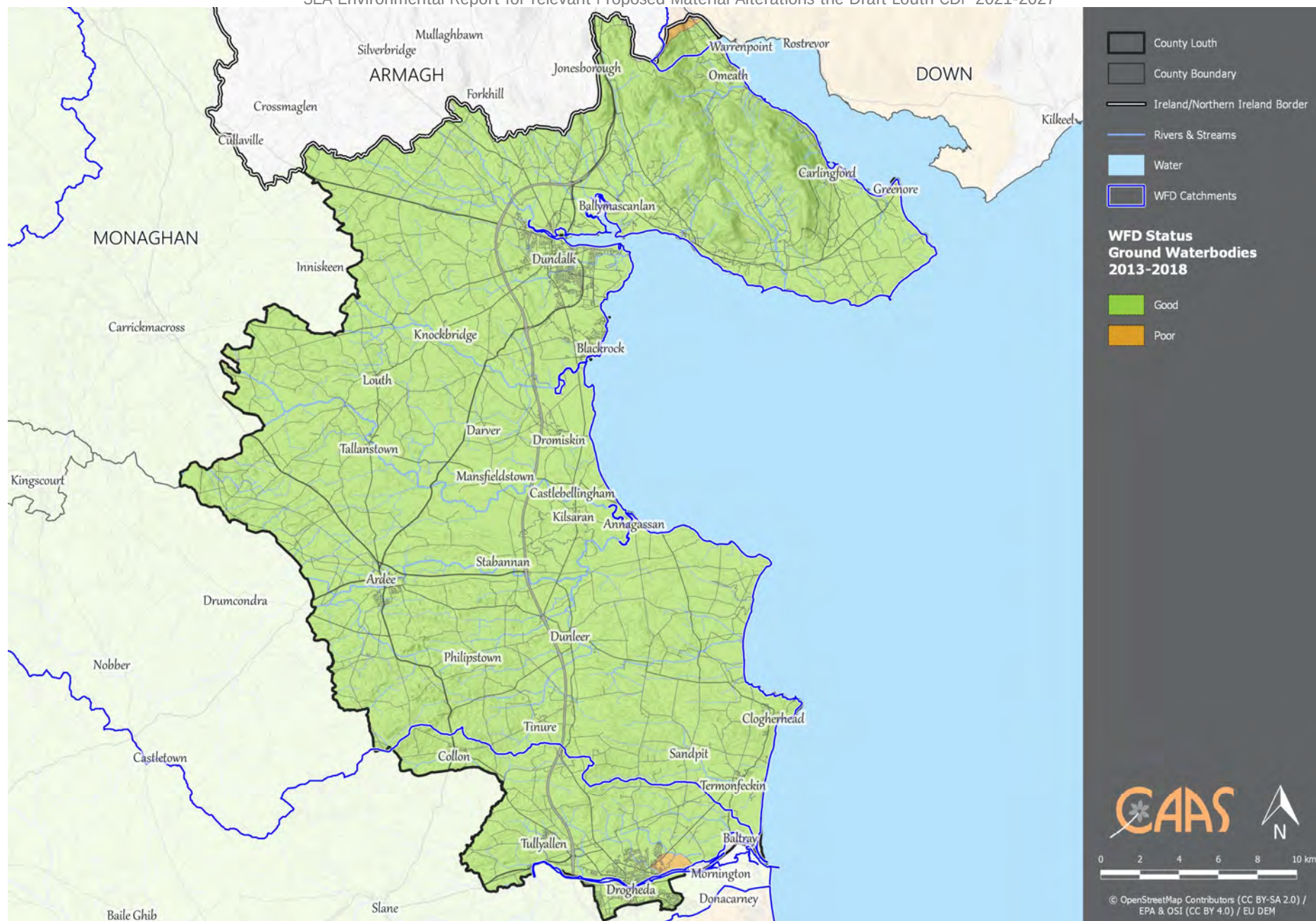


Figure 4.11 WFD Groundwater Status (2013-2018)

CAAS for Louth County Council

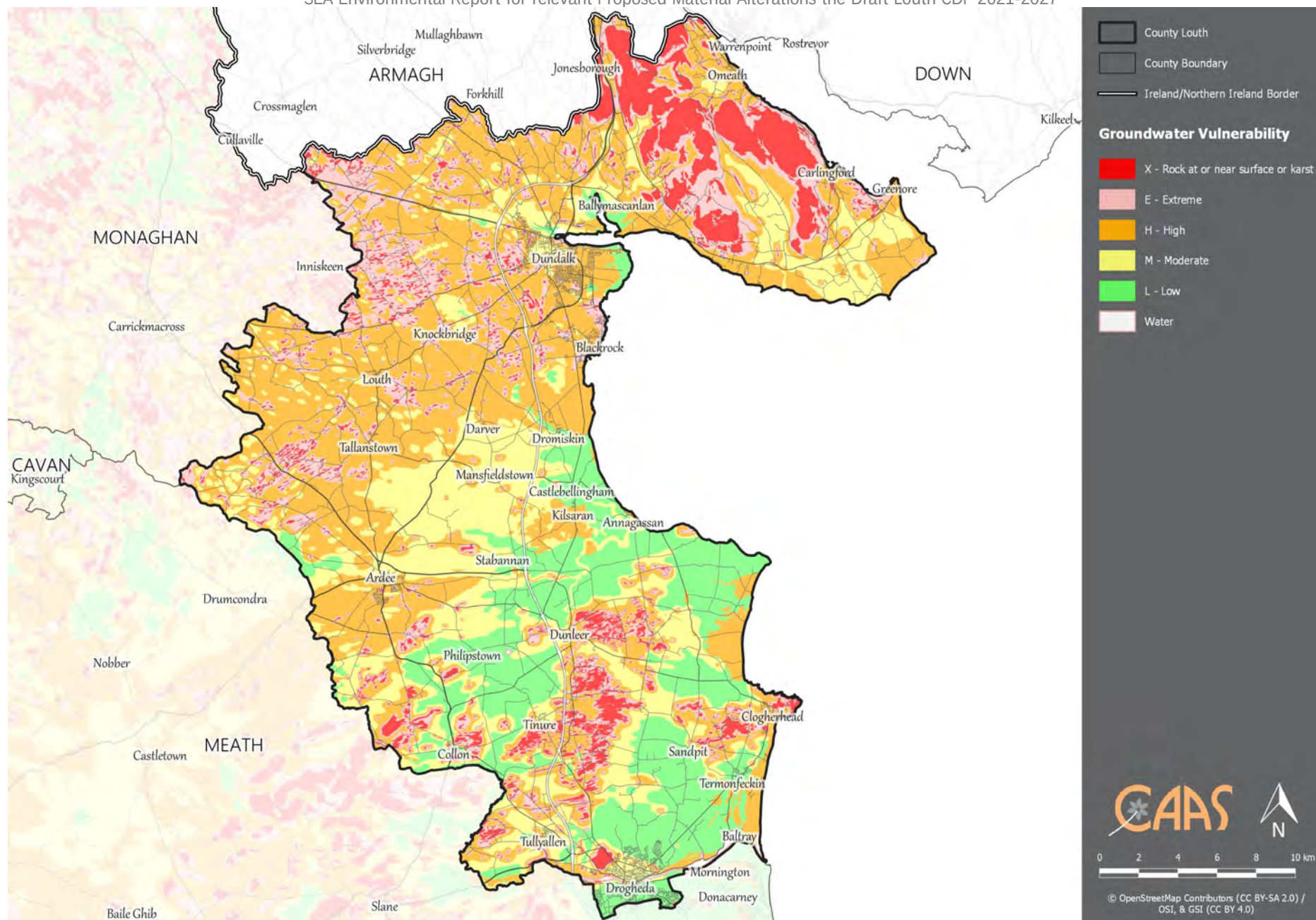
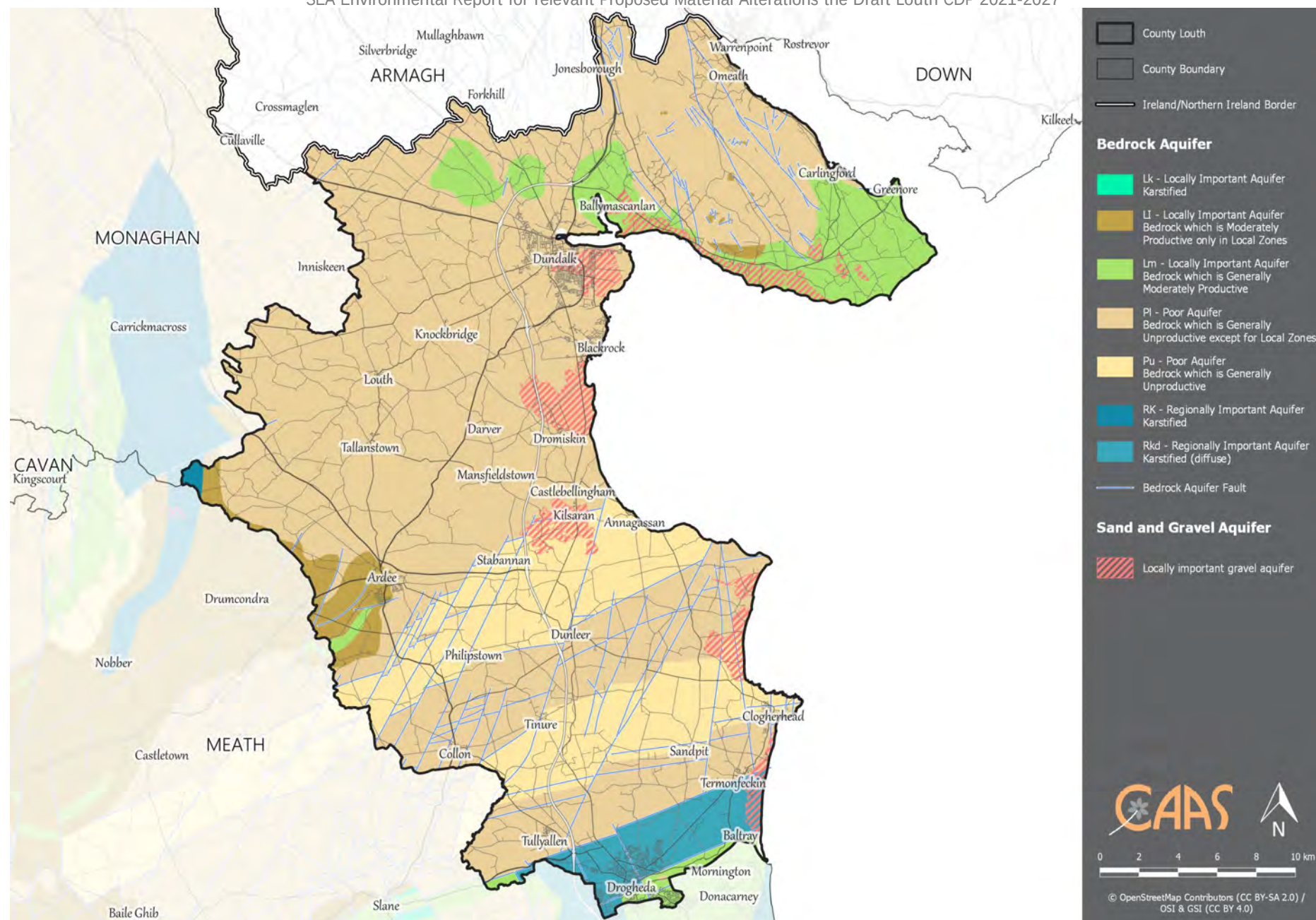


Figure 4.12 Groundwater Vulnerability

CAAS for Louth County Council

**Figure 4.13 Groundwater Productivity**

CAAS for Louth County Council

4.10 Air and Climatic Factors

4.10.1 Introduction

Total emissions of greenhouse gases by humans come from various sectors including transport, agriculture, energy industries, manufacturing combustion, industrial processes, residential developments, commercial services developments, waste management processes and fluorinated gases equipment (such as refrigeration and fire protection systems).

Ireland's Provisional Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2017 (EPA, 2018) details provisional estimates of greenhouse gas emissions for the period 1990-2017. For 2017, total national greenhouse gas emissions are estimated to be 60.75 million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO₂eq). This is 0.9% lower (0.53 Mt CO₂eq) than emissions in 2016.

The EPA's 2019 publication *Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emission Projections 2018-2040* provides an assessment of Ireland's progress towards achieving its emission reduction targets set down under the EU Effort Sharing Decision (Decision No. 406/2009/EC) for the years 2013-2020 and a longer-term assessment based on current projections. Ireland's 2020 target is to achieve a 20% reduction of non-Emission Trading Scheme (non-ETS) sector emissions (i.e. agriculture, transport, the built environment, waste and non-energy intensive industry) on 2005 levels with annual limits set for each year over the period 2013-2020.

The report on *Ireland's Final Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2017* (EPA, 2019) identifies that:

- For 2017, the total national GHG emissions are estimated to be 60.74 million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO₂eq), 0.9% lower than 2016.
- In the last 3 years, national total emissions have increased by 6.4%. In the same period, emissions in the ETS⁸⁴ sector have increased by 5.9%.

- Agriculture emissions increased by 2.9% in 2017 (driven by higher dairy cow numbers and increases in milk production).
- GHG emissions from the Transport sector decreased by 2.4% in 2017. This is the first year of decreased emissions after four successive years of increases in transport emissions.
- Agriculture and Transport accounted for 73.5% of total ESD emissions in 2017.
- Emissions in the Energy Industries sector show a decrease of 6.9% which is attributable to a 5.9% decrease in fossil fuel consumption and an increase of 21.1% and 1.6% in electricity generated from wind and hydro, respectively, in 2017. Renewables now account for 30.1% of electricity generated in 2017, an increase of 3.3% from 2016 figures. Ireland continued to be a net exporter of electricity in 2017. However, exported electricity saw a 4.7% reduction in 2017 to previous 2016 figures.
- Emissions from the Manufacturing Combustion⁸⁵ sector increased by 3.1% in 2017.
- The Industrial Processes sector emissions increased by 4.1%, mainly from increased cement production. Cement process emissions increased by 2.6% in 2017.
- GHG emissions from the residential sector decreased by 5.0%. This can be attributed to a milder winter.
- Emissions from the Waste sector decreased by 2.5% in 2017.

The EPA 2019 publication *Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emission Projections 2018-2040* provides an assessment of Ireland's total projected greenhouse gas emissions out to 2040 which includes an assessment of progress towards achieving its emission reduction targets out to 2020 and 2030 set under the EU Effort Sharing Decision and Effort Sharing Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2018/842). Ireland's 2020 target is to achieve a 20% reduction of non-Emission Trading Scheme (non-ETS) sector emissions (i.e. agriculture, transport, the built environment, waste and non-energy intensive industry) on 2005 levels with annual limits set for each year over the period 2013-2020. Ireland's 2030 target under the Effort Sharing Regulation is a 30% reduction of emissions compared to 2005 levels by 2030. There will be binding annual limits over the 2021-2030 period to meet that target. Key Insights identified as part of the report's package of documents are that:

- There is a long-term projected decrease in greenhouse gas emissions as a result of inclusion of new climate mitigation policies and measures that formed part of the 2018-2027 National Development Plan, which was published in 2018.

⁸⁴ The EU emissions trading system (EU ETS) was launched in 2005 as the world's first international company-level 'cap-and-trade' system for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases cost-effectively. The cap makes sure that CO₂ becomes a product and, thus, CO₂ is valued at a price,

which is determined by the supply and demand at the (trading) market.

⁸⁵ Manufacturing Combustion; includes combustion of fuels in Industry and Construction, both in ETS and non-ETS

This is evident in the with additional measures scenario which assumes full implementation of the programmes, policies and measures included in the National Development Plan.

- Fossil fuels such as coal, peat and gas continue to be key contributors to emissions from the power generation sector. However, a significant reduction in emissions over the longer term is projected as a result of the expansion of renewables (e.g. wind), assumed to reach 41-54% by 2030, with a move away from coal and peat.
- A growth in emissions from the transport sector continues to be projected which is largely attributed to fuel consumption from diesel cars and diesel freight. A decrease in emissions over the longer term, most notably in the with additional measures scenario, is largely attributed to assumed accelerated deployment of 500,000 electric vehicles and the impact of greater biofuel uptake.
- Agriculture emissions are projected to continue to grow steadily over the period which is mainly a result of an increase in animal numbers particularly for the dairy herd.
- The implementation of additional energy efficiency measures included in the National Development Plan will see a significant reduction in emissions in the residential, commercial/public services and manufacturing sectors over the projected period.

4.10.2 Climate Mitigation

The National Mitigation Plan (Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, 2017), represents an initial step to set Ireland on a pathway to achieve the level of decarbonisation required. It is a whole-of-Government Plan, reflecting in particular the central roles of the key Ministers responsible for the sectors covered by the Plan – Electricity Generation, the Built Environment, Transport and Agriculture, as well as drawing on the perspectives and responsibilities of a range of other Government Departments.

The National Adaptation Framework (Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, 2018), sets out the national strategy to reduce the vulnerability of the country to the negative effects of climate change and to avail of positive impacts. The National Adaptation Framework outlines a whole of government and society approach to climate adaptation. Under the Framework, a number of Government Departments will be required to prepare sectoral adaptation plans in relation to a priority area that they are responsible for.

The National Climate Action Plan 2019 is an all of Government plan to tackle climate change and bring about a step change in Ireland's

climate ambition over the coming years. The plan sets out an ambitious course of action over the coming years to address the diverse and wide-ranging impacts climate disruption is having on Ireland's environment, society, economic and natural resources. The Climate Action Plan sets out clear 2030 targets for each sector with the ultimate objective of achieving a transition to a competitive, low-carbon, climate-resilient, and environmentally sustainable society and economy by 2050.

The use of alternative fuels, including electricity, forms a significant part of government policy to reduce emissions, including from transport. Greater use of alternative fuels, including renewable energy, has the potential to further contribute towards energy security.

The 2019 emission projections do not consider the impact of new policies and measures that will be included in the forthcoming Government Climate Plan. It is anticipated that future emission projections will include the additional impact of the Government Climate Plan.

The Climate Change Advisory Council's Annual Review 2019 identifies that the most recent projections demonstrate that, under different assumptions, Ireland will not meet its emissions reduction targets, even with the additional policies and measures included in the National Development Plan. The projections also show that progress on reducing emissions is sensitive to the future path of fuel prices. A significant and sustained rate of emissions reduction of approximately -2.5% per year is required to meet our objectives for 2050. However, it must be noted that additional measures within the recent Climate Action Plan are not included in the analysis to date.

4.10.3 Ambient Air Quality

In order to protect human health, vegetation and ecosystems, EU Directives set down air quality standards in Ireland and the other Member States for a wide variety of pollutants. These pollutants are generated through fuel combustion, in space heating, traffic, electricity generation and industry and, in sufficient amounts, could affect the well-being of the areas inhabitants. The EU Directives include details regarding how ambient air quality should be monitored, assessed and managed.

The principles to this European approach are set out in the Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (2008/50/EC) (which replaces the earlier Air Quality Framework Directive 1996 and the first, second and third *Daughter Directives*; the fourth *Daughter Directive* will be included in CAFE at a later stage).

In order to comply with the directives mentioned above, the EPA measures the levels of a number of atmospheric pollutants. For the purposes of monitoring in Ireland, four zones are defined in the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2002 (SI No. 271 of 2002).

The EPA's (2019) *Air Quality in Ireland 2018* identifies that:

- Levels at monitoring sites in Ireland were below the EU legislative limit values in 2018;
- Ireland was above World Health Organization (WHO) air quality guideline value levels at a number of monitoring sites for fine particulate matter, ozone and nitrogen dioxide;
- Ireland was above the European Environment Agency reference level for PAH, a toxic chemical, at three monitoring sites.

Problem pollutants identified by the EPA include particulate matter from burning of solid fuel and nitrogen dioxide from transport emissions in urban areas. Indications that Ireland will exceed EU limit values for nitrogen dioxide in the near future.

With regards to solutions, the report identifies that:

- To tackle the problem of particulate matter, clean ways of heating homes and improve energy efficiency of homes can be progressed; and
- To reduce the impact of nitrogen dioxide, transport options in the Government's Climate Action Plan can be implemented and transport choices can be considered by individuals.

In order to apply with European Directives relating to air quality, the EPA manages the National Ambient Air Quality Network and measures the levels of a number of atmospheric pollutants at locations across the country. The current⁸⁶ air quality within the Plan area (Rural East Air Quality Index Region) is identified by the EPA as being *good*.

The Second Assessment of the State of Northern Ireland's Environment states that air quality in Northern Ireland continues to

improve. Problems remain on nitrogen dioxide emissions due to transport, and ammonia emissions, mostly due to livestock, which pose a risk to sensitive habitats and ecosystems.

4.10.4 Noise

Louth County Council has prepared a Noise Action Plan 2018-2023 in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006. The purpose of the Noise Action Plan is to avoid, prevent and reduce, on a prioritised basis the harmful effects, including annoyance due to the long-term exposure to environmental noise.

4.10.5 Existing Problems

Legislative objectives governing air and climatic factors in County Louth were not identified as being conflicted with.

4.11 Material Assets

Other material assets, in addition to those detailed below, covered by the SEA include archaeological and architectural heritage (see Section 4.12) natural resources of economic value, such as water and air (see Sections 4.9 and 4.10).

4.11.1 Public Assets and Infrastructure

Public assets and infrastructure that have the potential to be impacted upon by the Plan, if unmitigated, include; settlements; resources such as public open spaces, parks and recreational areas; the coastline and ports and harbours; fisheries; public buildings and services; transport and utility infrastructure (electricity, gas, telecommunications, water supply, waste water infrastructure etc.); forestry; and natural resources that are covered under other topics such as water and soil.

4.11.2 Land

The Plan seeks to assist with the reuse and regeneration of brownfield sites thereby contributing towards sustainable mobility and reducing the need to develop greenfield lands and associated potential adverse environmental

⁸⁶ 06/08/2020 (<http://www.epa.ie/air/quality/>)

effects. Brownfield lands are generally located within urban/suburban areas.

4.11.3 Agriculture

Much of the land throughout the County is used for agriculture, as indicated by the agricultural related land covers shown on Figure 4.3. Agriculture is a strong employer and a significant source of economic activity in the County. It contributes to exports and provides the raw materials for the food processing industry.

4.11.4 Forestry⁸⁷

Various extents and types of forestry exist across the County, as indicated on Figure 4.3. Forest accounts for approximately 2.9% of the landcover of County Louth. Much of the forested land is owned by Coillte. The most significant of the forested areas under public ownership are Ravensdale Forest and Slieve Foye Woods in the north of the County and Townley Hall in the south of the County. There are also significant privately owned forestry in the areas of Collon, Mullary and Jenkinstown. Ravensdale Forest is the most densely forested area in the County. Woodlands provide recreational opportunities in addition to their heritage and economic benefits. They are also important as links in the County's green infrastructure network.

4.11.5 Coastline

Louth has a coastline of over 90 kilometres providing significant opportunities for the support of a range of marine activities such as aquaculture, defence, energy, fisheries, mining and aggregates, ports harbours and shipping, telecommunications cables, tourism, safety at sea, sport and recreation and waste-water treatment and disposal.

Management of the County's coastline and coastal erosion are topics with relevance to various environmental components. The coastal areas of County Louth are amongst the most sensitive and valuable resources in the County, in terms of natural heritage, scenic beauty and recreation and tourism. Many of the County's settlements have developed along or near the coast.

The coastline in County Louth stretches from Carlingford Lough in the north to the Boyne Estuary in the south.

Ports in the Plan area are of great economic value including Drogheda, Greenore, Dundalk and Clogherhead.

Port/Lurganboy, Clogherhead, and Shellinghill/Templetown are high value Blue Flag beaches which have considerable tourism potential. Seapoint beach, Termonfeckin also achieved a Green Coast award in 2020 in recognition of its high environmental quality.

4.11.6 Renewable Energy Potential

Under EU Directive 2001/77/EC Renewable Energy, renewable energy sources are defined as renewable non-fossil energy sources such as, but not limited to wind, solar, geothermal, wave, tidal, hydropower, biomass, landfill gas, sewage treatment plant gas, bio-gases and bio-char (i.e. the thermal treatment of natural organic materials in an oxygen-limited environment). There is potential for renewable energy development in the County and the Plan seeks to facilitate such development in a sustainable manner.

4.11.7 Minerals and Aggregates

Minerals such as iron and copper and aggregates such as sand and gravel can occur throughout the country. Minerals and aggregates are essential to manufacturing and construction.

Minerals localities within Louth are shown on Figure 4.14. The GSI have a suite of data sources available that would be useful in planning and assessing individual projects with regard to the environmental topic(s) of soil and/or material assets. These include:

- Aggregate Potential Mapping;
- Bedrock mapping;
- Quaternary and Physiographic mapping;
- National Aquifer and Recharge mapping; and
- Marine and Coastal Unit datasets.

⁸⁷ Draft Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027

4.11.8 Transport

Transport infrastructure in the County has the potential to support reductions in energy demand from the transport sector, including through electrification of modes.

County Louth is strategically located in proximity to both Dublin and Belfast. The network of national and regional roads traverses the County. Louth is well served by a number of mainline and commuter train services including the Dublin to Belfast line and a daily commuter service between Dublin and Dundalk. Further to this, Bus Éireann and others operate daily services to and from the main population centres in County Louth.

Both regional and local roads provide vital links between the towns and villages to retail, service and employment centres throughout the County and to adjoining counties.

4.11.9 Water Services

4.11.9.1 Waste Water

The EPA's 2019 report *'Urban Waste Water Treatment in 2018'* identified that:

- Waste water treatment at 21 large urban areas did not meet European standards;
- Raw sewage is released into the environment from 36 urban areas;
- Waste water from 57 areas is the sole threat to waters at risk of pollution;
- Waste water contributed to poor quality bathing waters at three beaches in 2018;
- Discharges from 13 areas must improve to protect freshwater pearl mussels;
- Disinfection systems must be installed at two villages to safeguard shellfish; and
- Eight waste water collection systems have been found non-compliant with European Union requirements.

Based on the EPA's assessment of monitoring information provided by Irish Water and the enforcement activities carried out by the EPA, this report identifies urban areas with the most important environmental issues with respect to waste water infrastructure that must be addressed.

From January 2014, Irish Water became responsible for all public water services, involving the supply of drinking water and the collection, treatment and disposal of waste water. Irish Water is also responsible for the treatment and disposal of the sludge that is generated from both its water and waste water treatment plants. The Council is an agent of

Irish Water for operations and remains the designated Water Authority for the assessment and approval of on-site waste water treatment systems and is responsible for surface water drainage in the County.

The provision of well-maintained quality waste water treatment infrastructure is essential to facilitate sustainable development of the County in line with the Settlement and Core Strategy while also protecting the environment and public health. Irish Water is now responsible for the collection, treatment and disposal of waste water where public waste water facilities exist in towns and villages. In unserviced areas and outside the main towns and villages, the main method of sewage disposal is by means of individual septic tanks and proprietary waste water treatment systems.

Irish Water, working in partnership with Louth County Council, is making investments to undertake essential upgrade works to waste water treatment plants in towns and villages in the County. The upgrading of infrastructure will contribute towards compliance with the Water Framework Directive, EU Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive and Drinking Water Regulations and will help to protect human health and maintain the quality of surface and ground waters.

Irish Water is responsible for the treatment of wastewater in towns and villages where public wastewater treatment facilities exists and currently operates eighteen public sewerage schemes in the County.

In unserviced areas and outside the main towns and villages, the main method of sewage disposal is by means of individual septic tanks and proprietary waste water treatment systems. There are six urban areas in County Louth listed as priority areas where improvements are required to resolve urgent environmental issues (EPA, 2019):

- Blackrock (due to not meeting the secondary treatment requirements and waste water discharges causing a significant pressure on the waters of the Inner Dundalk Bay);
- Castlebellingham (due to waste water discharges causing a significant pressure on the waters of the River Glyde);
- Dundalk (due to not meeting the secondary treatment requirements and waste water discharges causing a significant pressure on the waters of the Castletown Estuary and the Inner Dundalk Bay);
- Dunleer (due to waste water discharges causing a significant pressure on the River White);

- Omeath (due to continued release of untreated waste water into the environment); and
- Tallanstown (due to waste water discharges causing a significant pressure on waters of the River Glyde).

Irish Water has provided the Waste Water Treatment Capacity Register for County Louth (see Table 4.3) to assist the planning authority in the preparation of the new County Development Plan by indicating where there may be waste water treatment capacity available to accommodate growth ("headroom") in terms of population equivalent⁸⁸ (PE) in each settlement serviced by a public waste water treatment plant. Spare treatment capacity is available now or is expected to be delivered by 2022 in most of these settlements, except for Tinure and Omeath. The highest levels of headroom (PE) is available at Drogheda (26,574 PE); Dundalk (6,184 PE); and Blackrock (2,559 PE).

Irish Water is responsible for the treatment and disposal of the sludge that is generated from both its water and waste water treatment plants. Irish Water has prepared a National Waste water Sludge Management Plan 2016-2021 that outlines Irish Water's strategy to ensure a nationwide standardised approach for managing waste water sludge over a 25-year period. A separate plan will be prepared in relation to sludge produced at drinking water plants.

The Sludge Management Plan proposes to develop a Sludge Hub Centre and Satellite Dewatering Site network for waste water sludge treatment, optimised on a regional rather than county basis. Dundalk and Drogheda waste water treatment plants are currently under consideration by Irish Water as a potential site for a Sludge Hub Centre on a regional basis.

4.11.9.2 Water Supply

Irish Water is responsible for the treatment and supply of water in towns, villages and rural areas where public water supply schemes are in place and currently operates thirteen water supply schemes in the County from five water resource zones. Private supplies provide water to those areas not served by a public water

supply and comprise private Group Water Schemes serving local communities or private wells serving single dwelling houses. There are seven private Group Schemes operating in County Louth.

Under Section 58 of the Environmental Protection Agency Act 1992, the EPA is required to collect and verify monitoring results for all water supplies in Ireland covered by the European Communities (Drinking Water) Regulations, 2000. The EPA publishes their results in annual reports that are supported by Remedial Action Lists (RALs). The RAL identifies water supplies that are not in compliance with the Regulations mentioned above.

The Greenmount Regional Public Supply Scheme is listed on the most recent EPA Remedial Action List (Q2 of 2020) due to EPA audit observation - treatment and management issues. This Water Supply Scheme has a supply volume of 1,125 m³/day, serving a population of 4,814 people. The proposed plan of action to remedy this issue is to be submitted by Irish Water (it will be determined under the National Water Resources Plan), with 2024+ completion date for the action programme.

The South Louth East Meath Regional Public Supply Scheme is listed on the most recent EPA Remedial Action List (Q2 of 2020) due to elevated levels of THMs above the standard in the Drinking Water Regulations and poor turbidity removal. This Water Supply Scheme has a supply volume of 25,349 m³/day, serving a population of 71,111 people. The proposed plan of action to remedy this issue is an upgrade of water treatment plant to include changes to the chemical dosing and filtration system. This is complete but need verification of the effectiveness of the action programme.

The Tallanstown Regional Public Supply Scheme is listed on the most recent EPA Remedial Action List (Q2 of 2020) due to excessive levels of aluminium in the treated water and EPA audit observation - treatment and management issues. This Water Supply Scheme has a supply volume of 450 m³/day, serving a population of 1,978 people. The proposed plan of action to remedy this issue is

⁸⁸ As identified in Irish Water's Water Services Strategic Plan, wastewater treatment plants are described in terms of their designed treatment capacity, which is generally expressed as population equivalent (PE). This is a measurement of total organic biodegradable load, including industrial, institutional, commercial and domestic organic

load, on a wastewater treatment plant, converted to the equivalent number of PEs. One person is considered to generate 60g of five-day Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) per day. 1 PE is defined as being equivalent to 60g of BOD per day.

replacement of supply with Cavanhill Public Water Scheme to be completed by December 2020.

Currently, Irish Water is developing the National Water Resource Plan outlining how to move to a sustainable, secure and reliable public drinking water supply over a 25-year period while safeguarding the environment. It will outline how Irish Water intends to maintain a balance between supply from water sources around the country and demand for drinking water over the short, medium and long term. This will facilitate future planning and ensure provision of sufficient, safe, clean drinking water to facilitate the social and economic growth of our country.⁸⁹

It is the policy of the Council to work in conjunction with Irish Water to protect existing water infrastructure, to maximise the potential of existing capacity and to facilitate the timely delivery of new wastewater services infrastructure to facilitate future growth.

4.11.9.3 Surface Water Drainage

The Council is responsible for surface water drainage in the County. Sustainable urban Drainage systems (SuDS) is a method to minimise the quantity and increase the quality of surface water runoff and to mitigate adverse impacts of climate change. SuDS can also provide amenity and biodiversity benefits. The Council seeks to ensure the sustainable management of surface water discharges in urban areas through the use of SuDS.

4.11.10 Waste Management

The Eastern and Midland Waste Region comprises 12 local authority areas of Dublin City, Fingal, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Kildare, Laois, Longford, Louth, Offaly, Meath, Wicklow, Westmeath and South Dublin. Dublin City Council is the lead authority within the Region acting on behalf of the other authorities and hosting the Eastern-Midlands Waste Regional Office (EMWRO).

The Eastern-Midlands Waste Management Plan 2015-2021 provides the framework for solid

waste management in the region and sets out a range of policies and actions to meet specified mandatory and performance-based targets. It is underpinned by National and European waste legislation and the work carried out will ensure the continued management of waste in a safe and sustainable manner. The plan includes eight Strategic Objectives and three overarching targets:

- 1% reduction per annum in the quality of household waste generated per capita;
- Reduce to 0% the direct disposal of unprocessed municipal waste to landfill (from 2016 onwards) in favour of higher value pre-treatment processes and indigenous recovery practices; and
- Recycling rate of 50% of managed municipal waste by 2020.

The Eastern-Midlands Waste Management Plan states that the future role of local authorities in waste management will be focused on education, prevention, and resource efficiency activities as well as regulating householders, businesses and waste operators and enforcing waste legislation. Waste infrastructure provided by local authorities will mainly include bring banks and civic amenities.

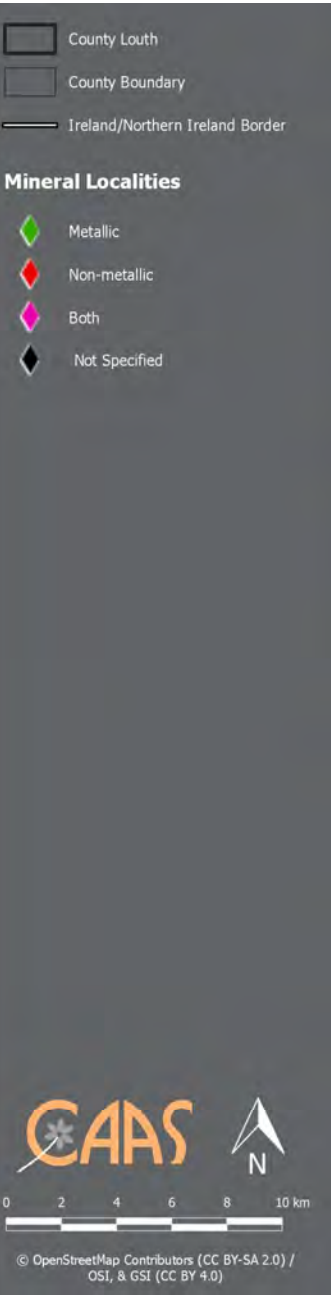
4.11.11 Existing Problems

There are a number of challenges with respect to the provision of water services infrastructure that are described under Section 4.11 above.

The Water Services Section of Louth County Council will co-operate with Irish Water in providing and maintaining adequate public water supply and wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure throughout the county for the period of the plan and beyond. In conjunction with Irish Water, the Water Services Section of Louth County Council will endeavour to ensure the continued investment in and delivery of improvements to water infrastructure over the Plan period through the implementation of the Capital Investment Plan. 2020-2024.

The provisions of the new County Development Plan will contribute towards protection of the environment with regard to impacts arising from material assets.

⁸⁹ Draft Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027



CAAS for Louth County Council

Table 4.2 Waste Water Treatment Plant Performance⁹⁰

Plant name and Reference	Treatment Provided	Overall Compliance (Pass/Fail)	Parameter Failed	Cause of Exceedances and Significance of Results (Water Quality)	Organic Capacities (PE)		
					As Constructed	Collected Load (peak week)	Remaining
Dundalk D0053-01	Preliminary Treatment (screening) Primary Treatment Secondary Treatment (Anaerobic Digestion)	Fail	BOD, 5 days with Inhibition (Carbonaceous BOD) mg/l Suspended Solids mg/l COD-Cr mg/l Total Phosphorus (as P) mg/l Total Nitrogen mg/l	Cause: Inadequate plant or equipment breakdown at WWTP and WWTP upgrade required to meet Emission Limit Values - The plant's discharge was not compliant with the Emission Limit Values set in the waste water discharge licence. - The ambient monitoring results meet the required Environmental Quality Standards. - All three stations did not meet the salinity-based thresholds for chlorophyll median and chlorophyll 95%. Based on the above and the effluent compliance results, the discharge from the wastewater treatment plant may be having an observable negative impact on the water quality of the Castletown Estuary and Inner Dundalk Bay. - The discharge from the wastewater treatment plant may be contributing to the Moderate status of the Castletown Estuary and Inner Dundalk Bay. Dundalk Shellfish Waters are located ca. 3.5km south of the primary discharge. - It was noted in the 2013 Shellfish Assessment and recent the Stage 2 Scoping Assessment Report prepared by IW that Dundalk WWTP is the most likely of the WWTPs in the environs to have an effect on the Shellfish waters on Dundalk Bay due to outflow levels and oceanography of the bay. The results from this study show that in general the microbiological results of shellfish flesh of species collected within Dundalk Bay Shellfish Waters are good, but that on occasion levels may be above the Class B standard. It is likely that discharge from Dundalk WWTP may contribute to these high microbiological levels in the shellfish, however, these levels are within acceptable limits and the shellfish remain fit for human consumption after appropriate treatment. It is most likely that the high microbiological values occur during periods of heavy rainfall as it is during such periods that waters from Dundalk town have the greatest chance of reaching and affecting the shellfish production area	120000	65428	54572
Dunleer D0111-01	Preliminary Treatment (screening) Secondary Treatment (activated sludge)	Pass	N/A	The WWTP discharge was compliant with the Emission Limit Values set in the wastewater discharge licence.	4344	2262	2082
Blackrock D0188-01	Preliminary Treatment (grit setting channels) Secondary Treatment (activated sludge)	Fail	Suspended Solids mg/l BOD, 5 days with Inhibition (Carbonaceous BOD) mg/l COD-Cr mg/l	Cause: Inadequate Operational Procedures. - The plant's discharge was not compliant with the Emission Limit Values set in the waste water discharge licence. - Based on the ambient monitoring results, it is considered that the discharge from the wastewater treatment plant does not have an observable impact on the water quality - The discharge from the wastewater treatment plant does not have an observable negative impact on the Water Framework Directive status. - The 2010-2015 WFD Status at the downstream monitoring point at Outer Dundalk Bay (Coastal Waterbody) is 'Good'. The EPA currently classify Dundalk Bay as "Unpolluted". - The Dundalk Bay Shellfish Area is located 0.5km from the primary discharge point. The Dundalk Bay Pollution Reduction Programme (PRP) list Blackrock urban waste water system as a key pressure on the protected shellfish area. Stage 1 Desktop Assessment of the impact of this agglomeration on the receiving Designated Shellfish water recommended further assessment to be carried out to identify potential impact. Stage 2 Scoping Assessment Reports concluded that discharges are likely to have a negative microbiological effect on the quality of the shellfish in the Dundalk Bay designated shellfish waters	7300	6851	449

⁹⁰ Source: EPA Annual Environmental Reports for 2018 and 2019

SEA Environmental Report for relevant Proposed Material Alterations the Draft Louth CDP 2021-2027

Plant name and Reference	Treatment Provided	Overall Compliance (Pass/Fail)	Parameter Failed	Cause of Exceedances and Significance of Results (Water Quality)	Organic Capacities (PE)		
					As Constructed	Collected Load (peak week)	Remaining
Castlebellingham D0269-01	Preliminary Treatment (screening) Secondary Treatment (activated sludge)	Fail	Ammonia-Total (as N) mg/l Suspended Solids mg/l	Cause: Plant or equipment maintenance at WWTP and Plant or equipment breakdown at WWTP - The ambient monitoring results meet the required EQS. Where the ambient monitoring results meet the EQS this relates to the Oxygenation and Nutrient Conditions set out in the Surface Water Regulations 2009. - The discharge from the wastewater treatment plant does not have an observable negative impact on the water quality. - The discharge from the WWTP has no observable negative impact on the Water Framework Directive status. - As shown in evidence presented as part of the 2016 AER, there are no Drinking Water Abstraction points downstream of the treatment plant. Therefore, it is considered that there are no potential impacts on drinking water abstractions arising from the Castlebellingham WWTP. As such there is no need for further assessment at present - The Dundalk Bay Shellfish Area is located approx. 4 km from the primary discharge point. Stage 2 Scoping Assessment Reports concluded that discharges from Castlebellingham are likely to have a negative microbiological effect on the quality of the shellfish in the Dundalk Bay designated shellfish waters.	1700	1478	222
Tallanstown D0270-01	Preliminary Treatment (screening and grit removal) Secondary (conventional activated sludge) Nutrient removal (chemical dosing for phosphorus removal)	Pass	N/A	The WWTP discharge was compliant with the Emission Limit Values set in the wastewater discharge licence.	1000	806	194

Table 4.3 Waste Water Treatment Capacity Register (Irish Water 29/04/20)

Region	County	Settlement	Census pop. (2016)	Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP)	Reg #	Serves other areas?	WWTP Capacity (PE)		Load (PE) 2019	Headroom (PE)		Current project completion year
							Today	Upon works completion		WWDL ELV Capability	UWW Standards Capability (not WWDL ELVs)	
EM	Louth	Drogheda	40,956	Drogheda WWTP	D0041	Yes	101,600	=	75,026	26,574		
EM	Louth	Dundalk	39,004	Dundalk WWTP	D0053	Yes	61,000	=	54,816	6,184		
EM	Louth	Blackrock	(Dundalk)	Blackrock WWTP	D0188	No	7,300	9,500	6,941	2,559		2020
EM	Louth	Ardee	4,928	Ardee WWTP	D0117	No	8,000	=	6,245	0	1,755	
EM	Louth	Clogherhead	2,145	Clogherhead WWTP	D0265	No	3,400	=	3,062	0	338	
EM	Louth	Dunleer	1,822	Dunleer WWTP	D0111	No	4,344	=	2,292	0	2,052	
EM	Louth	Tullyallen	1,547	Tullyallen WWTP	D0266	No	2,000	=	1,760	240		
EM	Louth	Carlingford	1,445	Carlingford WWTP	D0268	No	2,700	=	2,305	395		
EM	Louth	Dromiskin	1,195	Dromiskin WWTP	D0264	No	1,700	=	1,410	290		
EM	Louth	Castlebellingham	1,126	Castlebellingham WWTP	D0269	No	1,900	=	1,495	0	405	
EM	Louth	Collon	896	Collon WWTP	D0261	No	1,200	=	1,030	0	170	
EM	Louth	Louth Village	735	Louth Village WWTP	D0263	No	1,200	=	721	479		
EM	Louth	Tallanstown	674	Tallanstown WWTP	D0270	No	1,000	=	816	184		
EM	Louth	Knockbridge	667	Knockbridge WWTP	D0260	No	1,000	=	680	320		
CoA Headroom (PE)												
EM	Louth	Annagassan	201	Annagassan WWTP	A0086	No	300	=	244	56		
EM	Louth	Greenore	Unavailable	Greenore WWTP	A0075	No	150	=	135	15		
EM	Louth	Tinure	464	Tinure WWTP	A0147	No	320	=	448			
EM	Louth	Omeath	Unavailable	-	A0072	No	-	1,000	823			2023

Notes: 91,92,93,94,95,96,97

⁹¹ Waste Water Discharge Licences (WWDL) and Certificates of Authorisation (CoA)⁹² WWTP Capacity (PE) Today = Overall design capacity of the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) in population equivalents (PE) today (the date at the top of this table).⁹³ WWTP Capacity (PE) Upon works completion = Overall design capacity of the WWTP in population equivalents (PE) upon completion of a relevant project delivering additional capacity. Note that 'WWDL' or 'UWW' following the capacity value indicates that the upgraded WWTP will have capability to achieve the full Waste Water Discharge Licence (WWDL) emission limit values (ELVs) in the former case, or at least the Urban Waste Water (UWW) Treatment Directive parametric values in the latter case.⁹⁴ Load (PE) 2019 = Wastewater load arising from the settlement(s) being served entering the WWTP in 2019.⁹⁵ Headroom (PE) = Headroom available at the WWTP in 2019 in terms of population equivalents based on available capacity now or by completion of a project by 2022 (where relevant). Green = spare capacity available. Amber = potential spare capacity. WWTP currently not compliant with Waste Water Discharge Licence emission limit values but is capable of achieving at least UWW standards. Potential availability of capacity in this case would be dependent on any additional load not resulting in a significant breach of the combined approach as set out in Regulation 43 of the Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations 2007. Red = no spare capacity available⁹⁶ Current project completion year = This is the current forecasted completion year as of date of this table and is subject to change. 'Post 2024' indicates that the project is proposed to be completed within the next investment period (2025-2029), subject to the planning and approval of the next capital investment plan. Note, there is no guarantee that this capacity will be delivered if the current Investment Plan is amended due to emerging needs or changes due to exchequer funding.⁹⁷ General notes (i) The headroom figure stated is based on available information on the date of issue of this table and is subject to change. (ii) The indication of spare treatment capacity has been determined based on a standardised national review of the available information. (iii) A Pre-Connection Enquiry should be submitted to Irish Water to determine the feasibility of connecting any particular site to the Irish Water network, feasibility should not be inferred from this register.

4.12 Cultural Heritage

4.12.1 Archaeological Heritage

Archaeology is the study of past societies through the material remains left by those societies and the evidence of their environment. Archaeological sites and monuments vary greatly in form and date; examples include earthworks of different types and periods, (e.g. early historic ringforts and prehistoric burial mounds), megalithic tombs from the Prehistoric period, medieval buildings, urban archaeological deposits and underwater features.

Archaeological heritage is protected under the National Monuments Acts (1930-2004), Natural Cultural Institutions Act 1997 and the Planning Acts.

The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is an inventory, put on a statutory basis by amendment to the National Monuments Act 1994, of sites and areas of archaeological significance, numbered and mapped. It is available from the National Monuments Service and at archaeology.ie.

The term 'monument' includes all man-made structures of whatever form or date except buildings habitually used for ecclesiastical purposes. All monuments in existence before 1700 A.D. are automatically considered to be historic monuments within the meaning of the Acts. Monuments of architectural and historical interest also come within the scope of the Acts. Monuments include: any artificial or partly artificial building, structure or erection or group of such buildings, structures or erections; any cave, stone or other natural product, whether or not forming part of the ground, that has been artificially carved, sculptured or worked upon or which (where it does not form part of the place where it is) appears to have been purposely put or arranged in position; any, or any part of any, prehistoric or ancient tomb, grave or burial deposit, or, ritual, industrial or habitation site; and any place comprising the remains or traces

of any such building, structure or erection, any such cave, stone or natural product or any such tomb, grave, burial deposit or ritual, industrial or habitation site, situated on land or in the territorial waters of the State', but excludes 'any building or part of any building, that is habitually used for ecclesiastical purposes' (National Monuments Acts 1930-2004).

A recorded monument is a monument included in the list and marked on the map, which comprises the RMP set out county by county under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994 by the Archaeological Survey of Ireland. The definition includes Zones of Archaeological Potential within which requirements for notifications of proposed works apply. There are thirteen Zones in County Louth found in the following settlements: Ardee; Collon; Carlingford; Dunleer; Louth Village; Termonfeckin; Dromiskin; Grange; Castlering; Castleroche; Monasterboice; Drogheda; and Dundalk.

There are currently approximately 1,600 structures listed in the RMP for County Louth.⁹⁸ Figure 4.15 shows the spatial distribution of recorded monuments in the County. Clusters of monuments in County Louth are located within the County's settlements, including Drogheda and Dundalk which are referred to as Areas of Special Archaeological Interest.

There are 23 Monuments in State Care (10 in State Ownership and 13 in State Guardianship)⁹⁹ in County Louth:

- Aghnaskeagh;
- Athclare Castle;
- Mansfieldstown;
- Carlingford Castle;
- The Mint (Carlingford);
- Dun Dealgan;
- Donaghmore;
- St. Laurence's Gate (Drogheda);
- Dromiskin;
- Greenmount;
- Carlingford Abbey;
- Lisnaran Fort;
- Mellifont Abbey;
- Monasterboice;
- St. Mochta's House;
- Proleek;
- Clochafarmore;
- Ravensdale Park;
- Castleroche Castle;
- Rockmarshall;

⁹⁸ Draft Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027

⁹⁹ This list of National Monuments in State care includes those which are in the ownership and guardianship of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

- Roodstown Castle;
- Termonfeckin Castle; and
- Townleyhall.

Further to this, there are 11 National Monuments subject to a Preservation Order:

- Aghnaskeagh Cairns;
- Aghnaskeagh Ringfort;
- Belpatrick Archaeological Complex;
- Benagh Souterrain;
- Casteltowncooley Ringfort and Annexe;
- Lisnaran Fort;
- Milltown Dwelling;
- Milltown Barrow;
- St. Mochtha's House, Priorstate;
- Rampark Ringfort; and
- Rathdrumin Rath;

County Louth has an array of archaeological assets, ranging from the historic ruins of Monasterboice in the south of the County, to the walled medieval towns of Carlingford, Drogheda and Dundalk which were founded between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Castles, megalithic tombs, souterrains, ring forts, mottes, battlefield sites and ecclesiastical sites are amongst the most common recorded monuments in the County.

Battlefield sites are an important archaeological feature in Louth such as those in relating to the Battle of the Boyne and the Battle of Faughart. The conservation, management and protection of views and prospects of battlefields is of national importance.

Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site is located partially within the Plan area (shown on Figure 4.15). Brú na Bóinne, refers to the area within the bend of the river Boyne around Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth, and is one of the world's most important archaeological complexes. It is internationally recognised for its many outstanding archaeological features, notably its megalithic art, the large and varied grouping of monuments, and evidence of continuous settlement and activity in the area for some 7,000 years. The area of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne encompasses Battle of the Boyne landmarks, structures of significant architectural heritage, many of which are included on the Record of Protected Structures, demesne landscapes (Netterville, Campbell – Caldwell and Coddington Estate) and the Boyne Navigation. The State is obliged to protect Brú na Bóinne World Heritage site to preserve its Outstanding Universal Value.

Monasterboice is listed as part of the Early Medieval Monastic Sites UNESCO Tentative World Heritage Site (shown on Figure 4.15). A Tentative List is an inventory of properties which a country intends to consider for nomination to the World Heritage List. Monasterboice contains two examples of early Irish art, Muiredach's Cross and the Tall Cross, standing in a rural graveyard alongside two ruined churches, a round tower and many other features of interest of early ecclesiastical settlements.

Other notable sites of archaeological significance include Mellifont Abbey in Drogheda and King John's Castle in Carlingford.

The Underwater Archaeology Unit was established within the National Monuments Service to manage and protect Ireland's underwater cultural heritage, including the quantification of the underwater resource and assessing development impacts in order to manage and protect this aspect of Ireland's heritage. The Shipwreck Inventory is principally a desktop survey with information gathered from a broad range of cartographic, archaeological and historical sources, both documentary and pictorial. Wrecks over 100 years old and archaeological objects found underwater are protected under the National Monuments (Amendment) Acts 1987 and 1994. Significant wrecks less than 100 years old can be designated by Underwater Heritage Order on account of their historical, archaeological or artistic importance. Such Orders can also be used to designate areas of seabed or land covered by water to more clearly define and protect wreck sites and archaeological objects. Under the legislation all diving on known protected wreck sites or with the intention of searching for underwater cultural heritage is subject to licensing requirements.

Rivers and lakes and within the County may contain many features and finds associated with riverine heritage such as shipwrecks, piers, quay walls, fords, stepping stones and associated archaeological objects and features. The coast of the County also provides potential for underwater archaeology, including the intertidal areas.

Relevant archaeological heritage designations in Northern Ireland include¹⁰⁰: entries to the

¹⁰⁰ Mapping available at: <https://dfcgis.maps.arcgis.com>

Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record; Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest and Archaeological Potential; Defence Heritage; Historic Wrecks; and Protected Wreck Zones.

4.12.2 Architectural Heritage

The term architectural heritage is defined in the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments Act 1999 as meaning all: structures and buildings together with their settings and attendant grounds, fixtures and fittings; groups of structures and buildings; and, sites which are of technical, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical interest.

Records of Protected Structures are legislated for under Section 12 and Section 51 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended. Protected structures are defined in the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended as structures, or parts of structures that are of special interest from an architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical point of view.

In relation to a protected structure or proposed protected structure, the following are encompassed:

- The interior of the structure;
- The land lying within the curtilage¹⁰¹ of the structure;
- Any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors; and,
- All fixtures and features that form part of the interior or exterior of any structure or structures referred to in subparagraph (i) or (iii).

Similar to the general spatial spread of archaeological heritage, clusters of architectural heritage are indicated within the County's settlements as shown on Figure 4.16. There are over 1,500 entries to the Record of Protected Structures within the County, including notable town centre buildings, various

houses, thatched cottages and churches. The County also contains many items of industrial heritage such as mills, road and rail bridges and associated infrastructures. Notable protected structures include: St Andrew's Church Drummullagh; the Water Lodge Balregan; Carlingford House, Abbeyview; Arthurstown Thatch; and Cistercian Abbey, Mellifont.

In addition to Protected Structures, the Planning and Development Act, 2000 provides the legislative basis for the protection of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs). An ACA is a place, area or group of structures or townscape that is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures, whose character it is an objective to preserve in the Plan. The ACA designation requires that planning permission must be obtained before significant works can be carried out to the exterior of a structure in the ACA that might alter the character of the structure or the ACA. There are 36 ACA designated within County Louth¹⁰², including eight ACAs in Dundalk¹⁰³ and seventeen ACAs in Drogheda¹⁰⁴. All ACAs within the Plan area are mapped on Figure 4.16.

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) is a State initiative under the administration of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and was established on a statutory basis under the provisions of the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) and Historic Monuments (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1999. The purpose of the NIAH is to identify, record, and evaluate the post-1700 architectural heritage of Ireland, uniformly and consistently as an aid in the protection and conservation of the built heritage. NIAH surveys provide the basis for the recommendations of the Minister of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to the local authorities for the

¹⁰¹ Curtilage is normally taken to be the parcel of ground immediately associated with the Protected Structure, or in use for the purposes of the structure. Protection extends to the buildings and land lying within the curtilage. While the curtilage sometimes coincides with the present property boundary, it can originally have included lands, features or even buildings now in separate ownership, e.g. the lodge of a former country house, or the garden features located in land subsequently sold off. Such lands are described as being attendant grounds, and the protection extends to them just as if they were still within the curtilage of the Protected Structure.

¹⁰² Including: Ardee; Carlingford; Castlebellingham; Collon; Greenore; Monasterboice; Monastic site; Newtown

Monasterboice; Clachan; Salterstown; Whitestown; and Townley Hall Demesne.

¹⁰³ Including: St. Mary's Raod; Roden Place; The Crescent; Clanbrassil Street; Jocelyn Street/Seatown Place; Soldiers Point- Coastguard Houses; Magnet Road/The Demesne; and The Crescent, Blackrock.

¹⁰⁴ Including: Bolton Square/Green Lanes; Clinton's Lane; The Dale; Fair Street; Laurence's Street; Legavoureen Park; Magdalene Street (North); St. Mary's Cottages; Millmount; North Quays/Back Lanes; St. Peter's Church and its Environs; Railway Terrace; Windmill Road (part of); West Street and surrounding shopping streets forming Drogheda's shopping core; Leyland Place; Ship Street; and Old Abbey Lane and Merchant's Quay.

inclusion of particular structures in their Record of Protected Structures. The NIAH includes historic gardens and designed landscapes. Louth has a rich heritage of gardens and designed landscaped gardens. These consist of private gardens, public parks and the landscapes associated with country estates and demesnes. There are 93 Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes in County Louth.

Louth has a rich heritage of gardens and designed landscaped gardens consisting of public parks, private gardens, and landscapes associated with country estates and demesnes. These landscapes often include tree-lined avenues, formal ornamental woods, water-features, planned gardens, terraces and other formal features. In some cases, the house and buildings are no longer extant, but the demesne and designed landscape remains. There are 93 historic gardens and designed landscapes in County Louth.

Figure 4.16 shows entries to NIAH in County Louth, including Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes. Similar to the general spatial spread of archaeological heritage, clusters of architectural heritage are indicated within already developed urban and suburban areas.

Relevant architectural heritage designations in Northern Ireland include¹⁰⁵: entries to NIAH and Listed Buildings; Historic Parks and Gardens; and Industrial Heritage.

4.12.3 Existing Problems

The context of archaeological and architectural heritage has changed over time within County Louth, however no existing conflicts with legislative objectives governing archaeological and architectural heritage have been identified.

¹⁰⁵ Mapping available at: <https://dfcgis.maps.arcgis.com>

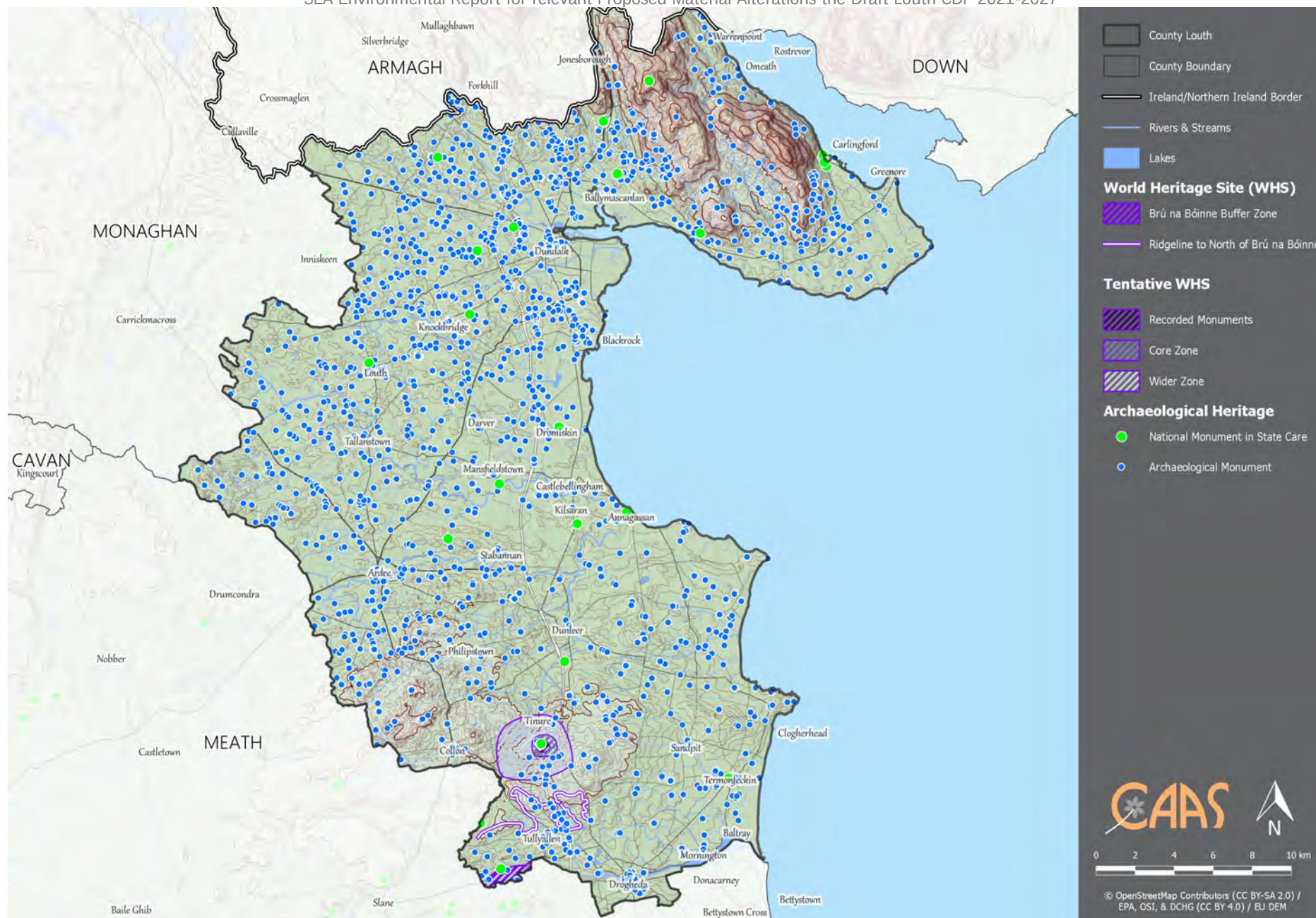


Figure 4.15 Archaeological Heritage

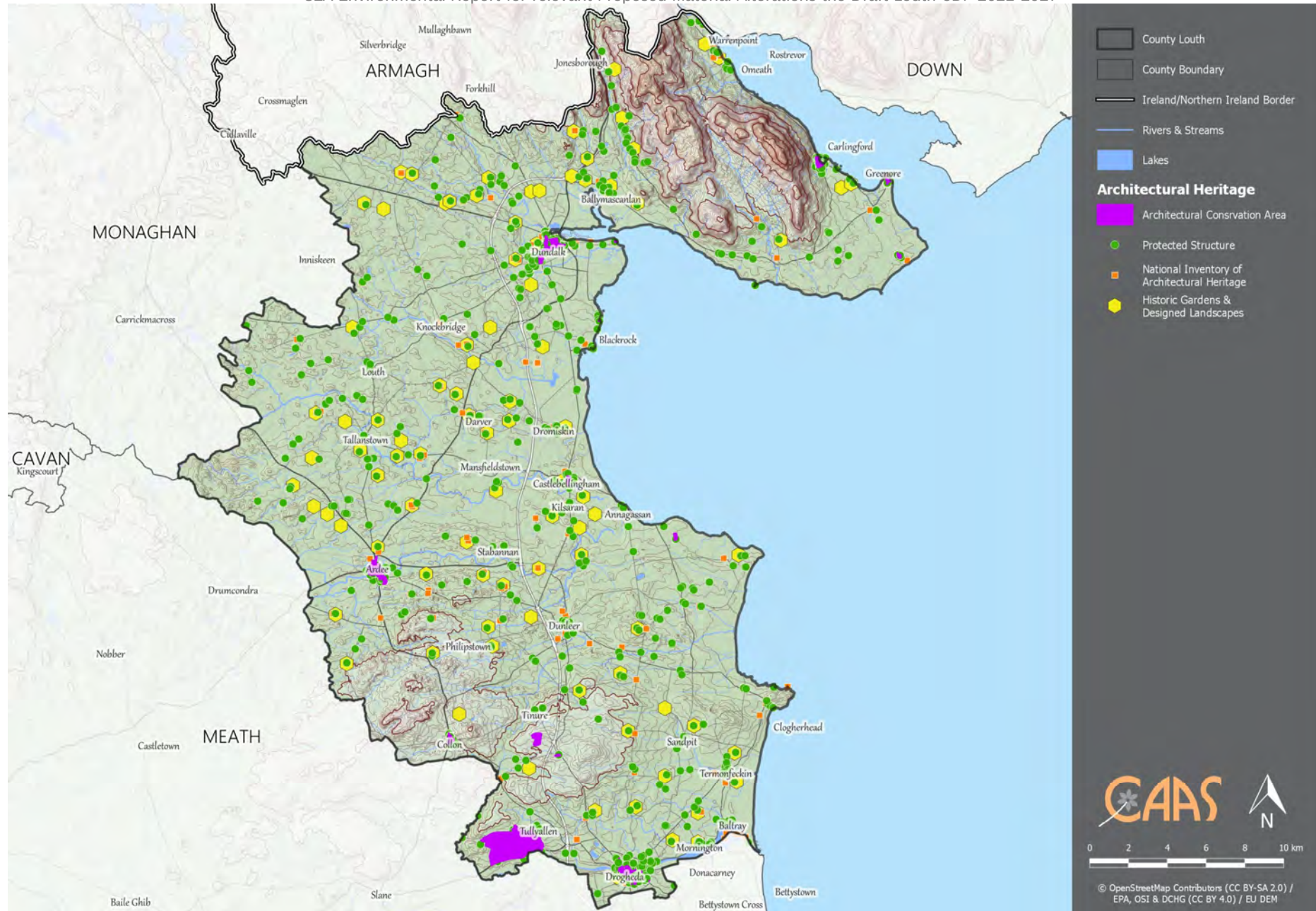


Figure 4.16 Architectural Heritage

- Boyne and Mattock Valleys.

4.13 Landscape

4.13.1 Introduction

Article 1 (a) of the European Landscape Convention provides a definition of landscape as follows; "Landscape means an area, as perceived by people whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural/or human factors". The importance of landscape and visual amenity and the role of its protection are recognised in the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, which requires that Development Plans include objectives for the preservation of the landscape, views and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty.

The landscape of County Louth includes a variety of different land forms and features, including its extensive coastline stretching from Carlingford Lough to Boyne Estuary, wetlands, woodlands, rivers, bogs and uplands. Some upland areas in Cooley Peninsula are recognised as being amongst the most unspoiled in the Country.

The range of different landscapes found in Louth have varying visual and amenity values, topography, exposure levels and contain a variety of habitats. Each landscape type has varying capacity to absorb development related to its overall sensitivity.

4.13.2 Landscape Character Areas

The purpose of landscape character assessment is to provide the foundation for policy formulation and decision making for landscape management. The County Louth Landscape Character Assessment has identified the following nine Landscape Character Areas:

- Cooley Lowlands and Coastal Area;
- Carlingford Lough and Mountains, including West Feede Uplands;
- Lower Faughart, Castletown and Flurry River Basins;
- Louth Drumlin and Lakes Areas;
- Muirhevna Plain;
- Dundalk Bay Coast;
- Dunany, Boyne Estuary Coast;
- Uplands of Collon and Monasterboice; and

Landscape Character Areas in County Louth are mapped on Figure 4.17.

It is further proposed by the Council to designate Carlingford Mountain SAC as a Landscape Conservation Area during the lifetime of the Plan.¹⁰⁶

Relevant Landscape Character Areas in Northern Ireland along the County border include¹⁰⁷: Crossmaglen Drumlins and Loughs; Ring of Gullion; Slieve Roosley; Mourne Mountains; The Kingdom of Mourne; and Kilkeel Coast.

Relevant Seascape Character Areas in Northern Ireland include: Newry Estuary; Carlingford Lough; Mourne Coast; and Irish Sea (South Down).

4.13.3 Landscape Classification

The classification of a landscape aims to heighten awareness of the importance of landscape in all aspects of physical planning, provide guidance to planners and others, as to how to deal with landscape considerations, indicate specific requirements for development plans and for development controls. The landscapes of County Louth are classified as following:

- International Importance (Carlingford Lough and Mountains including West Feede Uplands);
- National Importance (Boyne and Mattock Valley);
- Regional Importance (Dundalk Bay Coast, Dunany to Boyne Estuary Coast and Uplands of Collon and Monasterboice); and
- Local Importance (Cooley Lowlands and Coastal Area; Lower Faughart. Castletown and Flurry River Basins, Louth Drumlin and Lake Areas; and Muirhevna Plain).

These areas are the most sensitive to development and therefore developments which are likely to create a significant environmental and particularly visual impact will best be absorbed in areas where the landscape is most robust, i.e. has the capacity to absorb development without significantly changing its character.

¹⁰⁶ Draft Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027

¹⁰⁷ Mapping available at: <https://apps.d.aerani.gov.uk/nedmapviewer>

4.13.4 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Areas of High Scenic Quality

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) have been identified by the Council to facilitate the protection and enhancement of their unspoiled natural landscapes and spectacular scenic quality. There are two AONBs in the County:

- Carlingford and Feede Mountains in the north of the County;
- and Clogherhead and Port Oriel in the south of the County.

As both of these areas are extremely sensitive environments, they have been afforded a high degree of protection in the Plan to preserve their uniqueness and amenity value.

Further to this, Areas of High Scenic Quality (AHSQ) have been identified by the Council to facilitate the protection and enhancement of natural scenic landscapes within the County. All of the Areas of High Scenic Quality are currently farmed, although the quality of the land for farming purposes varies considerably from area to area. The Council considers it important that AHSQs are protected from excessive development, particularly from inappropriate, one-off, urban-generated housing, in order to preserve their unspoiled rural landscapes. There are six designated Areas of High Scenic Quality in the County:

- Feede Mountains and Cooley Area;
- Monasterboice;
- Boyne Valley / King Williams Glen;
- Collon Uplands;
- Dunany; and
- Ardee Bog.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Areas of High Scenic Quality are mapped on Figure 4.19.

4.13.5 Scenic Routes and Views and Prospects

A number of important Scenic Routes have been identified in County Louth which are of an amenity and tourism value and which require protection. Applications for development must carefully consider the siting, design and landscaping of the proposed development to ensure that there are no significant alterations to the character of the area. Any development

proposals, which would interfere with or adversely affect these scenic routes will not be permitted. There are 23 Scenic Routes within the County.

In addition, the Council recognises the need to protect the character of the County by protecting Views and Prospects. There are 65 Protected Views and Prospects identified in the County.

Existing Scenic Routes and Views and Prospects are mapped on Figure 4.19.

4.13.6 Tree Preservation Orders, Champion Trees and Trees and Woodlands of Special Amenity Value

Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) are a planning mechanism whereby individual trees or groups of trees can be identified as important and protected by a TPO. There are five trees protected by TPOs in County Louth, including:

- Fox Covert, Ardee (Bayview House);
- Ardee Golf Club;
- Red House Ardee;
- Mell, Drogheda; and
- One Mile Wood, Newtownstalan.

The Tree Council of Ireland and the Irish Tree Society initiated the Tree Register of Ireland (TROI) project in 1999 with the aim of compiling a database of trees in Ireland. Project 'Champion Trees Register of Ireland' identified 21 trees in County Louth that are considered of significant environmental value to the County and that such trees should be protected from development where necessary.

Trees and Groups of Trees that Contribute to Amenity are considered by the Council as groups of trees of significant value to environment that should be protected where necessary and in recognition of the value of the trees, their conservation, as part of any grant of planning permission will be required. There are 141 'Trees and Woodlands of Special Amenity Value' in County Louth. See also Section 4.6.7.

TPOs, Champion Trees (Heritage Trees) and Trees and Woodlands of Special Amenity Value are mapped on Figure 4.18.

4.13.7 Existing Environmental Problems

New developments have resulted in changes to the visual appearance of lands within the County however legislative objectives governing landscape and visual appearance were not identified as being conflicted with.

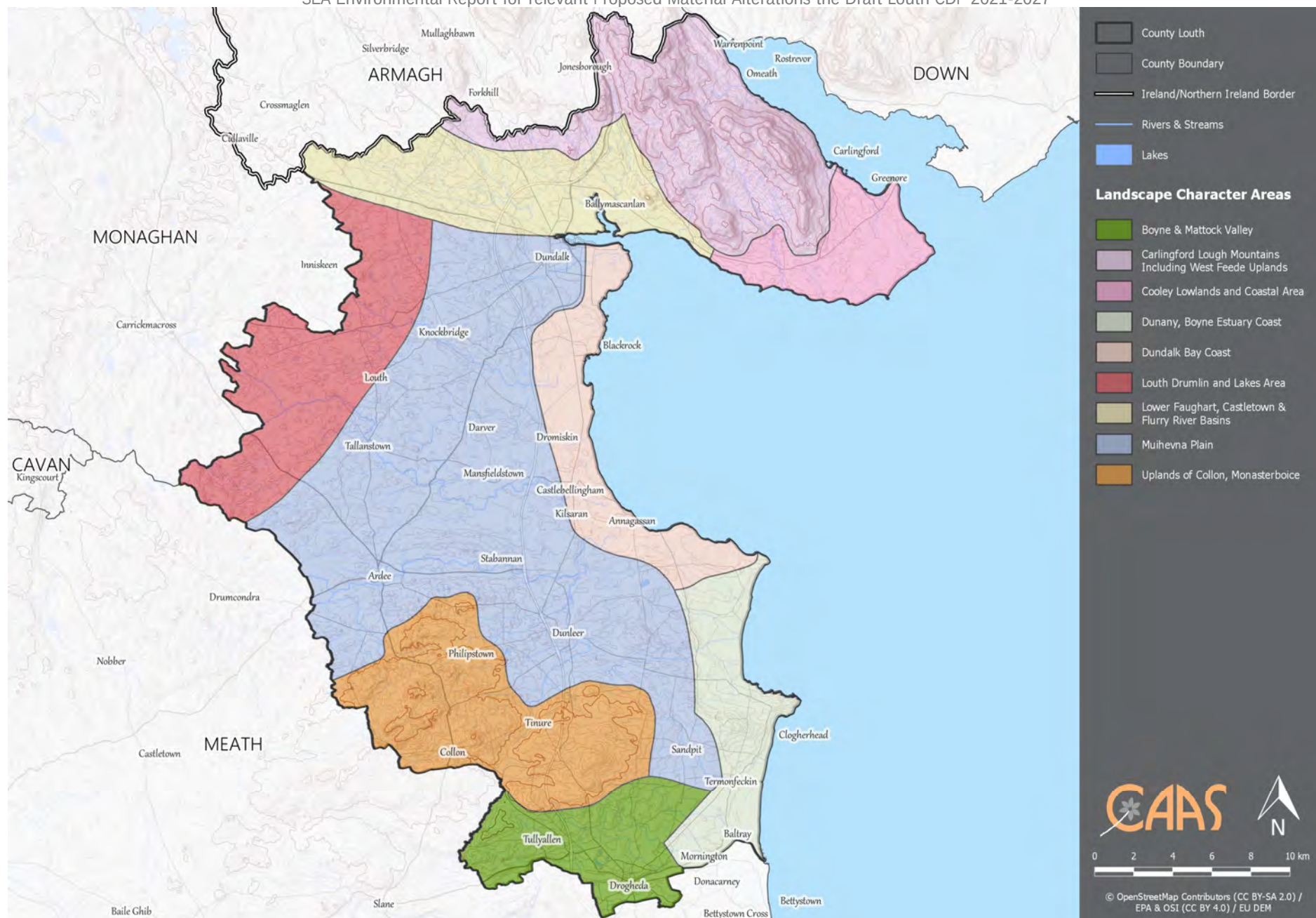
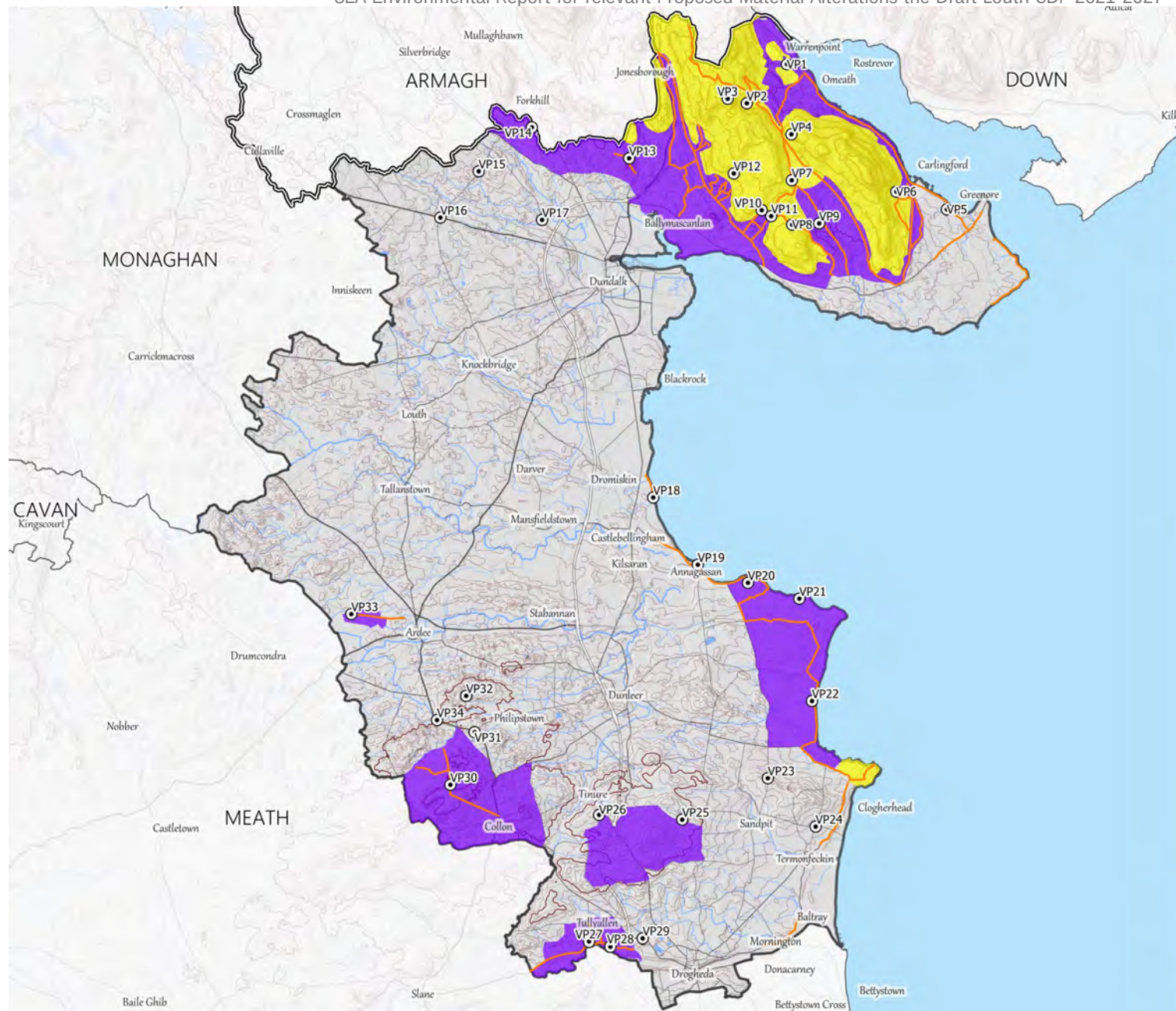


Figure 4.17 Landscape Character Areas

CAAS for Louth County Council

CAAS for Louth County Council



CAAS for Louth County Council

4.14 Overlay of Environmental Sensitivity Mapping

In order to identify where most sensitivities within the County occur, a number of the environmental sensitivities described above were weighted and mapped overlapping each other.

Figure 4.20 provides an Overlay of Environmental Sensitivities in the County. Environmental sensitivities are indicated by colours which range from higher to lower sensitivity. The map was prepared using Geographical Information System (GIS) software that allowed for a weighting system to be applied with differentiation in certain layers as follows:

- European Sites – SACs and SPAs (10 points);
- Other Ecological designations – NHAs and pNHAs (5 points);
- Sensitive Landcover Categories (10 points);
- WFD Status of Surface moderate and unassigned ecological status (5 points);
- WFD Status of Surface water poor ecological status (10 points);
- WFD Status of Groundwater water poor ecological status (10 points);
- Groundwater vulnerability (“extreme” or “extreme – rock at or near surface or karst” 10 points, “high” 5 points);
- Source Protection Areas (Inner-10 points and Outer-5 points);
- WFD RPA Nutrient Sensitive Rivers, Lakes and Estuaries (10 points) and Rivers in Nutrient Sensitive Areas (5 points);
- WFD RPA Shellfish Areas and Salmonid Rivers Regs (S.I. only) (10 points);
- WFD RPA Bathing Water Quality and Rivers and Lakes for Drinking Water (10 points);
- Flood extents- Flood Zone A (10 points) and Flood Zone B (5 points);
- Geological Sites of Importance (10 points);
- Cultural Heritage including Architectural Conservation Areas, entries to the Record of Protected Structures, entries to the Record of Monuments and Places, National Monuments in State Care and entire to the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage and World Heritage Sites (10 points);
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (10 points) and Areas of High Scenic Quality (5 points); and
- Scenic routes and view points (10 points).

Where the mapping shows a concentration of environmental sensitivities there is an increased likelihood that development will conflict with these sensitivities and cause environmental deterioration. However, the occurrence of environmental sensitivities does not preclude development; rather it flags at a strategic level that the mitigation measures - which have been integrated into the Plan - will need to be complied with in order to ensure that the implementation of

the Plan contributes towards environmental protection.

Most of the County is identified as having low to moderate levels of sensitivity. The most sensitive areas in the County include:

- Upland areas, including Cooley Mountains - on account of ecological and land cover sensitivities, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Areas of High Scenic Quality designations and extreme groundwater vulnerability;
- Coastal and marine areas within the County - on account of ecological designations, sensitive land cover sensitivities, shellfish production areas and/or nutrient sensitivity in surface waters;
- Individual rivers throughout the County;
- Areas throughout the County on account of areas of elevated groundwater vulnerability.

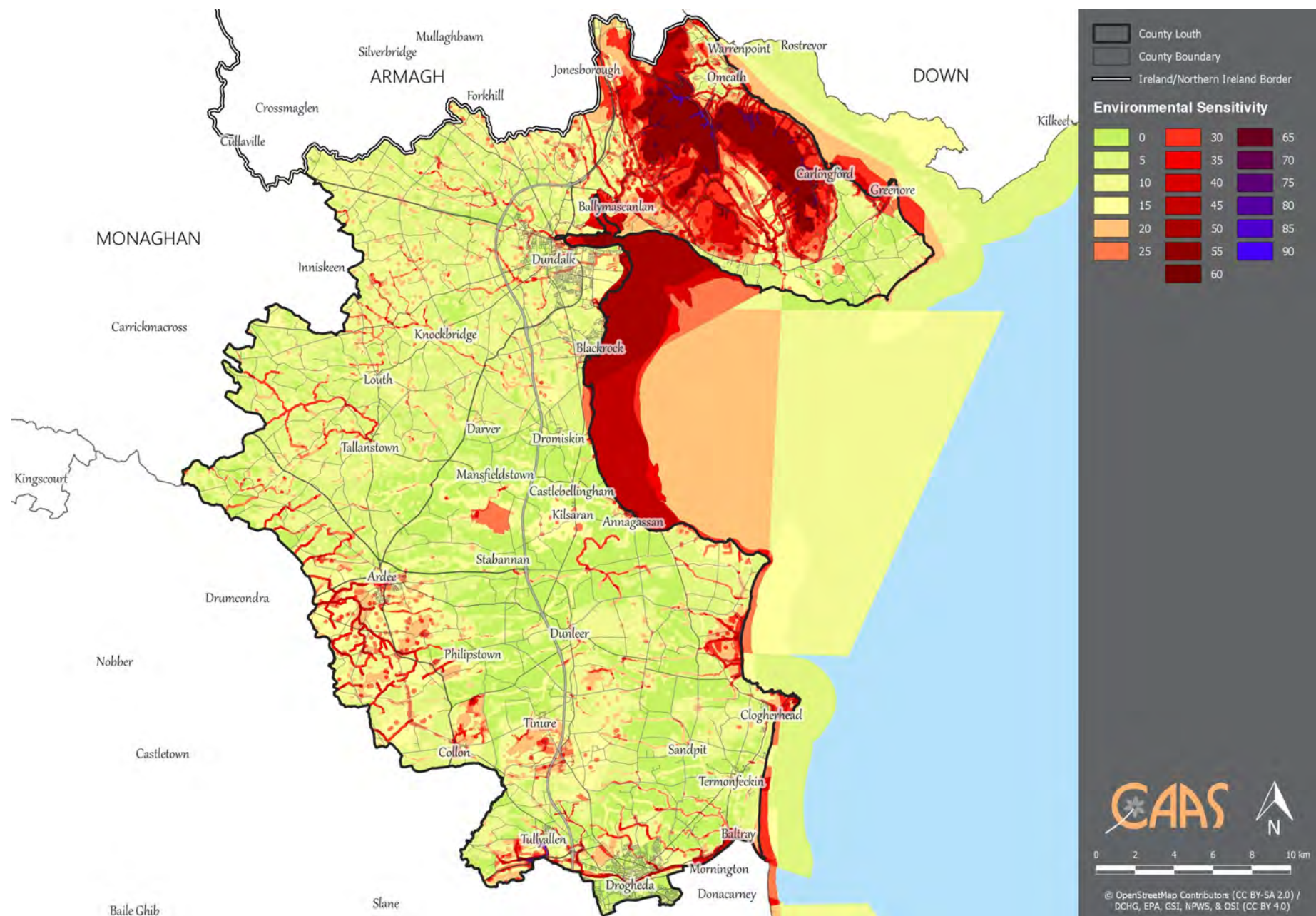


Figure 4.20 Overlay of Environmental Sensitivities in County Louth

CAAS for Louth County Council

Section 5 Strategic Environmental Objectives

Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs) are methodological measures developed from policies that generally govern environmental protection objectives established at international, Community or Member State level e.g. the environmental protection objectives of various European Directives that have been transposed into Irish law and which are required to be implemented.

The SEOs are set out under a range of topics and are used as standards against which the provisions of the Draft Plan, the alternatives and Proposed Material Alterations are evaluated in order to help identify which provisions would be likely to result in significant environmental effects and where such effects would be likely to occur, if – in the case of adverse effects – unmitigated.

The SEOs are linked to indicators which can facilitate monitoring the environmental effects of the Plan as well as identifying targets which the Plan can help work towards.

All SEOs, indicators and targets are provided on Table 5.1 overleaf.

Further detail on legislation, plans and programmes are provided under Section 2 (and associated Appendix I “Relationship with Legislation and Other Policies, Plans, and Programmes”) and Section 4.

Given the position of the Development Plan in the land use planning hierarchy beneath the Eastern and Midland 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.

Table 5.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives (SEOs), Indicators and Targets

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Targets
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	BFF	No net contribution to biodiversity losses or deterioration	- To preserve, protect, maintain and, where appropriate, enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, particularly EU designated sites and protected species - Ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function - Safeguard national, regional and local designated sites and supporting features which function as stepping stones for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species - Enhance biodiversity in line with the National Biodiversity Strategy and its targets - To protect, maintain and conserve the County's natural capital	- 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”	- 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”
Population and Human Health	PHH	Improve quality of life for all ages and abilities based on high-quality, serviced, well connected and sustainable residential, working, educational and recreational environments	- Promote economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable development and environmental protection and management - Ensure that existing population and planned growth is matched with the required public infrastructure and the required services - Safeguard the County's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being	- 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	- 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
Soil (and Land)	S	Ensure the long-term sustainable management of land	- Protect soils against pollution, and prevent degradation of the soil resource - Promote the sustainable use of infill and brownfield sites over the use of greenfield within the County - Safeguard areas of prime agricultural land and designated geological sites	- Proportion of population growth occurring on infill and brownfield lands compared to greenfield - Volume of contaminated material generated from brownfield and infill - Number of AA determinations and environmental assessments undertaken to support applications for brownfield and infill development prior to planning permission	- Maintain built surface cover nationally to below the EU average of 4%. - Achieve the 40% target for growth on infill as per NPF.

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Targets
Water	W	Protection, improvement and sustainable management of the water resource	• Ensure that the status of water bodies is protected, maintained and improved in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and Marine Strategy Framework Directive • Ensure that economic growth of the marine resource and its ecosystems are managed sustainably • Ensure water resources are sustainably managed to deliver proposed regional and County growth targets in the context of existing and projected water supply and waste water capacity constraints ensuring the protection of receiving environments • Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and areas that are vulnerable to current and future erosion, particularly coastal areas • Integrate sustainable water management solutions (such as SuDS, porous surfacing and green roofs) into development proposals	• 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	• 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 iterations as relevant) • Minimise developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk
Material Assets	MA	Sustainable and efficient use of natural resources	• Optimise existing infrastructure and provide new infrastructure to match population distribution proposals in the County • Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all which encourages a broad energy generation mix to ensure security of supply – wind, wave solar, tidal, biomass, energy from waste and traditional fossil fuels • Promote the circular economy, reduce waste, and increase energy efficiencies • Ensure there is adequate sewerage and drainage infrastructure in place to support new development • Reduce the energy demand from the transport sector and support moves to electrification of road and rail transport modes • Encourage the transition to a zero-carbon economy by facilitating the development of a grid infrastructure to support renewables and international connectivity. Reduce the average energy consumption per capita including promoting energy efficient buildings, retrofitting, smart- buildings, cities and grids	• 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	• 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 • By 2020 all citizens will have access to speeds of 30Mbps, and that 50% of citizens will be subscribing to speeds of 100Mbps

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Targets
Air	A	Support clean air policies that reduce the impact of air pollution on the environment and public health	- To avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole resulting from emissions to air from all sectors with particular reference to emissions from transport, residential heating, industry and agriculture. - Maintain and promote continuing improvement in air quality through the reduction of emissions and promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency. - Promote continuing improvement in air quality. - Reduction of emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, ammonia and fine particulate matter which are responsible for acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone pollution - Meet Air Quality Directive standards for the protection of human health — Air Quality Directive - Significantly decrease noise pollution by 2020 and move closer to WHO recommended levels.	- 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	- 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
Climatic Factors	C	Achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient economy that is cognisant of environmental impacts	- To minimise emissions of greenhouse gasses. - Integrate sustainable design solutions into the County's infrastructure (e.g. energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure). - Contribute towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with national targets. - Promote development resilient to the effects of climate change - Promote the use of renewable energy, energy efficient development and increased use of public transport	- 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	- 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 States to reach a 10% share of renewable energy in transport by 2020 - 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

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives	Indicators	Targets
Cultural Heritage	CH	Safeguard cultural heritage features and their settings through responsible design and positioning of development	• Protect places, features, buildings and landscapes of cultural, archaeological or architectural heritage	• 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	• 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
Landscape	L	Protect and enhance the landscape character	• To implement the Plan's framework for identification, assessment, protection, management and planning of landscapes having regard to the European Landscape Convention	• 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	• 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

Section 6 Description of Alternatives

6.1 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 under Tiers 1 to 5 detailed below. These alternatives are assessed in Section 7.

The Proposed Material Alterations – whether adopted as part of the Draft Plan or not – will not affect the consideration of reasonable alternatives for the Draft Plan (originally included in the October 2020 SEA Environmental Report for the Draft Plan) that are reproduced in this section and assessed in Section 7.

6.2 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.

6.3 Tier 1: Alternatives for Positioning under the Settlement Hierarchy

The Settlement Hierarchy Levels for the Plan are identified on Table 6.2.

Table 6.1 Settlement Hierarchy Levels

Settlement Level	Settlement Category	Description
1	Regional Growth Centres	Regional Growth Centres are large towns with a high level of self-sustaining employment and services that act as regional economic drivers and play a significant role for a wide catchment area.
2	Self-Sustaining Growth Towns	Self-Sustaining Growth Towns with a moderate level of jobs and services – includes sub-county market towns and commuter towns with good transport links and capacity for continued commensurate growth to become more self-sustaining
3	Self-Sustaining Towns	Self-sustaining towns with high levels of population growth and a weak employment base which are reliant on other areas for employment and/or services and which require targeted 'catch up' investment to become more self-sustaining
4	Small Towns and Villages	Towns and villages with local service and employment functions
5	Rural Villages	Rural villages

In considering significant realistic alternatives for placing of individual settlements under alternative typologies, the planning authority has taken into account the objectives of the NPF and the Eastern and Midland RSES. As a result, there are no strategic reasonable alternatives available for the designating of most settlements under the hierarchy. Nonetheless, there are strategic reasonable alternatives for some of the settlements and these are detailed overleaf.

Tier 1 (i): Alternatives for Ardee and Dunleer

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

Tier 1 (ii): Alternatives for Dromiskin

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

Tier 1 (iii): Alternatives for 24 Potential “Rural Villages”

- (A) Designate 24 (no.) Level 5 Settlements, “Rural Villages” 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 Villages” but designate Tinure, Lordship and Greenore as “Small Towns and Villages”

6.4 Tier 2: Alternatives for Population Allocations

- (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.

6.5 Tier 3: Alternatives for Rural Areas

- (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

6.6 Tier 4: Alternatives for Densities

In considering significant realistic alternatives of densities, the planning authority has taken into account the objectives of the NPF and the Eastern and Midland RSES. As a result, strategic reasonable alternatives available for densities are only available in the instances below:

Tier 4 (i): 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

Tier 4 (ii): Alternatives for Self-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

6.7 Tier 5: 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. Requirements relating to land use zoning provided for by the NPF and RSES limit the availability of alternatives for various settlements.

The Council have identified strategic reasonable alternatives for certain settlements, where these are available.

The findings of the examination of available strategic reasonable land use zoning alternatives for settlements is provided at Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 Screening for Available Strategic Reasonable Alternatives

Settlement Typology	Settlements	Not available – taking into account high-level planning objectives	Strategic Reasonable Alternatives Available
Large Growth Towns	Dundalk		✓
	Drogheda		✓
Moderate Sustainable Growth Town	Ardee		✓
	Dunleer		✓
Rural Villages	Annagassan	✓	
	Baltray		✓
	Castlebellingham/ Kilsaran	✓	
	Carlingford		✓
	Clogherhead		✓
	Collon	✓	
	Dromiskin	✓	
	Louth Village	✓	
	Omeath	✓	
	Knockbridge	✓	
	Tallanstown		✓
	Termonfeckin	✓	
	Tullyallen	✓	

A description of assessable alternatives, where available, are provided on Table 6.3. Maps for each of these alternatives are provided in Appendix II “Indicative Mapping of Land Use Zoning Alternatives”.

Table 6.3 Description of Assessable Alternatives Available

Settlement Typology	Settlements	Available Reasonable Alternatives Set 1	Available Reasonable Alternatives Set 2 (if 2 nd set is available)	Available Reasonable Alternatives Set 3 (if 3 rd set is available)	Available Reasonable Alternatives Set 4 (if a 4 th set available)
Large Growth Towns	Dundalk	New Residential Zoning: A. North, to the north of Castletown River or B. Along Mount Avenue or C. South, to the south of Oriel Park	General Employment Zoning: A. Northern site, along N52 or B. North Western site along R177		
	Drogheda	A. Site (within Flood Zone A) along the Boyne zoned as New Residential or B. Site (within Flood Zone A) along the Boyne zoned as Open Space	Westgate Area Zoning A. Town or Village Centre or B. Regeneration	Site to the north west of the M1/R168 roundabout A. Tourism and Leisure or B. Retail Park or C. Do not include in the settlement plan boundary	Site to the north west of the N51/R132 roundabout A. Tourism and Leisure or B. Retail Park or C. Do not include in the settlement plan boundary
Moderate Sustainable Growth Town	Ardee	Zoning for sites in the north of the settlement: A. New Residential for eastern site (with open space provided in flood areas), or 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			
	Dunleer	General Employment Zoning: A. Site adjoining the south west of the existing settlement envelope or B. Site adjoining the north east of the existing settlement envelope			
Rural Villages	Baltray	A. Sites (within Flood Zone A) along the Boyne Estuary zoned as New Residential or B. Sites (within Flood Zone A) along the Boyne Estuary zoned as Open Space			
	Carlingford	A. Site (within Flood Zone A) along Carlingford Lough zoned as New Residential or B. Site (within Flood Zone A) along Carlingford Lough zoned as Open Space			
	Clogherhead	General Employment Zoning: A. Site adjoining the west of the existing settlement envelope or B. Site adjoining the south of the existing settlement envelope and coast			
	Tallanstown	A. Site (within Flood Zone A) adjacent to centre zoned as New Residential or B. Site (within Flood Zone A) adjacent to centre zoned as Open Space			

Section 7 Evaluation of Alternatives

7.1 Introduction

This section provides a comparative evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects¹⁰⁸ of implementing available alternatives that are described in Section 6. This determination sought to understand whether each alternative was likely to improve conflict with or have a neutral interaction with the receiving environment.

The Proposed Material Alterations – whether adopted as part of the Draft Plan or not – will not affect the consideration of reasonable alternatives for the Draft Plan (originally included in the October 2020 SEA Environmental Report for the Draft Plan) that are assessed in this section and described in Section 6.

7.2 Methodology

The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (see Section 4) and the Strategic Environmental Objectives (see Section 5 and Table 7.1) are used in the assessment of alternatives.

The degree to which effects can be determined is limited as implementation of the Plan will involve assessment, consideration and decision-making associated with lower tier plans and individual projects. Nonetheless a comparative evaluation of the various alternatives can be provided.

Table 7.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives¹⁰⁹

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	BFF	No net contribution to biodiversity losses or deterioration	- To preserve, protect, maintain and, where appropriate, enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, particularly EU designated sites and protected species - Ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function - Safeguard national, regional and local designated sites and supporting features which function as stepping stones for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species - Enhance biodiversity in line with the National Biodiversity Strategy and its targets - To protect, maintain and conserve the County's natural capital
Population and Human Health	PHH	Improve quality of life for all ages and abilities based on high-quality, serviced, well connected and sustainable residential, working, educational and recreational environments	- Promote economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable development and environmental protection and management - Ensure that existing population and planned growth is matched with the required public infrastructure and the required services - Safeguard the County's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being
Soil (and Land)	S	Ensure the long-term sustainable management of land	- Protect soils against pollution, and prevent degradation of the soil resource - Promote the sustainable use of infill and brownfield sites over the use of greenfield within the County - Safeguard areas of prime agricultural land and designated geological sites

¹⁰⁸ These effects include secondary, cumulative (see also Section 8.2), synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

¹⁰⁹ See also Section 5

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
Water	W	Protection, improvement and sustainable management of the water resource	• Ensure that the status of water bodies is protected, maintained and improved in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and Marine Strategy Framework Directive • Ensure that economic growth of the marine resource and its ecosystems are managed sustainably • Ensure water resources are sustainably managed to deliver proposed regional and County growth targets in the context of existing and projected water supply and waste water capacity constraints ensuring the protection of receiving environments • Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and areas that are vulnerable to current and future erosion, particularly coastal areas • Integrate sustainable water management solutions (such as SuDS, porous surfacing and green roofs) into development proposals
Material Assets	MA	Sustainable and efficient use of natural resources	• Optimise existing infrastructure and provide new infrastructure to match population distribution proposals in the County • Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all which encourages a broad energy generation mix to ensure security of supply – wind, wave solar, tidal, biomass, energy from waste and traditional fossil fuels • Promote the circular economy, reduce waste, and increase energy efficiencies • Ensure there is adequate sewerage and drainage infrastructure in place to support new development • Reduce the energy demand from the transport sector and support moves to electrification of road and rail transport modes • Encourage the transition to a zero-carbon economy by facilitating the development of a grid infrastructure to support renewables and international connectivity. Reduce the average energy consumption per capita including promoting energy efficient buildings, retrofitting, smart- buildings, cities and grids
Air	A	Support clean air policies that reduce the impact of air pollution on the environment and public health	• To avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole resulting from emissions to air from all sectors with particular reference to emissions from transport, residential heating, industry and agriculture. • Maintain and promote continuing improvement in air quality through the reduction of emissions and promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency. • Promote continuing improvement in air quality. • Reduction of emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, ammonia and fine particulate matter which are responsible for acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone pollution • Meet Air Quality Directive standards for the protection of human health — Air Quality Directive • Significantly decrease noise pollution by 2020 and move closer to WHO recommended levels.
Climatic Factors	C	Achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient economy that is cognisant of environmental impacts	• To minimise emissions of greenhouse gasses. • Integrate sustainable design solutions into the County's infrastructure (e.g. energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure). • Contribute towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with national targets. • Promote development resilient to the effects of climate change • Promote the use of renewable energy, energy efficient development and increased use of public transport
Cultural Heritage	CH	Safeguard cultural heritage features and their settings through responsible design and positioning of development	• Protect places, features, buildings and landscapes of cultural, archaeological or architectural heritage
Landscape	L	Protect and enhance the landscape character	• To implement the Plan's framework for identification, assessment, protection, management and planning of landscapes having regard to the European Landscape Convention

7.3 Detailed Assessment of Alternatives

7.3.1 Effects Common to all Alternatives

Each of the alternatives envisage – in compliance with the robust policy framework in place at national, regional and local level – sustainable development and compact growth in County Louth. As such, various potential environmental effects are common to each of the alternatives. The environmental effects detailed on would be present, some to varying degrees, under the different alternatives.

Table 7.2 Effects Common to All Alternatives

Environmental Component	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potentially Significant Adverse Environmental Effects, if unmitigated
Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna	• Contribution towards protection of ecology (including designated sites, ecological connectivity, habitats) by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond. • Sustains existing sustainable rural management practices – and the communities who support them – to ensure the continuation of long-established managed landscapes and the flora and fauna that they contain.	Arising from both construction and operation of development and associated infrastructure: • Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites, Wildlife Sites and Areas of Special Scientific Interest) 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.
Population and Human Health	• Promotion of economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable development and environmental protection and management. • Contribution towards appropriate provision of infrastructure and services to existing population and planned growth by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond • Contribution towards the protection of human health by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.	• Potential adverse effects arising from flood events. • Potential interactions if effects arising from environmental vectors.
Soil	• Contribution towards the protection of soils (including those used for agriculture) and designated sites of geological heritage by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.	• Potential adverse effects on the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource, including as a result of development on contaminated lands. • Potential for riverbank and coastal erosion.
Water	• Contribution towards the protection of water by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more	• 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.

Environmental Component	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potentially Significant Adverse Environmental Effects, if unmitigated
	easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.	• Increase in flood risk and associated effects associated with flood events.
Material Assets	• Contribution towards appropriate provision of infrastructure and services to existing population and planned growth by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond. • Contribution towards limits in increases in energy demand from the transport sector by facilitating sustainable compact growth.	• 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 development with adequate drinking water (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts). • 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.
Air and Climatic Factors	• Contribution towards climate mitigation and adaptation by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.	• 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 adaptation measures including those relating to flood risk management.
Cultural Heritage	• Contributes towards protection of cultural heritage elsewhere in the County by facilitating development within existing settlements.	• Potential effects on protected and unknown archaeology and protected architecture arising from construction and operation activities.
Landscape	• Contributes towards protection of wider landscape and landscape designations by facilitating development within existing settlements.	• Occurrence of adverse visual impacts and conflicts with the appropriate protection of designations relating to the landscape.

7.3.2 Assessment of Tier 1: Alternatives for Positioning under the Settlement Hierarchy

Tier 1 (i): Alternatives for Ardee and Dunleer

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

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-served 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.

Tier 1 (ii): Alternatives for Dromiskin

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

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 outboard 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.

Tier 1 (iii): Alternatives for 24 Potential “Rural Villages”

- (A) Designate 24 (no.) Level 5 Settlements, “Rural Villages” 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 Villages” but designate Tinure, Lordship and Greenore as “Small Towns and Villages”

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 Villages. 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 Villages, 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 villages 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 villages 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 Villages 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 villages 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.

Table 7.3 Assessment¹¹⁰ of Tier 1 Alternatives against Strategic Environmental Objectives

Alternative (selected alternative for the Plan in bold)	Likely to improve status of SEOs		Potential Conflict with status of SEOs – likely to be mitigated	
	to a Greater degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Greater degree
Tier 1 (i): Alternatives for Ardee and Dunleer				
(A) Designate Ardee and Dunleer as Self-Sustaining Growth Towns	PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L	
(B) Designate Dunleer as Self-Sustaining Towns		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L
Tier 1 (ii): Alternatives for Dromiskin				
(A) Designate Dromiskin as a Small Town and Village	PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L	
(B) Designate Dromiskin as a Self-Sustaining Town		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L
Tier 1 (iii): Alternatives for 24 Potential "Rural Villages"				
(A) Designate 24 (no.) Level 5 Settlements, "Rural Villages"	PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L	
(B) Do not designate 24 (no.) Level 5 Settlements		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L
(C) Designate 21 (no.) "Rural Villages" but designate Tinure, Lordship and Greenore as "Small Towns and Villages"		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L

¹¹⁰ The alternatives are evaluated using compatibility criteria in order to determine how they would be likely to affect the status of the existing environment and the SEOs. The SEOs and the alternatives are arrayed against each other to demonstrate which interactions would cause effects on specific components of the environment. Where the appraisal identifies an interaction with the status of an SEO the relevant SEO code is entered into the relevant column.

The interactions identified are reflective of likely significant environmental effects:

- Interactions that would be likely to improve the status of a particular SEO would be likely to result in a significant positive effect on the protection/management of the environmental component/issues to which the SEO relates.
- Interactions that would potentially conflict with the status of an SEO and would be likely to be mitigated would be likely to result in a potential significant negative effect however these effects would be likely to be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Plan.

These effects include secondary, cumulative (see also Section 8.2), synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

7.3.3 Assessment of Tier 2: Alternatives for Population Allocations

- (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.

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.

Table 7.4 Assessment¹¹¹ of Tier 2 Alternatives against Strategic Environmental Objectives

Alternative (selected alternative for the Plan in bold)	Likely to Improve status of SEOs		Potential Conflict with status of SEOs – likely to be mitigated	
	to a Greater degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Greater degree
(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.	PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L	
(B) Continued growth of Drogheda and Dundalk with dispersed pattern of growth across the smaller settlements and the open countryside.		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L

¹¹¹ The alternatives are evaluated using compatibility criteria in order to determine how they would be likely to affect the status of the existing environment and the SEOs. The SEOs and the alternatives are arrayed against each other to demonstrate which interactions would cause effects on specific components of the environment. Where the appraisal identifies an interaction with the status of an SEO the relevant SEO code is entered into the relevant column.

The interactions identified are reflective of likely significant environmental effects:

3. Interactions that would be likely to improve the status of a particular SEO would be likely to result in a significant positive effect on the protection/management of the environmental component/issues to which the SEO relates.
4. Interactions that would potentially conflict with the status of an SEO and would be likely to be mitigated would be likely to result in a potential significant negative effect however these effects would be likely to be mitigated by measures which have been integrated into the Plan.

These effects include secondary, cumulative (see also Section 8.2), synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

7.3.4 Assessment of Tier 3: Alternatives for Rural Areas

- (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

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 varied, 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.

Table 7.5 Assessment of Tier 3 Alternatives against Strategic Environmental Objectives

Alternative (selected alternative for the Plan in bold)	Likely to improve status of SEOs		Potential Conflict with status of SEOs – likely to be mitigated	
	to a Greater degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Greater degree
(A) Retain the 6 Development Control Zones for the County as set out in the CDP 2015-2021		BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L		BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L
(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	BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L		BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L	
(C) Have a single Rural Policy Zone for the entire County as follows: Rural Policy Zone – Area under strong urban influence		BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L		BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L

7.3.5 Assessment of Tier 4: Alternatives for Densities

Tier 4 (i): 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

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.

Tier 4 (ii): Alternatives for Self-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

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.

Table 7.6 Assessment of Tier 4 Alternatives against Strategic Environmental Objectives

Alternative (selected alternative for the Plan in bold)	Likely to improve status of SEOs		Potential Conflict with status of SEOs – likely to be mitigated	
	to a Greater degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Greater degree
Tier 4 (i): 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	PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L	
(B) Densities in line with the larger settlements of Drogheda and Dundalk		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L
(C) Densities in line with the lower Level settlements		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L
Tier 4 (ii): Alternatives for Self-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	PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L	
(B) A defined density applicable to all the designated settlements		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L

7.3.6 Assessment of Tier 5: Alternatives for Land Use Zoning

Tier 5 alternatives are assessed on Table 7.7.

Table 7.7 Assessment of Tier 5 Alternatives

Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Likely to <u>Improve</u> status of SEOs			<u>Potential Conflict</u> with status of SEOs – likely to be mitigated			Commentary
		to a <u>Greater</u> degree	to a <u>Moderate</u> degree	to a <u>Lesser</u> degree	to a <u>Lesser</u> degree	to a <u>Moderate</u> degree	to a <u>Greater</u> degree	
Dundalk (Set 1)	New Residential Zoning: A. North, to the north of Castletown River			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L	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	PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			Alternative B provides for sequential development of the town, closes to the existing town centre. Funding has been secured for movement infrastructure
	New Residential Zoning: C. South, to the south of Oriel Park			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L	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	PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			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			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L	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			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L	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	PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			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			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L	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	PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			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.

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Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Likely to Improve status of SEOs			Potential Conflict with status of SEOs – likely to be mitigated			Commentary
		to a Greater degree	to a Moderate degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Moderate degree	to a Greater degree	
Drogheda (Set 3)	Site to the north west of the M1/R168 roundabout A. Tourism and Leisure		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L		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			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L	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	PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			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 A. Tourism and Leisure		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L		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.
	Site to the north west of the N51/R132 roundabout B. Retail Park			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L	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		PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L		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 B 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	PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			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.

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Town	Alternative (selected alternatives in bold)	Likely to Improve status of SEOs			Potential Conflict with status of SEOs – likely to be mitigated			Commentary
		to a Greater degree	to a Moderate degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Lesser degree	to a Moderate degree	to a Greater degree	
	General Employment Zoning: B. Site adjoining the north east of the existing settlement envelope			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L	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			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L	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	PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			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.
Carlingford (Set 1)	A. Site (within Flood Zone A) along Carlingford Lough zoned as New Residential			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L	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	PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			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	PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			Site Alternative A has less sensitivities than site alternative A – including flood risk, ecological and visual sensitivities.
	B. Site adjoining the south of the existing settlement envelope and coast			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L	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			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L	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	PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			PHH MA A C BFF S W CH L			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.

7.4 Selected Alternatives for the Plan

Selected alternatives for the Plan that emerged from the planning/SEA process are indicated on Table 7.8 below.

These alternatives have been selected and developed by the Planning Team and placed on public display by the Council having regard to both:

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

Table 7.8 Selected Alternatives for the Draft Plan

Tier	Alternatives Considered	Selected Alternative
Tier 1: Alternatives for Positioning under the Settlement Hierarchy	Tier 1 (i): Alternatives for Ardee and Dunleer: (A) Designate Ardee and Dunleer as Self-Sustaining Growth Towns (B) Designate Dunleer as Self-Sustaining Towns	(A) Designate Ardee and Dunleer as Self-Sustaining Growth Towns
	Tier 1 (ii): Alternatives for Dromiskin: (A) Designate Dromiskin as a Small Town and Village (B) Designate Dromiskin as a Self-Sustaining Town	(A) Designate Dromiskin as a Small Town and Village
	Tier 1 (iii): Alternatives for 24 Potential "Rural Villages": (A) Designate 24 (no.) Level 5 Settlements, "Rural Villages" 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 Villages" but designate Tinure, Lordship and Greenore as "Small Towns and Villages"	(A) Designate 24 (no.) Level 5 Settlements, "Rural Villages" dispersed throughout the County to meet rural generated housing needs.
Tier 2: Alternatives for Population Allocations	(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.	(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.
Tier 3: Alternatives for Rural Areas	(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	(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
Tier 4: Alternatives for Densities	Tier 4 (i): 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	(A) Densities applicable to the Settlements are min 35/ha in the town centre and min 25/ha at the edge of centre
	Tier 4 (ii): Alternatives for Self-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	(A) The density of development will be reflective of the character of the settlement and the existing pattern of development in the area
Tier 5: Land Use Zoning	Dundalk (Set 1) New Residential Zoning: A. North, to the north of Castletown River B. Along Mount Avenue C. South, to the south of Oriel Park	New Residential Zoning: B. Along Mount Avenue General Site to the north west of the M1/R168 roundabout Site to the north west of the N51/R132 roundabout
	Dundalk (Set 2) General Employment Zoning: A. Northern site, along N52 B. North Western site along R177	Employment Zoning: A. Northern site, along N52
	Drogheda (Set 1) A. Site (within Flood Zone A) along the Boyne zoned as New Residential B. Site (within Flood Zone A) along the Boyne zoned as Open Space	B. Site (within Flood Zone A) along the Boyne zoned as Open Space
	Drogheda (Set 2) Westgate Area Zoning A. Town or Village Centre B. Regeneration	Westgate Area Zoning B. Regeneration

Tier	Alternatives Considered	Selected Alternative
	Drogheda (Set 3) Site to the north west of the M1/R168 roundabout A. Tourism and Leisure B. Retail Park C. Do not include in the settlement plan boundary	C. Do not include in the settlement plan boundary
	Drogheda (Set 4) Site to the north west of the N51/R132 roundabout A. Tourism and Leisure roundabout B. Retail Park C. Do not include in the settlement plan boundary	A. Tourism and Leisure
	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 B. Strategic Reserve for eastern site (with open space provided in flood areas), New Residential for western site	A. New Residential for eastern site (with open space provided in flood areas), Strategic Reserve for western site
	Dunleer (Set 1) General Employment Zoning: A. Site adjoining the south west of the existing settlement envelope B. Site adjoining the north east of the existing settlement envelope	General Employment Zoning: A. Site adjoining the south west of the existing settlement envelope
	Baltray (Set 1) A. Sites (within Flood Zone A) along the Boyne Estuary zoned as New Residential B. Sites (within Flood Zone A) along the Boyne Estuary zoned as Open Space	B. Sites (within Flood Zone A) along the Boyne Estuary zoned as Open Space
	Carlingford (Set 1) A. Site (within Flood Zone A) along Carlingford Lough zoned as New Residential B. Site (within Flood Zone A) along Carlingford Lough zoned as Open Space	B. Site (within Flood Zone A) along Carlingford Lough zoned as Open Space
	Clogherhead (Set 1) General Employment Zoning: A. Site adjoining the west of the existing settlement envelope B. Site adjoining the south of the existing settlement envelope and coast	General Employment Zoning: A. Site adjoining the west of the existing settlement envelope
	Tallanstown (Set 1) A. Site (within Flood Zone A) adjacent to centre zoned as New Residential B. Site (within Flood Zone A) adjacent to centre zoned as Open Space	B. Site (within Flood Zone A) adjacent to centre zoned as Open Space

Section 8 Evaluation of Draft Plan and Proposed Material Alterations

8.1 Introduction

This section provides an assessment of environmental effects using the information on the current state of the environment (provided in Section 4) and the Strategic Environmental Objectives (see Table 8.1) from implementation of the Draft Plan and Proposed Material Alterations.

The degree of significance of effects occurring cannot be fully determined at this level of decision making due to the lack of exact detail available with regard to the type or scale of development that will be permitted under the Plan. However, a strategic assessment can be undertaken.

Table 8.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives¹¹²

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	BFF	No net contribution to biodiversity losses or deterioration	- To preserve, protect, maintain and, where appropriate, enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, particularly EU designated sites and protected species - Ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function - Safeguard national, regional and local designated sites and supporting features which function as stepping stones for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species - Enhance biodiversity in line with the National Biodiversity Strategy and its targets - To protect, maintain and conserve the County's natural capital
Population and Human Health	PHH	Improve quality of life for all ages and abilities based on high-quality, serviced, well connected and sustainable residential, working, educational and recreational environments	- Promote economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable development and environmental protection and management - Ensure that existing population and planned growth is matched with the required public infrastructure and the required services - Safeguard the County's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being
Soil (and Land)	S	Ensure the long-term sustainable management of land	- Protect soils against pollution, and prevent degradation of the soil resource - Promote the sustainable use of infill and brownfield sites over the use of greenfield within the County - Safeguard areas of prime agricultural land and designated geological sites
Water	W	Protection, improvement and sustainable management of the water resource	- Ensure that the status of water bodies is protected, maintained and improved in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and Marine Strategy Framework Directive - Ensure that economic growth of the marine resource and its ecosystems are managed sustainably - Ensure water resources are sustainably managed to deliver proposed regional and County growth targets in the context of existing and projected water supply and waste water capacity constraints ensuring the protection of receiving environments - Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and areas that are vulnerable to current and future erosion, particularly coastal areas - Integrate sustainable water management solutions (such as SuDS, porous surfacing and green roofs) into development proposals
Material Assets	MA	Sustainable and efficient use of natural resources	- Optimise existing infrastructure and provide new infrastructure to match population distribution proposals in the County - Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all which encourages a broad energy generation mix to ensure security of supply – wind, wave solar, tidal, biomass, energy from waste and traditional fossil fuels - Promote the circular economy, reduce waste, and increase energy efficiencies - Ensure there is adequate sewerage and drainage infrastructure in place to support new development - Reduce the energy demand from the transport sector and support moves to electrification of road and rail transport modes - Encourage the transition to a zero-carbon economy by facilitating the development of a grid infrastructure to support renewables and international connectivity. Reduce the average energy consumption per capita including promoting energy efficient buildings, retrofitting, smart- buildings, cities and grids

¹¹² See also Section 5

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
Air	A	Support clean air policies that reduce the impact of air pollution on the environment and public health	- To avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole resulting from emissions to air from all sectors with particular reference to emissions from transport, residential heating, industry and agriculture. - Maintain and promote continuing improvement in air quality through the reduction of emissions and promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency. - Promote continuing improvement in air quality. - Reduction of emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, ammonia and fine particulate matter which are responsible for acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone pollution - Meet Air Quality Directive standards for the protection of human health — Air Quality Directive - Significantly decrease noise pollution by 2020 and move closer to WHO recommended levels.
Climatic Factors	C	Achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient economy that is cognisant of environmental impacts	- To minimise emissions of greenhouse gasses. - Integrate sustainable design solutions into the County's infrastructure (e.g. energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure). - Contribute towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with national targets. - Promote development resilient to the effects of climate change - Promote the use of renewable energy, energy efficient development and increased use of public transport
Cultural Heritage	CH	Safeguard cultural heritage features and their settings through responsible design and positioning of development	Protect places, features, buildings and landscapes of cultural, archaeological or architectural heritage
Landscape	L	Protect and enhance the landscape character	To implement the Plan's framework for identification, assessment, protection, management and planning of landscapes having regard to the European Landscape Convention

8.2 Cumulative Effects

Cumulative effects are one of the types of effects which have been considered by the assessment of the alternatives. Cumulative effects can be described as the addition of many small impacts to create one larger, more significant, impact.

There are two types of potential cumulative effects that have been considered, namely:

Potential *intra-Plan* cumulative effects - these arise from the interactions between different types of potential environmental effects resulting from a plan, programme, etc. Where there are elevated levels of environmental sensitivities (such as those identified under Section 4), future development could result in environmental conflicts and lead to a deterioration in environmental integrity. The interrelationships between environmental components that help determine these potential effects are identified on Table 8.2

- Table 8.2 e.g. interrelationships between: human health and water quality; human health and air quality; human health and flood risk; and ecology and water quality.
- Potential *inter-Plan* cumulative effects - these arise when the effects of the implementation of one plan occur in combination with those of other plans, programmes, developments, etc.

Effects that may arise as a result of implementing the Plan, to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate, have been mitigated to the extent that the only residual adverse effects likely to occur as a result of implementation of the Plan are those which are identified under Table 8.3.

Other policies, plans and programmes that have been considered by the assessment of effects include those which are detailed under Section 2.8 (and associated Appendix I "Relationship with Legislation, Plans and Programmes"), Section 4 and Section 5. Plans and programmes from various sectors will interact with the Plan, including those relating to land use planning. These plans and programmes are subject to their own environmental assessment requirements as relevant. Examples include:

- Land use policy, plans and programmes (e.g. the National Planning Framework, the Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, adjoining County Development Plans and Local Area Plans)

- Louth Local Economic and Community Plan and the Local Economic and Community Plans of adjoining counties;
- Energy policy, plans and programmes (e.g. Grid25 and associated Implementation Programme, Ireland's National Renewable Energy Action Plan 2010, Strategy for Renewable Energy 2012-2020, Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan, Draft National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030 and the Renewable Electricity Policy and Development Framework);
- Climate related policy, plans and programmes (e.g. the National Climate Policy Position and Climate Action 2014, Low Carbon Development Act 2015 and White Paper Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015, Climate Action Plan 2019, the National Adaptation Framework 2018, National Mitigation Plan 2017, and the Louth Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024 and Climate Action Charter 2019);
- Water services, waste management, transport and energy infrastructure plans (e.g. Irish Water's Water Services Strategic Plan and associated Capital Investment Plan, Eastern-Midlands Regional Waste Management Plan and Transportation Policies and Strategies); and
- Environmental protection and management plans (e.g. River Basin Management Plan, emerging Marine Spatial Plan and Flood Risk Management Plans).

Potential cumulative/in combination effects include:

- Contributions towards reductions in travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air, reductions in consumption from non-renewables and associated achievement of legally binding targets (in combination with plans and programmes from all sectors, including energy, transport and land use planning) as a result of facilitating:
 - o sustainable compact growth;
 - o sustainable mobility/a shift from motorised transport modes to more sustainable and non-motorised transport modes; and
 - o renewable energy development.
- Contributions towards travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air (in combination with plans and programmes from all sectors, including transport and land use planning) as a result of facilitating development which must be accompanied by road capacity;
- Facilitation of new development that is accompanied by appropriate levels of water services thereby contributing towards environmental protection;
- Need for and use of water and waste water treatment capacity arising from new developments and associated potential adverse effects;
- Potential cumulative effects upon surface and ground water status as a result of housing, employment, agricultural and forestry – loadings and abstractions;
- Potential cumulative effects (habitat damage, enhancing ecological connectivity, contributing towards sustainable mobility) arising from linear developments, such as those relating to Green Infrastructure, including beyond the County border;
- Potential cumulative effects on flood risk by, for example, development of greenfield lands or obstruction of flood paths; and
- In combination with plans and programmes from all sectors potential adverse effects on all environmental components arising from all development in greenfield and brownfield areas (e.g. infrastructural, residential, economic, agricultural etc.). The type of these effects is consistent with those described on Table 8.3. These plans and programmes are required to comply with environmental legislation and undergo SEA and AA as relevant comply with environmental legislation while projects are subject to EIA and AA, as relevant.

These effects would have the potential, if unmitigated, if they occurred, to result in changes in the environment within and beyond County Louth.

A variety of the issues covered by the Draft Plan provisions are regional issues which are considered: at Regional Assembly level, in the Eastern and Midland RSES and by planning authorities across the Region. The solutions to these issues are often regional solutions which are subject their own consenting procedures. Works arising outside of the Plan as a result of providing for new development within the County including those arising as a result of the cumulative provision of development in the wider Eastern and Midland region would potentially conflict with a number of environmental components, across the wider Eastern and Midland region and beyond, including: ecology, soil function, the status of water bodies and the landscape. Some of these conflicts would be mitigated by measures

which will be integrated into the Plan while some will be mitigated by measures arising out of separate consent procedures.

8.3 Appropriate Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening and Stage 2 AA are being undertaken alongside the Plan and Proposed Material Alterations. The requirement for AA is provided under the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 1992/43/EEC).

The emerging 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.¹¹³

The Proposed Material Alterations are accompanied by an AA Natura Impact Report, which has informed this SEA Environmental Report.

SFRA is being undertaken to inform the preparation of the Draft Plan and the Proposed Material Alterations. The SFRA process has informed this report.

The SFRA has considered the Proposed Material Alterations and finds that all Proposed Material Alterations, apart from one, comply with “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities” (DEHLG/OPW, 2009). Proposed Material Alteration Reference 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.

8.4 Interrelationship between Environmental Components

The SEA Directive requires the Environmental Report to include information on the likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, fauna, flora, population, human health, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors.

Likely significant effects on environmental components which are identified include those which are interrelated; implementation of the Plan and associated Proposed Material Alterations will not affect the interrelationships between these components. The presence of significant interrelationships between environmental components is identified on Table 8.2.

¹¹³ 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.

Table 8.2 Presence of Interrelationships between Environmental Components

Component	Biodiversity, flora and fauna	Population and human health	Soil	Water	Air and Climatic factors	Material assets	Cultural heritage	Landscape
Biodiversity, flora and fauna		No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Population and Human Health			Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Soil				Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Water					No	Yes	No	No
Air and Climatic Factors						Yes	No	No
Material Assets							Yes	Yes
Cultural Heritage								Yes
Landscape								

8.5 Overall Evaluation (including Transboundary) of Draft Plan Provisions to which the Proposed Material Alterations Relate (from SEA Environmental Report October 2020)

Louth County Council have integrated various recommendations arising from the SEA, AA and SFRA processes into the Draft Plan (see Section 9). Table 8.3 provides a detailed overall evaluation of the environmental effects arising from the Plan. The effects encompass all in-combination/cumulative effects arising from implementation of the Plan. The potentially significant adverse environmental effects (if unmitigated) arising from implementation of the Plan are detailed as are residual effects, taking into account mitigation through both provisions integrated into the Plan – see Section 9.

The scope of the assessment (including description of baseline, the relationship to other plans and programmes and the evaluation of effects) has considered the environment of both Ireland and Northern Ireland. Taking into account, *inter alia*, the detailed mitigation which has been integrated into the Draft Plan (including that which is identified at Section 9), it has been determined that significant residual adverse environmental effects as a result of implementing the Draft Plan will not occur in either Ireland or Northern Ireland.

Environmental impacts which occur will be determined by the nature and extent of multiple or individual projects and site-specific environmental factors. Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO) codes are taken from Table 8.1.

Table 8.3 Overall Evaluation (including Transboundary) – Effects arising from the Draft Plan

Table 6.10 Overall Evaluation (including Transboundary) – Effects arising from the Draft Plan				
Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the wider planning framework			SEO Codes
	Effects include in-combination effects that are planned for through the wider planning framework including the NPF and associated NDP 2018, the Eastern and Midland RSES, adjacent Development Plans and lower-tier land use plans.			
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potentially Significant Adverse Environmental Effects, if unmitigated	Likely Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna	• Contribution towards protection of ecology (including designated sites, ecological connectivity, habitats) by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond. • Contribution towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and associated ecosystem services, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats. • Contribution towards protection and/or maintenance of biodiversity and flora and fauna by contributing towards the protection of natural capital including the environmental vectors of air, water and soil. Biodiversity and flora and fauna includes biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites, Wildlife Sites and Areas of Special Scientific Interest) and Annexed habitats and species (including birds and bats), listed/protected species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats (including terrestrial and aquatic habitats), and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna – including terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity and flora and fauna. • Sustains existing sustainable rural management practices – and the communities who support them – to ensure the continuation of long-established managed landscapes and the flora and fauna that they contain.	Arising from both construction and operation of development and associated infrastructure: • Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites, Wildlife Sites and Areas of Special Scientific Interest) 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.	• Loss of an extent of non-protected habitats and species arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces. • Losses or damage to ecology (these would be in compliance with relevant legislation).	BFF

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the wider planning framework Effects include in-combination effects that are planned for through the wider planning framework including the NPF and associated NDP 2018, the Eastern and Midland RSES, adjacent Development Plans and lower-tier land use plans.			SEO Codes
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potentially Significant Adverse Environmental Effects, if unmitigated	Likely Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
Population and Human Health	- Promotion of economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable development and environmental protection and management. - Contribution towards appropriate provision of infrastructure and services to existing population and planned growth by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond - Contribution towards the protection of human health by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond. - Contributes towards protection of human health as a result of contributing towards the protection of natural capital including environmental vectors, including air and water.	- Potential adverse effects arising from flood events. - Potential interactions if effects arising from environmental vectors.	Potential interactions with residual effects on environmental vectors – please refer to residual adverse effects under “Soil”, “Water” and “Air and Climatic Factors” below.	PHH
Soil	- Contribution towards the protection of soils (including those used for agriculture) and designated sites of geological heritage by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond. - Contribution towards the protection of the environment from contamination the highest standards of remediation, and where appropriate consultations with the EPA and other relevant bodies, will be required to resolve any instances of environmental pollution created by contaminated land.	- Potential adverse effects on the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource, including as a result of development on contaminated lands. - Potential for riverbank and coastal erosion.	Loss of an extent of soil function arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces.	S

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Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the wider planning framework			SEO Codes
	Effects include in-combination effects that are planned for through the wider planning framework including the NPF and associated NDP 2018, the Eastern and Midland RSES, adjacent Development Plans and lower-tier land use plans.			
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potentially Significant Adverse Environmental Effects, if unmitigated	Likely Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
Water	• Contribution towards the protection of water by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-serviced lands elsewhere in the County and beyond. • Contributions towards the protection of water resources including the status of surface and groundwaters and water-based designations. • Contribution towards flood risk management and appropriate drainage.	• 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. • Increase in flood risk and associated effects associated with flood events.	• Any increased loadings as a result of development to comply with the River Basin Management Plan. • Flood related risks remain due to uncertainty with regard to extreme weather events – however such risks will be mitigated by measures that have been integrated into the Plan.	W
Material Assets	• Contribution towards appropriate provision of infrastructure and services to existing population and planned growth by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-serviced lands elsewhere in the County and beyond. • Contribution towards compliance with national and regional water services and waste management policies. • Contribution towards increase in renewable energy use by facilitating renewable energy and electricity transmission infrastructure developments. • Contribution towards limits in increases in energy demand from the transport sector by facilitating sustainable compact growth. • Contribution towards reductions in average energy consumption per capita including promoting energy efficient buildings, retrofitting, smart buildings, cities and grids.	• 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 development with adequate drinking water (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts). • 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.	• Exceedance of capacity in critical infrastructure risks remain, including due to uncertainty with regard to climate – however, such risks will be mitigated by: measures, including those requiring the timely provision of critical infrastructure, and compliance with the Water Framework Directive and associated River Basin Management Plan. • Residual wastes to be disposed of in line with higher-level waste management policies. • Any impacts upon public assets and infrastructure to comply with statutory planning/consent-granting framework.	MA

SEA Environmental Report for relevant Proposed Material Alterations the Draft Louth CDP 2021-2027				
Environmental Component	Environmental Effects, in combination with the wider planning framework			SEO Codes
	Effects include in-combination effects that are planned for through the wider planning framework including the NPF and associated NDP 2018, the Eastern and Midland RSES, adjacent Development Plans and lower-tier land use plans.			
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potentially Significant Adverse Environmental Effects, if unmitigated	Likely Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects	
Air and Climatic Factors	- Contribution towards climate mitigation and adaptation by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond. - In combination with other plans, programmes etc., contribution towards the objectives of the wide policy framework relating to climate mitigation and adaptation, and associated contribution towards maintaining and improving air quality and managing noise levels, including through measures relating to: - Sustainable compact growth; - Sustainable mobility, including walking, cycling and public transport; - Drainage, flood risk management and resilience; - Sectors including agriculture, residential heating and infrastructure; - Sustainable infrastructure design solutions including energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure).	- 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 adaptation measures including those relating to flood risk management.	- An extent of travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air. This has been mitigated by provisions which have been integrated into the Plan, including those relating to sustainable compact growth and sustainable mobility. - Interactions between noise emissions and sensitive receptors. Various provisions have been integrated into the Plan to ensure that noise levels at sensitive receptors will be minimised.	AC
Cultural Heritage	- Contributes towards protection of cultural heritage elsewhere in the County by facilitating development within existing settlements. - Contributes towards protection of cultural heritage within existing settlements by facilitating brownfield development and regeneration.	Potential effects on protected and unknown archaeology ¹¹⁴ and protected architecture ¹¹⁵ arising from construction and operation activities.	Potential effects on known architectural and archaeological heritage and unknown archaeology however, these will occur in compliance with legislation.	CH
Landscape	Contributes towards protection of wider landscape and landscape designations by facilitating development within existing settlements.	Occurrence of adverse visual impacts and conflicts with the appropriate protection of designations relating to the landscape.	Landscapes will change overtime as a result of natural changes in vegetation cover combined with new developments that will occur in compliance with the Plan's landscape protection measures.	L

¹¹⁴ 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.

¹¹⁵ 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.

8.6 Detailed Evaluation¹¹⁶

For an explanation of SEO codes e.g. **BFF**, **PHH**, **S**, **W**, etc. refer to Table 8.1 on page 92.

The following applies to the evaluation below:

The Plan, to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate, is situated in a hierarchy of documents setting out public policy setting out public policy for, among other things, land use planning, infrastructure, sustainable development, tourism, environmental protection and environmental management, such as the National Planning Framework, the National Development Plan, the National Mitigation Plan, the National Adaptation Framework, the Climate Action Plan and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region (for additional detail please refer to Section 2.8 *“Relationship with other relevant Plans and Programmes”* in this report).

These other existing policies, plans etc. have been subject to their own environmental assessment processes, as relevant, and already provide for various measures that have been compiled into the Plan. The Plan aligns with these documents and will be incorporated into the review and preparation of these documents.

Lower tier plans and projects must be consistent and comply with the provisions of the Plan and of these other policies, plans etc. and will be subject to their own project level EIA and AA requirements as relevant. An assessment of cumulative effects is provided at Section 8.2 of this report.

Any potential transboundary effects would be mitigated to the extent that they would not be significant.

Alteration Ref.	Commentary	Likely to Improve status of SEOs	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs – unlikely to be fully mitigated	Mitigated Conflicts	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs above those already identified for the original Draft Plan
L3-2 L3-5 L3-6 L3-7 L4-9 L5-1 L5-2 L5-3 L5-4 L5-5 L5-6 L5-7 L5-8 L5-9 L5-11 L5-12 L5-13 DROG2	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: - 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 Where such alterations are beyond the established settlement envelope, potentially significant adverse effects would be likely to include: - Difficulty in providing adequate and appropriate waste water treatment as a result of zoning outside of established built development envelopes of settlements		BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L		

¹¹⁶ The Proposed Material Alterations are evaluated using compatibility criteria in order to determine how they would be likely to affect the status of the existing environment and the SEOs. The SEOs and the Proposed Material Alterations are arrayed against each other in order to demonstrate which interactions would cause effects on specific components of the environment. Where the appraisal identifies an interaction with the status of an SEO the relevant SEO code is entered into the relevant column.

The interactions identified are reflective of likely significant environmental effects:

- Interactions that would be likely to improve the status of a particular SEO would be likely to result in a significant positive effect on the protection/management of the environmental component/issues to which the SEO relates.
- Interactions that would potentially conflict with the status of an SEO and would be likely to be mitigated would be likely to result in a potential significant negative effect however these effects would be likely to be mitigated by measures which have already been integrated into the Plan.

These effects include secondary, cumulative (see also Section 8.2), synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.

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Alteration Ref.	Commentary	Likely to improve status of SEOs	Probable Conflict with status of SEOs – unlikely to be fully mitigated	Mitigated Conflicts	No Likely interaction with status of SEOs above those already identified for the original Draft Plan
DLK1 DLK4 DLK7 DLK13 DLK14 DLK15 DLK16 DLK17 DLK18 ARD1 ARD3 DLR1 DLR2 DLR3	- 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 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.				
23 25	It was determined prudent to undertake SEA on these Proposed Material Alterations as Stage 2 AA was undertaken. Taking into account the measures that have been already integrated into the Draft Plan that provide for and contribute towards environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development, the AA process identified that there is no potential for effects to arise on the integrity of any European site as a result of all Proposed Material Alterations apart from Proposed Material Alteration Reference No. 25¹¹⁷, which has the potential, if unmitigated, to impact upon integrity of the Dundalk Bay SAC and SPA. Furthermore, the AA screening process takes into account the need to undertake Stage 2 AA when mitigation is being proposed. As certain Proposed Material Alterations (Proposed Material Alteration Reference No. 23¹¹⁸ and 25) could be considered to be mitigation in relation to Plan elements that could potentially affect the integrity of European sites, further to the mitigation already integrated into the Draft Plan, Stage 2 AA was undertaken.	BFF		BFF	PHH S W MA A C CH L
44	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		BFF PHH S W MA A C CH L		

¹¹⁷ This Proposed Material Alteration is to insert additional text into Policy Objective SS 32 as follows (new text in bold): To develop a network of green areas throughout the town, building on existing green infrastructure, and advancing the delivery of the Great Eastern Greenway along the coast **incorporating the delivery of greenway and pedestrian infrastructure on both sides of the Castletown River, while maintaining the integrity of the Dundalk Bay Natura 2000 sites.**

¹¹⁸ This Proposed Material Alteration is to insert additional text into Policy Objective SS 18 as follows (new text in bold): To develop a network of green areas throughout the town including the delivery of a greenway along the northern and southern banks of the River Boyne stretching from Townley Hall to Baltray and Oldbridge to Mornington in County Meath **while maintaining the integrity of the Boyne Natura 2000 sites.**

Section 9 Mitigation Measures

9.1 Introduction

Mitigation measures are measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse impacts on the environment of implementing the Plan. These measures also apply to Proposed Material Alterations.

Various environmental sensitivities and issues have been communicated to the Council through the SEA, Appropriate Assessment (AA) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) processes. By certain recommendations from the assessments into the Plan, the Council have ensured that both the beneficial environmental effects of implementing the Plan have been and will be maximised and that potential adverse effects have been and will be avoided, reduced or offset.

Mitigation was achieved through the:

- Strategic work undertaken by the Council to ensure contribution towards environmental protection and sustainable development;
- Considering alternatives for the Plan to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate;
- Integration of environmental considerations into zoning provisions of the Plan to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate; and
- Integration of individual SEA, AA and SFRA provisions into the text of the Plan to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate.

9.2 Strategic work undertaken by the Council to ensure contribution towards environmental protection and sustainable development

Far in advance of both the submission of the pre-Draft Plan to the Elected Members for approval and the placing of the Draft Plan on public display, Louth County Council undertook various works in order to inform the preparation of the Plan.

The findings of this strategic work have been integrated into the Plan and will contribute towards both environmental protection and management and sustainable development within the County.

Strategic work undertaken by the Council includes background work in relation to Plan Strategies and other provisions for a variety of sectors, including:

- Strategic Environmental Assessment;
- Appropriate Assessment;
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment;
- Core Strategy;
- Housing Strategy;
- Retail Strategy;
- Infrastructure Strategy;
- Green Infrastructure Strategy;
- Record of Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas;

- Landscape Designations;
- Economic Development;
- Energy and Utilities;
- Climate Action; and
- Movement.

9.3 Consideration of Alternatives

Although strategic alternatives in relation to the content of the Plan were significantly limited for the Plan (see Section 6), as part of the Plan preparation/SEA process, the Council considered a number of alternatives for the Draft Plan to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate.

These alternatives were assessed by the SEA process (see Section 7) and the findings of this assessment informed the selection of preferred alternatives, facilitating an informed choice with respect to the type of Plan that was prepared and placed on public display.

9.4 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 Midland RSES.

The detailed Plan preparation process undertaken by the Planning Department combined with specialist input from the SFRA process sought to facilitate 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 the overlay mapping of environmental sensitivities.

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

Various provisions have been integrated into the text of the Plan through the Plan-preparation and SEA, SFRA and AA processes. Both the Planning and the assessment teams contributed towards the mitigation which was developed over multiple iterations and was informed by, inter alia, various communications through the SEA, AA and SFRA processes. These measures also apply to Proposed Material Alterations.

Table 9.1 links key mitigation measure(s) to the likely significant effects of implementing the Plan, if unmitigated. 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.

Table 9.1 Integration of Environmental Considerations into the Plan

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Draft Plan, included in: (this text will be updated at adoption of the Plan to take account of any Alterations/Modifications made)
All	Various	1.7.2 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), as required under the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004, is being 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 from 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. 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. 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.
All	Various	1.7.5 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION The development objectives in the development 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 Draft Plan (Volume 5 of the Draft plan provides associated documents detailing the findings). All recommendations made by these processes have been integrated into this Draft Plan and this will contribute towards environmental conservation and protection within the County and beyond. Ecosystems Services Approach and Natural Capital In preparing the Draft Plan and developing policy objectives, the Council have followed these Ecosystem Services¹¹⁹ 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.

¹¹⁹ 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 Draft Plan, included in: (this text will be updated at adoption of the Plan to take account of any Alterations/Modifications made)
		In recognition of the need to manage natural capital ¹²⁰ , provisions have been integrated into the Plan that will contribute towards management of air quality, noise pollution, light pollution, water quality and integrated catchment management.
Biodiversity and flora and fauna	Arising from both construction and operation of development and associated infrastructure: • Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites, Wildlife Sites and Areas of Special Scientific Interest) 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	Designated and Non-Designated Sites NBG 1 To promote the implementation of the Draft Louth Heritage Plan 2020-2025 and any Louth Heritage Plan subsequently adopted during the lifetime of this Plan. NBG2 To promote and implement the objectives of the Draft Louth Biodiversity Action Plan 2020-2025 and any subsequent Biodiversity Action Plan adopted during the lifetime of this Plan. NBG 3 To protect and conserve Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives. 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” 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 projects¹²¹ 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. NBG 12 Prevent and control the spread of invasive plant and animal species within the County. 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. 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. 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. ENV 36 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. ENV 37 To retain and protect significant stands of existing trees/ hedgerows/woodlands, and seek increased planting of native trees, where appropriate, in new developments ENV 38 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. ENV 31 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.

¹²⁰ Renewable and non-renewable resources (e.g. plants, animals, air, water, soils, minerals)

¹²¹ 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 Draft Plan, included in: (this text will be updated at adoption of the Plan to take account of any Alterations/Modifications made)
	displacement of protected species such as birds and bats.	Peatlands, Wetlands, Watercourses NBG 19 To ensure that an appropriate level of ecological assessment is carried out for proposals involving drainage, infill or reclamation of wetland habitats. 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 any subsequent versions thereof. NBG 21 To support the implementation of recommendations included in the Louth Wetland Survey and any subsequent versions thereof. NBG 22 To support the implementation of recommendations contained in the National Peatlands Strategy in 2015 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 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. Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows NBG 29 To protect trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders and seek to designate additional Tree Preservations Orders (TPO), where appropriate. 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. 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 4:1 where the removal of trees is required in order to facilitate development. 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. 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 5. 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. NBG 35 To encourage initiatives supporting private and community driven native tree and woodland planting schemes throughout the County, utilising available funding schemes. Green Infrastructure 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. NBG 42 To require the use of and develop the green infrastructure network 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. Invasive Species NBG 12 Prevent and control the spread of invasive plant and animal species within the County. 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.

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		Light Pollution 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. ENV 9 To require all details of on-site lighting associated with all future development are submitted to and agreed with the planning authority. ENV 10 To promote the use of low energy LED (or equivalent) lighting in support of Climate Action. ENV 11 To implement a hierarchy of light intensity zone as required in development schemes to ensure that environmental impact is minimised as far as possible particularly in areas proximate to ecological corridors. Increases in visitor numbers 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. 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. Policy TO 19 shall be subject to compliance with all relevant EU Policies such as the Water Framework, Birds, Habitats, SEA and EIA Directives. 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. 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.
Population and human health	- Potential adverse effects arising from flood events. - Potential interactions if effects arising from environmental vectors.	Also see measures under other environmental components including Soil, Water and Air and Climatic Factors. Human Health 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 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. 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). 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. Major Accidents Directive – Seveso III ENV 26 To comply with the SEVESO II Directive in reducing the risk and limiting the potential consequences of major industrial accidents. ENV 27 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. ENV 28 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). Radon 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 that may be published within the lifetime of this Plan). Wind Farms IU 52 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.
Soil	Potential adverse effects on the hydrogeological and ecological	Also see measures under other environmental components including Water. Soil Protection and Contamination 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.

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	function of the soil resource, including as a result of development on contaminated lands. Potential for riverbank and coastal erosion.	Geology and Quarries NBG 16 Support the designation of qualifying sites of geological interest listed in Table 8.4 as Natural Heritage Areas. 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. NBG 18 To promote awareness, where appropriate, of areas of geological interest, including the provision of access and interpretation where desirable and feasible. ENV 40 To ensure that all existing and proposed quarries comply with the requirements of the document Quarry and Ancillary Facilities – Guidelines for Planning 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. ENV 42 To prevent development that would hinder the efficient or effective recovery of the County's aggregate resources. ENV 44 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; - 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; - Sensitive Landscapes - World Heritage Sites - Tentative World Heritage Sites ENV 46 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. Coastal and Riverbank Erosion ENV 49 To require that all proposed developments within 100m of the coastline of Louth, outside the main settlements 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. ENV 50 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. ENV 51 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. ENV 52 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. ENV 53 To employ soft engineering techniques as an alternative to hard coastal defence works, wherever possible. ENV 54 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. IU 23 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.
Water	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	Also see measures under other environmental components including Soil and Material Assets. Water Quality/Status ENV 15 To implement the recommendations contained in the River Basin District Management Plans for Ireland 2018-2021 or any subsequent plan adopted during the lifetime of the 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. 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. 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. 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. ENV 19 To implement the requirements of the Groundwater Protection Scheme to protect known and potential ground water reserves.

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	quality, flow and/or morphology. • Increase in flood risk and associated effects associated with flood events.	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. 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. 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. 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. ENV 32 To encourage forestry and forestry related development, as a means of diversifying from traditional agriculture activity with a preference for native species. ENV 33 To encourage access to forestry and woodlands, including private forestry, in cooperation with stakeholders for walking routes, bridle paths, mountain biking, nature walks, orienteering, hiking, recreational areas and other similar facilities. ENV 34 To promote the avoidance of deforestation or commercial afforestation within European sites unless directly relating to the management of the site for its qualifying interests. ENV 35 To support the development of appropriate and sustainable tourism development within forestry locations, while retaining adequate tree cover in the general area. ENV 36 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. ENV 37 To retain and protect significant stands of existing trees/ hedgerows/woodlands, and seek increased planting of native trees, where appropriate, in new developments ENV 38 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. ENV 39 In accordance with the National Climate Action Plan 2019 (or any subsequent Plan) Louth County Council shall promote sustainable forestry development of appropriate scale within the County in order to address climate action directly through carbon sequestration and indirectly through the displacement of fossil fuel. ENV 40 To ensure that all existing and proposed quarries comply with the requirements of the document Quarry and Ancillary Facilities – Guidelines for Planning 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. ENV 41 To facilitate adequate supplies of aggregate resources to meet the future growth needs of the County and the wider region while addressing key environmental, traffic and social impacts and details of rehabilitation. ENV 42 To prevent development that would hinder the efficient or effective recovery of the County's aggregate resources. ENV 43 To ensure that extractive developments do not adversely impact on environmental quality, including water quality, tourism value, existing infrastructure, residential amenity or the amenity value of neighbouring lands. ENV 44 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; • 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; • Sensitive Landscapes • World Heritage Sites • Tentative World Heritage Sites ENV 45 To ensure that developments associated with the extractive industry minimise adverse impacts on the road network in the area and that the full cost of road improvements, including during operations and at time of closure which were necessary to facilitate such development are borne by the extractive industry. ENV 46 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. ENV 47 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. ENV 48 To support and accommodate any change to the marine spatial planning system which is proposed under the Marine Planning and Development Management Bill 2019 (or any subsequent Bill) once enacted into law.

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		ENV 49 To require that all proposed developments within 100m of the coastline of Louth, outside the main settlements 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. ENV 50 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. ENV 51 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. ENV 52 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. ENV 53 To employ soft engineering techniques as an alternative to hard coastal defence works, wherever possible. ENV 54 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. ENV 55 To protect the special character of the coast by preventing inappropriate development, particularly on the seaward side of coastal roads. New development, wherever possible, shall be accommodated within existing developed areas and be climate resilient in their design. ENV 56 To strictly control the nature and pattern of development within coastal areas and ensure that it is designed and landscaped to the highest standards, and sited appropriately so as not to detract from the visual amenity of the area. Development shall be prohibited where the development poses a significant or potential threat to coastal habitats or features, and/or where the development is likely to result in altered patterns of erosion or deposition elsewhere along the coast. ENV 57 To prohibit development along the coast outside existing urban areas where such development is not adequately safeguarded over the lifetime of the development without the need to construct additional coastal defences. ENV 58 To protect the excellent status classification of identified bathing water areas within County Louth. ENV 59 To encourage proposals that promote sustainable development of water-based sports and marine recreation in coastal areas and on river systems across the County providing there is no cause of significant adverse impacts on the environment, visual amenity and heritage. ENV 60 To support proposals that improve access to marine and coastal resources for tourism activities and sport and recreation, where appropriate, at the applicable scale. ENV 61 To facilitate sustainable tourism and recreation activities where appropriate, particularly where this creates diversification or additional utilisation of related facilities beyond typical usage patterns. ENV 62 To require that new developments take into account the potential for impact on tourism in the area and demonstrate how potential negative impacts to tourism in communities have been minimised. This must include assessment of how the benefits of what is proposed are not outweighed by potential negative impacts identified. ENV 63 To support proposals for sustainable tourism development that seek to optimise facilities and use space whilst minimising environmental impact by taking a cross-sectoral development approach that provides for multiple activities. ENV 64 To resist development along the coast which would detract from its visual appearance or conflict with its recreational and leisure functions. ENV 65 To continue to work with local communities, relevant stakeholders and with the Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine to ensure the proper and successful implementation of the Shellfish Waters Directive along County Louth's coastline. Sustainable urban drainage systems and Surface Water IU 18 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. IU 19 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. IU 20 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. IU 21 To ensure all new developments provide for separated drainage systems. IU 22 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.

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		IU 23 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. Flood Risk Management IU 24 To reduce the risk of new development being affected by possible future flooding by: - 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. IU 25 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. IU 26 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 can be satisfied. IU 27 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. IU 28 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. IU 29 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.
Air and Climatic Factors	- 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	Also refer to the overall approach to compact development and sustainability provided by the Plan 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). 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 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. Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Also refer to 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.

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	of sensitive receptors. Potential conflicts with climate adaptation measures including those relating to flood risk management.	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, - Assist with water and flood risk management, - Carbon storage or sequestration. 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. 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. Traffic and Transport Assessment MOV 38 To require the preparation of Transport and Traffic Assessments for new developments in accordance with the requirements set out the TII Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines.
Material Assets	- 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 development	Also see measures under other environmental components including Population and Human Health and various land use/compact development/phasing provisions from the Plan. Water Services and Surface Water 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. IU 2 To work in conjunction with Irish Water to protect and make climate resilient existing water and wastewater infrastructure, 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. IU 3 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. IU 4 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. IU 5 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. IU 6 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. IU 7 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. IU 8 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. IU 9 To support Irish Water in promoting public awareness and involvement in water conservation measures by households, business and industry. IU 10 To encourage new developments incorporate water conservation measures such as rain water harvesting to minimise wastage of water supply. IU 11 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. IU 12 To require that all development taking place within an area served by a public wastewater treatment system connects to that system. IU 13 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 treated and discharged to suitable receiving water, subject to a discharge licence. IU 14 To promote rain water harvesting and grey water use in all developments and in particular for larger developments, as an alternative to attenuation. IU 15 To require that proper supervision, installation and commissioning of on-site wastewater treatment system by requiring site characterisation procedures and geotechnical assessments, be carried out by competent professionally indemnified and suitably qualified persons.

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Draft Plan, included in: (this text will be updated at adoption of the Plan to take account of any Alterations/Modifications made)
	with adequate drinking water (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts). - 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.	IU 16 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 complies with the Council's requirements. IU 17 To require that private wastewater treatment systems for individual houses, where permitted, comply with the recommendations contained within the EPA Code of Practice for Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems (2009) Serving Single Houses (population equivalent less than or equal to 10). Waste Management 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. 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. 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. 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. Resource based industry 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. Policy Objective ENV 30 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. ENV 42 To prevent development that would hinder the efficient or effective recovery of the County's aggregate resources. ENV 47 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. ENV 66 To protect the quality of designated shellfish waters off the Louth coast Agriculture and Nitrates 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. 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. 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. 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. Tourism and Infrastructure Capacity 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.

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Draft Plan, included in: (this text will be updated at adoption of the Plan to take account of any Alterations/Modifications made)
Cultural Heritage	Potential effects on protected and unknown archaeology and protected architecture arising from construction and operation activities.	Archaeological Heritage¹²², including Monuments, Zones of Potential and World Heritage Site BHC 1 To protect archaeological sites and monuments, underwater archaeology, and archaeological objects which are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), and seek their preservation (i.e. preservation in situ or in exceptional cases preservation by record) through the planning process and having regard to the advice and recommendations of the National Monuments Service of the Department of Culture Heritage and the Gaeltacht. BHC 2 To ensure any development, either above or below ground, adjacent to or in the immediate vicinity of a recorded monument or an 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. BHC 3 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. BHC 4 To protect and preserve in situ all surviving elements of medieval town defences as detailed in the Conservation and Management Plans available. BHC 5 To retain the surviving medieval street pattern, building lines and burgage plot widths in historic walled towns. BHC 6 To require, as part of the development management process, archaeological impact assessments, geophysical surveys, test excavations or 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. BHC 7 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. BHC 8 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. BHC 9 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). BHC 10 To ensure no development, which might have significant, deleterious impacts upon the character of the World Heritage Site is permitted. BHC 11 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. BHC 12 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. BHC 13 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 UNESCO World Heritage Site of Brú na Bóinne, the Tentative World Heritage Site of Monasterboice, and the Battle of the Boyne Battlefield site). BHC 14 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. Architectural Heritage¹²³, including Protected Structures, Architectural Conservation Areas, Gardens and Designed Landscapes and Vernacular Heritage BHC 15 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. BHC 16 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.

¹²² 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.

¹²³ 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 Draft Plan, included in: (this text will be updated at adoption of the Plan to take account of any Alterations/Modifications made)
		BHC 17 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. BHC 18 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 variation thereof, to enable a proper assessment of the proposed works and their impact on the structure or area. BHC 19 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. BHC 20 To promote best conservation practice and the use of skilled specialist practitioners in the conservation of, and for any works to protected structures. BHC 21 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. BHC 22 To permit the demolition or significant modification of a protected structure, only in exceptional circumstances. BHC 23 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. BHC 24 To review and update the Record of Protected Structures on an ongoing basis and to make additions and deletions as appropriate. BHC 25 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. BHC 26 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. BHC 27 To retain any building within an ACA 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. BHC 28 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 ACA. BHC 29 To ensure that the protection of architectural features of special interest within an ACA are retained as part of any proposed re-development, in certain cases, development management guidelines may be relaxed in order to secure their conservation. BHC 30 To require that any development on the periphery of an ACA does not detract from the existing character of the designated ACA. BHC 31 To ensure that the new trading bays and all associated signage shall not be located where it will be detrimental to the character of the ACA or any important building or vista in the ACA. BHC 32 To retain surviving medieval plots and street patterns in the ACAs, 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. BHC 33 To ensure new development will not adversely affect the site, setting, or views to and from historic gardens and designed landscapes of heritage significance. BHC 34 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. BHC 35 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. BHC 36 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. BHC 37 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. BHC 38 To encourage the re-use and adaption of existing historic buildings in a manner compatible with their character.

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Draft Plan, included in: (this text will be updated at adoption of the Plan to take account of any Alterations/Modifications made)
Landscape	Occurrence of adverse visual impacts and conflicts with the appropriate protection of designations relating to the landscape.	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. 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. 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. 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. 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 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. 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. 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. NBG 38 Protect and sustain the established appearance and character of views listed in this plan that contribute to the distinctive quality of the landscape from inappropriate development. NBG 39 To improve, where necessary, public access to viewing points, subject to availability of resources. 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. 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. NBG 42 To require the use of and develop the green infrastructure network 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. NBG 43 To utilise all information available on the Louth Baseline Assessment as evidence based decision making in the Louth Core Strategy. 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 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. NBG 51 To require the integration of climate change mitigation measures in any future spatial plans and climate change adaptation measures in proposed developments. 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.

Topic	Potentially Significant Adverse Effect, if Unmitigated	Recommendations integrated into the Draft Plan, included in: (this text will be updated at adoption of the Plan to take account of any Alterations/Modifications made)
		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. 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. 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. 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. 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.

Section 10 Monitoring Measures

10.1 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.

10.2 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 Section 5 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 10.1 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.

Many of the indicators below relate to more than one of the marine, freshwater and terrestrial environments, for example: indicator B1 'Conservation status of habitats and species as assessed under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive' relates to marine, freshwater and terrestrial habitats and species; and indicator W1 'To maintain and improve, where possible, the quality and status of surface waters' relates to coastal and estuarine waters as well as rivers.

10.3 Sources

The Draft 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 Midland 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*¹²⁴ 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.

10.4 Reporting

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 will seek to address the indicators set out on Table 10.1. 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.

¹²⁴ 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.

Table 10.1 Indicators, Targets, Sources and Remedial Action

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	BFF	- 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”	- 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”	- Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht 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 Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht 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 - see Section 10.4)	- Where condition of European sites is found to be deteriorating this will be investigated with the Regional Assembly and the DCHG (and the DHPLG 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 DHPLG 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	- 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	- 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	- 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	- 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 DHPLG, DCCAE and NTA to develop a tailored response.
Soil (and Land)	S	- Proportion of population growth occurring on infill and brownfield lands compared to greenfield - Volume of contaminated material generated from brownfield and infill - Number of AA determinations and environmental assessments undertaken to support applications for brownfield and infill development prior to planning permission	- Maintain built surface cover nationally to below the EU average of 4%. - Achieve the 40% target for growth on infill as per NPF.	- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Geoportal - Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant)	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.

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action
Water	W	• 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	• 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 iterations as relevant) • Minimise developments granted permission on lands which pose - or are likely to pose in the future - a significant flood risk	• 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	• Where water bodies are failing to meet at least good status this will be investigated with the DHPLG 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 DHPLG Water Section and the Regional Assembly 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 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	• 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	• 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	• Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant) • CSO data • Consultations with Irish Water (at monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4) • Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in conjunction with Local Authorities • Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment • Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	• 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, DHPLG and NTA to develop a tailored response.

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action
			By 2020 all citizens will have access to speeds of 30Mbps, and that 50% of citizens will be subscribing to speeds of 100Mbps		
Air	A	- 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	- 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	- CSO data - Data from the National Travel Survey - EPA Air Quality Monitoring - Consultations with Department of Transport Tourism and Sport, Transport Trends and Department of Communication Climate Action and Environment (at monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4)	Where proportion of population shows increase in private car use above CSO 2016 figures, Council will coordinate with the Regional Assembly, DHPLG, DCCAE and NTA to develop a tailored response. See also entry under Population and human health above
Climatic Factors	C	- 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	- 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 States to reach a 10% share of renewable energy in transport by 2020 - 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	- EPA Annual National Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory reporting - Climate Action Regional Office - Consultations with Department of Communication Climate Action and Environment (at monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4) - CSO data	- 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, DHPLG and NTA to develop a tailored response

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Indicators	Targets	Sources	Remedial Action
Cultural Heritage	CH	- 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	- 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	- Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant) - Consultation with Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (at monitoring evaluation - see Section 10.4).	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	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	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	Internal monitoring of likely significant environmental effects of grants of permission (grant by grant)	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

Appendix I Relationship with Legislation and Other Policies, Plans and Programmes

This appendix is not intended to be a full and comprehensive review of EU Directives, the transposing regulations or the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management. The information is not exhaustive and it is recommended to consult the Directive, Regulation, Plan or Programme to become familiar with the full details of each.

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
European Level			
SEA Directive (2001/42/EC)	- Contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development. - Provide for a high level of protection of the environment by carrying out an environmental assessment of plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.	- Carry out an environmental assessment for plans or programmes referred to in Articles 2 to 4 of the Directive. - Prepare an environmental report which identifies, describes and evaluates the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme and reasonable alternatives that consider the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme. - Consult with relevant authorities, stakeholders and public allowing sufficient time to make a submission. - Consult other Member States where the implementation of a plan or programme is likely to have transboundary environmental effects. - Inform relevant authorities and stakeholders on the decision to implement the plan or programme. - Issue a statement to include requirements detailed in Article 9 of the Directive. - Monitor and mitigate significant environmental effects identified by the assessment.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EIA Directive (2011/92/EU as amended by 2014/52/EU)	- Requires the assessment of the environmental effects of public and private projects which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. - Aims to assess and implement avoidance or mitigation measures to eliminate environmental effects, before consent is given of projects likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue, inter alia, of their nature, size or location are made subject to a requirement for development consent and an assessment with regard to their effects. Those projects are defined in Article 4.	- All projects listed in Annex I are considered as having significant effects on the environment and require an EIA. - For projects listed in Annex II, a "screening procedure" is required to determine the effects of projects on the basis of thresholds/criteria or a case by case examination. This should take into account Annex III. - The environmental impact assessment shall identify, describe and assess in an appropriate manner, in the light of each individual case and in accordance with Articles 4 to 12, the direct and indirect effects of a project on the following factors: human beings, fauna and flora, soil, water, air, climate and the landscape, material assets and the cultural heritage, the interaction between each factor. - Consult with relevant authorities, stakeholders and public allowing sufficient time to make a submission before a decision is made.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)	- Promote the preservation, protection and improvement of the quality of the environment, including the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. - Contribute towards ensuring biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. - Maintain or restore to favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of community interest. - Promote the maintenance of biodiversity, taking account of economic, social, cultural and regional requirements.	- Propose and protect sites of importance to habitats, plant and animal species. - Establish a network of European sites hosting the natural habitat types listed in Annex I and habitats of the species listed in Annex II, to enable the natural habitat types and the species' habitats concerned to be maintained or, where appropriate, restored at a favourable conservation status in their natural range. - Carry out comprehensive assessment of habitat types and species present. - Establish a system of strict protection for the animal species and plant species listed in Annex IV.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)	- Conserve all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state including their eggs, nests and habitats. - Protect, manage and control these species and comply with regulations relating to their exploitation. - The species included in Annex I shall be the subject of special conservation measures concerning their habitat in order to ensure their survival and reproduction in their area of distribution.	- Preserve, maintain or re-establish a sufficient diversity and area of habitats for all the species of birds referred to in Annex 1. - Preserve, maintain and establish biotopes and habitats to include the creation of protected areas (Special Protection Areas). - Ensure the upkeep and management in accordance with the ecological needs of habitats inside and outside the protected zones, re-establish destroyed biotopes and creation of biotopes. - Measures for regularly occurring migratory species not listed in Annex I is required as regards their breeding, moulting and wintering areas and staging posts along their migration routes. The protection of wetlands and particularly wetlands of international importance.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU Nitrates Directive (91/676/EC)	Reducing water pollution caused or induced by nitrates from agricultural sources and - preventing further such pollution.	Ireland's Nitrates Action Programme is designed to prevent pollution of surface waters and ground water from agricultural sources and to protect and improve water quality. Ireland's third NAP came into operation in 2014. Each Member State's NAP must include: - a limit on the amount of livestock manure applied to the land each year - set periods when land spreading is prohibited due to risk	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all

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Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
		set capacity levels for the storage of livestock manure	environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU Integrated Pollution Prevention Control Directive (2008/1/EC)	The purpose of this Directive is to achieve integrated prevention and control of pollution arising from the activities listed in Annex I. It lays down measures designed to prevent or, where that is not practicable, to reduce emissions in the air, water and land from the abovementioned activities, including measures concerning waste, in order to achieve a high level of protection of the environment taken as a whole, without prejudice to Directive 85/337/EEC and other relevant Community provisions.	The IPPC Directive is based on several principles: - an integrated approach - best available techniques, - flexibility; and - public participation	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU Plant Protection (products) Directive 2009/127/EC	- The Directive aims at reducing the risks and impacts of pesticide use on human health and - the environment by introducing different targets, tools and measures such as Integrated Pest - Management (IPM) or National Action Plans (NAPs).	- The Framework Directive applies to pesticides which are plant protection products. - Regarding pesticide application equipment already in professional use, the Framework Directive introduces requirements for the inspection and maintenance to be carried out on such equipment.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU Renewables Directive (2009/28/EC)	- The Renewable Energy Directive establishes an overall policy for the production and promotion of energy from renewable sources in the EU. - It requires the EU to fulfil at least 20% of its total energy needs with renewables by 2020 – to be achieved through the attainment of individual national targets. - All EU countries must also ensure that at least 10% of their transport fuels come from renewable sources by 2020.	- The Directive promotes cooperation amongst EU countries (and with countries outside the EU) to help them meet their renewable energy targets. - The Directive specifies national renewable energy targets for each country, taking into account its starting point and overall potential for renewables. - EU countries set out how they plan to meet these targets and the general course of their renewable energy policy in national renewable energy action plans. - Progress towards national targets is measured every two years when EU countries publish national renewable energy progress reports.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Indirect Land Use Change Directive (2012/0288 (COD))	- Article 3(4) of Directive 2009/28/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (3) requires Member States to ensure that the share of energy from renewable energy sources in all forms of transport in 2020 is at least 10 % of their final energy consumption. - The blending of biofuels is one of the methods available for Member States to meet this target, and is expected to be the main contributor. - Other methods available to meet the target are the reduction of energy consumption, which is imperative because a mandatory percentage target for energy from renewable sources is likely to become increasingly difficult to achieve sustainably if overall demand for energy for transport continues to rise, and the use of electricity from renewable energy sources.	- Limit the contribution that conventional biofuels (with a risk of ILUC emissions) make towards attainment of the targets in the Renewable Energy Directive; - Improve the greenhouse gas performance of biofuel production processes (reducing associated emissions) by raising the greenhouse gas saving threshold for new installations subject to protecting installations already in operation on 1st July 2014; - Encourage a greater market penetration of advanced (low-ILUC) biofuels by allowing such fuels to contribute more to the targets in the Renewable Energy Directive than conventional biofuels; - Improve the reporting of greenhouse gas emissions by obliging Member States and fuel suppliers to report the estimated indirect land-use change emissions of biofuels.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Directive (2014/94/EU)	This Directive establishes a common framework of measures for the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure in the Union in order to minimise dependence on oil and to mitigate the environmental impact of transport.	This Directive sets out minimum requirements for the building-up of alternative fuels infrastructure, including recharging points for electric vehicles and refuelling points for natural gas (LNG and CNG) and hydrogen, to be implemented by means of Member States' national policy frameworks, as well as common technical specifications for such recharging and refuelling points, and user information requirements.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU Energy Efficiency Directive (2012/27/EU)	- Establishes a set of binding measures to help the EU reach its 20% energy efficiency target by 2020. - Under the Directive, all EU countries are required to use energy more efficiently at all stages of the energy chain, from production to final consumption.	- Energy distributors or retail energy sales companies have to achieve 1.5% energy savings per year through the implementation of energy efficiency measures - EU countries can opt to achieve the same level of savings through other means, such as improving the efficiency of heating systems, installing double glazed windows or insulating roofs	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all

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Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
		- The public sector in EU countries should purchase energy efficient buildings, products and services - Every year, governments in EU countries must carry out energy efficient renovations on at least 3% (by floor area) of the buildings they own and occupy - Energy consumers should be empowered to better manage consumption. This includes easy and free access to data on consumption through individual metering - National incentives for SMEs to undergo energy audits - Large companies will make audits of their energy consumption to help them identify ways to reduce it - Monitoring efficiency levels in new energy generation capacities.	environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU Seveso Directive (2012/18/EU)	This Directive lays down rules for the prevention of major accidents which involve dangerous substances, and the limitation of their consequences for human health and the environment, with a view to ensuring a high level of protection throughout the Union in a consistent and effective manner.	The Seveso Directive is well integrated with other EU policies, thus avoiding double regulation or other administrative burden. This includes the following related policy areas: - Classification, labelling and packaging of chemicals; - The Union's Civil Protection Mechanism; - The Security Union Agenda including CBRN-E and Protection of critical infrastructure; - Policy on environmental liability and on the protection of the environment through criminal law; - Safety of offshore oil and gas operations.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (2014/89/EU)	This Directive establishes a framework for maritime spatial planning aimed at promoting the sustainable growth of maritime economies, the sustainable development of marine areas and the sustainable use of marine resources.	- Each Member State shall establish and implement maritime spatial planning. - In doing so, Member States shall take into account land-sea interactions. - The resulting plan or plans shall be developed and produced in accordance with the institutional and governance levels determined by Member States. This Directive shall not interfere with Member States' competence to design and determine the format and content of that plan or those plans. - Maritime spatial planning shall aim to contribute to the objectives listed in Article 5 and fulfil the requirements laid down in Articles 6 and 8. - When establishing maritime spatial planning, Member States shall have due regard to the particularities of the marine regions, relevant existing and future activities and uses and their impacts on the environment, as well as to natural resources, and shall also take into account land-sea interactions. - Member States may include or build on existing national policies, regulations or mechanisms that have been or are being established before the entry into force of this Directive, provided they are in conformity with the requirements of this Directive.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
UK Marine Policy Statement	- Achieving a sustainable marine economy - Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society - Living within environmental limits - Promoting good governance - Using sound science responsibly	The MPS will facilitate and support the formulation of Marine Plans, ensuring that marine resources are used in a sustainable way in line with the high-level marine objectives and thereby: - Promote sustainable economic development; - Enable the UK's move towards a low-carbon economy, in order to mitigate the causes of climate change and ocean acidification and adapt to their effects; - Ensure a sustainable marine environment which promotes healthy, functioning marine ecosystems and protects marine habitats, species and heritage assets; and - Contribute to the societal benefits of the marine area, including the sustainable use of marine resources to address local social and economic issues	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009	Aims to provide the legal mechanism to help ensure clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas by putting in place a new system for improved management and protection of the marine and coastal environment.	The Marine Act comprises eight key elements: - Marine Management Organisation (MMO) - Strategic Marine Planning System - Streamlined Marine Licensing System - Marine Nature Conservation - Fisheries Management and Marine Enforcement - Migratory and Freshwater Fisheries - Coastal Access - Coastal and Estuarine Management	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Marine (Northern Ireland) Act 2013	Aims to provide for marine plans in relation to the Northern Ireland inshore region; to provide for marine conservation zones in that region; to make further provision in relation to marine licensing for certain electricity works in that region; and for connected purposes.	The Marine Act sets out a new framework for Northern Ireland's seas based on: a system of marine planning that will balance conservation, energy and resource needs; improved management for marine nature conservation and the streamlining of marine licensing for some electricity projects. The main provisions of the Act are outlined below: - Marine Planning - Nature Conservation - Marine Licensing	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory

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Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
European Union Biodiversity Strategy to 2020	- Aims to halt or reverse biodiversity loss and speed up the EU's transition towards a resource efficient and green economy. - Halting the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020, and restoring them in so far as feasible.	- Outlines six targets and twenty actions to aid European Union in halting the loss to biodiversity and eco-system services. - The six targets cover: - Full implementation of EU nature legislation to protect biodiversity - Maintaining, enhancing and protecting for ecosystems, and green infrastructure - Ensuring sustainable agriculture, and forestry - Sustainable management of fish stocks - Reducing invasive alien species - Addressing the global need to contribute towards averting global biodiversity loss	framework for environmental protection and management. Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU Green Infrastructure Strategy	Aims to create a robust enabling framework in order to promote and facilitate Green Infrastructure (GI) projects.	- Promoting GI in the main EU policy areas. - Supporting EU-level GI projects. - Improving access to finance for GI projects. - Improving information and promoting innovation.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
UN Kyoto Protocol (2nd Kyoto Period), the Second European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II), Paris climate conference (COP21) 2015 (Paris Agreement)	The UN Kyoto Protocol set of policy measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Second European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II) aims to identify and develop all the necessary elements of an EU strategy to implement the Kyoto Protocol. At the Paris climate conference (COP21) in December 2015, 195 countries adopted the first-ever universal, legally binding global climate deal. The agreement sets out a global action plan to put the world on track to avoid dangerous climate change by limiting global warming to well below 2°C.	- The Kyoto Protocol is implemented through the European Climate Change Programme (ECCP II). - EU member states implement measures to improve on or compliment the specified measures and policies arising from the ECCP. - Under COP21, governments agreed to come together every 5 years to set more ambitious targets as required by science; report to each other and the public on how well they are doing to implement their targets; track progress towards the long-term goal through a robust transparency and accountability system.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU 2020 Climate and Energy Package	- Binding legislation which aims to ensure the European Union meets its climate and energy targets for 2020. - Aims to achieve a 20% reduction in EU greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels. - Aims to raise the share of EU energy consumption produced from renewable resources to 20%. - Achieve a 20% improvement in the EU's energy efficiency.	Four pieces of complimentary legislation: - Reform of the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) to include a cap on emission allowances in addition to existing system of national caps. - Member States have agreed national targets for non-EU ETS emissions from countries outside the EU. - Meet the national renewable energy targets of 16% for Ireland by 2020. - Preparing a legal framework for technologies in carbon capture and storage.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU 2030 Framework for Climate and Energy	- A 2030 Framework for climate and energy, including EU-wide targets and policy objectives for the period between 2020 and 2030 that has been agreed by European countries. - Targets include a 40% cut in greenhouse gas emissions compared to 1990 levels, at least a 27% share of renewable energy consumption and at least 27% energy savings compared with the business-as-usual scenario.	To meet the targets, the European Commission has proposed the following policies for 2030: - A reformed EU emissions trading scheme (ETS). - New indicators for the competitiveness and security of the energy system, such as price differences with major trading partners, diversification of supply, and interconnection capacity between EU countries. - First ideas for a new governance system based on national plans for competitive, secure, and sustainable energy. These plans will follow a common EU approach. They will ensure stronger investor certainty, greater transparency, enhanced policy coherence and improved coordination across the EU.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
The Clean Air for Europe Directive (2008/50/EC) (EU Air Framework Directive) Fourth Daughter Directive (2004/107/EC)	- The CAFE Directive merges existing legislation into a single directive (except for the fourth daughter directive). - Sets new air quality objectives for PM_{2.5} (fine particles) including the limit value and exposure related objectives. - Accounts for the possibility to discount natural sources of pollution when assessing compliance against limit values. - Allows the possibility for time extensions of three years (PM₁₀) or up to five years (NO₂, benzene) for complying with limit values, based on conditions and the assessment by the European Commission.	- Sets objectives for ambient air quality designed to avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole. - Aims to assess the ambient air quality in Member States on the basis of common methods and criteria. - Obtains information on ambient air quality in order to help combat air pollution and nuisance and to monitor long-term trends and improvements resulting from national and community measures. - Ensures that such information on ambient air quality is made available to the public. - Aims to maintain air quality where it is good and improving it in other cases.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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	The Fourth Daughter Directive lists pollutants, target values and monitoring requirements for the following: arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in ambient air.	Aims to promote increased cooperation between the Member States in reducing air pollution.	framework for environmental protection and management.
Noise Directive (2002/49/EC)	The Noise Directive - Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise - is part of an EU strategy setting out to reduce the number of people affected by noise in the longer term and to provide a framework for developing existing Community policy on noise reduction from source.	The Directive requires competent authorities in Member States to: - Draw up strategic noise maps for major roads, railways, airports and agglomerations, using harmonised noise indicators and use these maps to assess the number of people which may be impacted upon as a result of excessive noise levels; - Draw up action plans to reduce noise where necessary and maintain environmental noise quality where it is good; and - Inform and consult the public about noise exposure, its effects, and the measures considered to address noise. The Directive does not set any limit value, nor does it prescribe the measures to be used in the action plans, which remain at the discretion of the competent authorities.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Floods Directive (2007/60/EC)	- Establishes a framework for the assessment and management of flood risks - Reduce adverse consequences for human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity associated with floods in the Community	- Assess all water courses and coast lines at risk from flooding through Flood Risk Assessment - Prepare flood hazard maps and flood risk maps outlining the extent or potential of flooding and assets and humans at risk in these areas at River Basin District level (Article 3(2) (b)) and areas covered by Article 5(1) and Article 13(1) (b) in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3. - Implement flood risk management plans and take adequate and coordinated measures to reduce flood risk for the areas covered by the Articles listed above. - Inform the public and allow the public to participate in planning process.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)	- Establish a framework for the protection of water bodies to include inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater and their dependent wildlife and habitats. - Preserve and prevent the deterioration of water status and where necessary improve and maintain "good status" of water bodies. - Promote sustainable water usage. - The Water Framework Directive repealed the following Directives: - The Drinking Water Abstraction Directive - Sampling Drinking Water Directive - Exchange of Information on Quality of Surface Freshwater Directive - Shellfish Directive - Freshwater Fish Directive - Groundwater (Dangerous Substances) Directive - Dangerous Substances Directive	- Protect, enhance and restore all water bodies and meet the environmental objectives outlined in Article 4 of the Directive. - Achieve "good status" for all waters. - Manage water bodies based on identifying and establishing river basins districts. - Involve the public and streamline legislation. - Prepare and implement a River Basin Management Plan for each river basin districts identified and a Register of Protected Areas. - Establish a programme of monitoring for surface water status, groundwater status and protected areas. - Recover costs for water services.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC)	- Protect, control and conserve groundwater. - Prevent the deterioration of the status of all bodies of groundwater. - Implements measures to prevent and control groundwater pollution, including criteria for assessing good groundwater chemical status and criteria for the identification of significant and sustained upward trends and for the definition of starting points for trend reversals.	- Meet minimum groundwater standards listed in Annex 1 of Directive. - Meet threshold values adopted by national legislation for the pollutants, groups of pollutants and indicators of pollution which have been identified as contributing to the characterisation of bodies or groups of bodies of groundwater as being at risk, also taking into account Part B of Annex II.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Drinking Water Directive (98/83/EC)	- Improve and maintain the quality of water intended for human consumption. - Protect human health from the adverse effects of any contamination of water intended for human consumption by ensuring that it is wholesome and clean.	- Set values applicable to water intended for human consumption for the parameters set out in Annex I. - Set values for additional parameters not included in Annex I, where the protection of human health within national territory or part of it so requires. The values set should, as a minimum, satisfy the requirements of Article 4(1) (a). - Implement all measures necessary to ensure that regular monitoring of the quality of water intended for human consumption is carried out, in order to check that the water available to consumers meets the requirements of this Directive and in particular the parametric values set in accordance with Article 5. - Ensure that any failure to meet the parametric values set in accordance with Article 5 is immediately investigated in order to identify the cause. - Ensure that the necessary remedial action is taken as soon as possible to restore its quality and shall give priority to their enforcement action. - Undertake remedial action to restore the quality of the water where necessary to protect human health.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC)	- This Directive concerns the collection, treatment and discharge of urban waste water and the treatment and discharge of waste water from certain industrial sectors. - The objective of the Directive is to protect the environment from the adverse effects of waste water discharges.	- Notify consumers when remedial action is being undertaken except where the competent authorities consider the non-compliance with the parametric value to be trivial. - Urban waste water entering collecting systems shall before discharge, be subject to secondary treatment. - Annex II requires the designation of areas sensitive to eutrophication which receive water discharges. - Establishes minimum requirements for urban waste water collection and treatment systems in specified agglomerations to include special requirements for sensitive areas and certain industrial sectors.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC) as amended by Directive 2006/21/EC, Directive 2009/31/EC and Directive 2013/30/EU	Establish a framework of environmental liability based on the 'polluter-pays' principle, to prevent and remedy environmental damage.	- Relates to environmental damage caused by any of the occupational activities listed in Annex III, and to any imminent threat of such damage occurring by reason of any of those activities; damage to protected species and natural habitats caused by any occupational activities other than those listed in Annex III, and to any imminent threat of such damage occurring by reason of any of those activities, whenever the operator has been at fault or negligent. - Where environmental damage has not yet occurred but there is an imminent threat of such damage occurring, the operator shall, without delay, take the necessary preventive measures. - Where environmental damage has occurred the operator shall, without delay, inform the competent authority of all relevant aspects of the situation and take all practicable steps to immediately control, contain, remove or otherwise manage the relevant contaminants and/or any other damage factors in order to limit or to prevent further environmental damage and adverse effects on human health or further impairment of services and the necessary remedial measures, in accordance with Article 7. - The operator shall bear the costs for the preventive and remedial actions taken pursuant to this Directive. - The competent authority shall be entitled to initiate cost recovery proceedings against the operator. - The operator may be required to provide financial security guarantees to ensure their responsibilities under the directive are met. - The Environmental Liability Directive has been amended through a number of Directives. Implementation of the Environmental Liability Directive is contributed towards by a Multi-Annual Work Programme (MAWP) 'Making the Environmental Liability Directive more fit for purpose' that is updated annually to changing developments, growing knowledge and new needs.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC), as amended	The aim of the European Union's ambitious Marine Strategy Framework Directive is to protect more effectively the marine environment across Europe.	The Directive provides various requirements, including: - Completion of an <u>initial assessment</u> of Irish marine waters; - Establishment of establish environmental targets and indicators; - Establishment of a monitoring programme; - Establishment of a programme of measures; and - Implementation of the programme of measures and monitoring programme. Implementation of the Directive is contributed towards by a set of detailed criteria and methodological standards that were revised in 2017 leading to a Commission Decision on "laying down criteria and methodological standards on good environmental status of marine waters and specifications and standardised methods for monitoring and assessment, and repealing Decision 2010/477/EU". Annex III "Indicative lists of characteristics, pressures and impacts" of the Directive was amended in 2017.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta 1992)	The aim of this (revised) Convention is to protect the archaeological heritage as a source of the European collective memory and as an instrument for historical and scientific study.	The Valletta Convention makes the conservation and enhancement of the archaeological heritage one of the goals of urban and regional planning policies. The Convention sets guidelines for the funding of excavation and research work and publication of research findings. It also deals with public access, in particular to archaeological sites, and educational actions to be undertaken to develop public awareness of the value of the archaeological heritage. It also constitutes an institutional framework for pan-European co-operation on the archaeological heritage, entailing a systematic exchange of experience and experts among the various States.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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Convention of the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada 1995)	The main purpose of the Convention is to reinforce and promote policies for the conservation and enhancement of Europe's heritage. It also affirms the need for European solidarity with regard to heritage conservation and is designed to foster practical co-operation among the Parties. It establishes the principles of "European co-ordination of conservation policies" including consultations regarding the thrust of the policies to be implemented.	- The reinforcement and promotion of policies for protecting and enhancing the heritage within the territories of the parties. - The affirmation of European solidarity with regard to the protection of the heritage and the fostering of practical co-operation between states and regions.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro 2005)	- Cultural heritage is a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time. - A heritage community consists of people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations.	- Recognise that rights relating to cultural heritage are inherent in the right to participate in cultural life, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. - Recognise individual and collective responsibility towards cultural heritage. - Emphasise that the conservation of cultural heritage and its sustainable use have human development and quality of life as their goal. - Take the necessary steps to apply the provisions of this Convention concerning the role of cultural heritage in the construction of a peaceful and democratic society. - Greater synergy of competencies among all the public, institutional and private actors concerned.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
European Landscape Convention 2000	The developments in agriculture, forestry, industrial and mineral production techniques, together with the practices followed in town and country planning, transport, networks, tourism and recreation, and at a more general level, changes in the world economy, have in many cases accelerated the transformation of landscapes. The Convention expresses a concern to achieve sustainable development based on a balanced and harmonious relationship between social needs, economic activity and the environment. It aims to respond to the public's wish to enjoy high quality landscapes.	- Promote protection, management and planning of landscapes. - Organise European co-operation on landscape issues.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
The Seventh Environmental Action Programme (EAP) of the European Community (2013-2020)	It identifies three key objectives: - to protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital - to turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green, and competitive low-carbon economy - to safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing	Four so called "enablers" will help Europe deliver on these objectives (goals): - Better implementation of legislation. - Better information by improving the knowledge base. - More and wiser investment for environment and climate policy. - Full integration of environmental requirements and considerations into other policies. Two additional horizontal priority objectives complete the programme: - To make the Union's cities more sustainable. - To help the Union address international environmental and climate challenges more effectively.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Bern Convention (Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats)	The convention has three main aims: - to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats - to promote cooperation between states - to give particular attention to endangered and vulnerable species including endangered and vulnerable migratory species	The Parties under the convention recognise the intrinsic value of nature, which needs to be preserved and passed to future generations, they also: - Seek to ensure the conservation of nature in their countries, paying particular attention to planning and development policies and pollution control. - Look at implementing the Bern Convention in central Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. - Take account of the potential impact on natural heritage by other policies. - Promote education and information of the public, ensuring the need to conserve species is understood and acted upon. - Develop an extensive number of species action plans, codes of conducts, and guidelines, at their own initiative or in co-operation with other organisations. - Created the Emerald Network, an ecological network made up of Areas of Special Conservation Interest.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Bali Road Map (2007)	The overall goals of the project are twofold: - To increase national capacity to co-ordinate ministerial views, participate in the UNFCCC process, and negotiate positions within the timeframe of the Bali Action Plan; and - To assess investment and financial flows to address climate change for up to three key sectors and/or economic activities.	The Bali Action Plan is centred on four main building Blocks: - mitigation - adaptation - technology - financing	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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Cancun Agreements (2010)	Set of decisions taken at the COP 16 Conference in Cancun in 2010 which addresses a series of key issues in the fight against climate change. Cancun Agreements' main objectives cover: • Mitigation • Transparency of actions • Technology • Finance • Adaptation • Forests • Capacity building	Among the most prominent agreements is the establishment of a Green Climate Fund to transfer money from the developed to developing world to tackle the impacts of climate change.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Doha Climate Gateway (2012)	Set of decisions taken at the COP 18 meeting in Doha in 2012 which pave the way for a new agreement in Paris in 2015.	• Set out a timetable to adopt a universal climate agreement by 2015 (to come into effect in 2020); • Complete the work under Bali Action Plan and to focus on new completing new targets; • Strengthen the aim to cut greenhouse gases and help vulnerable countries to adapt; • Amend Kyoto Protocol to include a new commitment period for cutting down the greenhouse gases emissions; and • Provide the financial and technology support and new institutions to allow clean energy investment and sustainable growth in developing countries.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU Common Agricultural Policy	• To improve agricultural productivity, so that consumers have a stable supply of affordable food; and • To ensure that EU farmers can make a reasonable living.	• ensuring viable food production that will contribute to feeding the world's population, which is expected to rise considerably in the future; • Climate change and sustainable management of natural resources; • Looking after the countryside across the EU and keeping the rural economy alive.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EU REACH Regulation (EC 1907/2006)	• Aims to improve the protection of human health and the environment through the better and earlier identification of the intrinsic properties of chemical substances.	The aims are achieved by applying REACH, namely: • Registration, • Evaluation, • Authorisation; and • Restriction of chemicals. REACH also aims to enhance innovation and competitiveness of the EU chemicals industry.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Stockholm Convention	• The objective of the Stockholm Convention is to protect human health and the environment from persistent organic pollutants.	• Prohibit and/or eliminate the production and use, as well as the import and export, of the intentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex A to the Convention • Restrict the production and use, as well as the import and export, of the intentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex B to the Convention • Reduce or eliminate releases from unintentionally produced POPs that are listed in Annex C to the Convention • Ensure that stockpiles and wastes consisting of, containing or contaminated with POPs are managed safely and in an environmentally sound manner • To target additional POPs • Other provisions of the Convention relate to the development of implementation plans, information exchange, public information, awareness and education, research, development and monitoring, technical assistance, financial resources and mechanisms, reporting, effectiveness evaluation and non-compliance	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Ramsar Convention	The Convention's mission is "the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world".	Under the "three pillars" of the Convention, the Contracting Parties commit to: • Work towards the wise use of all their wetlands; • Designate suitable wetlands for the list of Wetlands of International Importance (the "Ramsar List") and ensure their effective management; • Cooperate internationally on transboundary wetlands, shared wetland systems and shared species.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory

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OSPAR Convention	The mission of OSPAR is to conserve marine ecosystems and safeguard human health in the North-East Atlantic by preventing and eliminating pollution; by protecting the marine environment from the adverse effects of human activities; and by contributing to the sustainable use of the seas.	OSPAR's work is organised under six strategies: • Biodiversity and Ecosystem Strategy • Eutrophication Strategy • Hazardous Substances Strategy • Offshore Industry Strategy • Radioactive Substances Strategy • Strategy for the Joint Assessment and Monitoring Programme These six strategies fit together to underpin the ecosystem approach. For each strategy a programme of work is designed and implemented annually.	framework for environmental protection and management. Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
European 2020 Strategy for Growth	Europe 2020 sets out a vision of Europe's social market economy for the 21st century and puts forward three mutually reinforcing priorities: • Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation; • Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy; • Inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.	In order to reach these priorities, the Commission proposes five quantitative targets to fulfil by 2020: 1. 75 % of the population aged 20-64 should be employed; 2. 3% of the EU's GDP should be invested in R&D; 3. the "20/20/20" climate/energy targets should be met (including an increase to 30% of emissions reduction if the conditions are right); 4. the share of early school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a tertiary degree; 5. 20 million less people should be at risk of poverty.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
The European Green Deal (EGD) 2019	The deal sets out how to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050, boosting the economy, improving people's quality of life, caring for nature and leaving no one behind.	• It sets out a roadmap with actions to boost the efficient use of resources by moving to a clean, circular economy, restore biodiversity and cut pollution. • It outlines investments required, financing tools available and explains how to ensure a just and inclusive transition. • In order to meet the goal to become climate neutral by 2050 as part of the European Green Deal, the European Union (EU) Commission proposed on 4th March 2020 to bring about the first European Climate Law and legally bind the target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Level			
Ireland 2040 - Our Plan, the National Planning Framework, (replacing the National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020) and the National Development Plan (2018-2027)	• The National Planning Framework is the Government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of to the year 2040. It is a framework to guide public and private investment, to create and promote opportunities for people, and to protect and enhance the environment - from villages to cities, and everything around and in between. • The National Development Plan sets out the investment priorities that will underpin the successful implementation of the new National Planning Framework. This will guide national, regional and local planning and investment decisions in Ireland over the next two decades, to cater for an expected population increase of over 1 million people.	National Strategic Outcomes as follows: 1. Compact Growth 2. Enhanced Regional Accessibility 3. Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities 4. Sustainable Mobility 5. A Strong Economy, supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills 6. High-Quality International Connectivity 7. Enhanced Amenities and Heritage 8. Transition to a Low-Carbon and Climate-Resilient Society 9. Sustainable Management of Water and other Environmental Resources 10. Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Planning, Land Use and Transport Outlook 2040 [in preparation]	The PLUTO will take account of forecasted future economic and demographic scenarios, affordability considerations and relevant Government policies and will: 1. Quantify in broad terms the appropriate scale of financial investment in land transport over the long term; 2. Consider how fiscal, environmental and technological developments might impact on this investment; and, 3. Identify strategic priorities for future investment to ensure land transport infrastructure provision facilitates the objectives of Project Ireland 2040.	In preparation	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)	• The core principal objectives of this Act are to amend the Planning Acts of 2000 – 2009 with specific regard given to supporting economic renewal and sustainable development.	• Development, with certain exceptions, is subject to development control under the Planning Acts and the local authorities grant or refuse planning permission for development, including ones within protected areas. • There are, however, a range of exemptions from the planning system. Use of land for agriculture, peat extraction and afforestation, subject to certain thresholds, is generally exempt from the requirement to obtain planning permission. • Additionally, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for a range of classes and large-scale projects.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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		Under planning legislation, Development Plans must include mandatory objectives for the conservation of the natural heritage and for the conservation of European sites and any other sites which may be prescribed. There are also discretionary powers to set objectives for the conservation of a variety of other elements of the natural heritage.	framework for environmental protection and management.
European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (S.I. 435 of 2004), as amended by S.I. 200 of 2011	The purpose of these Regulations is to transpose into Irish law Directive 2001/42/EC of 27 June 2001 (O.J. No. L 197, 21 July 2001) on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment — commonly known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.	- The Regulations cover plans and programmes in all of the sectors listed in article 3(2) of the Directive except land-use planning. - These Regulations also amend certain provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 to provide the statutory basis for the transposition of the Directive in respect of land-use planning. - Transposition in respect of the land-use planning sector is contained in the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 436 of 2004).	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011, as amended)	These Regulations provide a new for the implementation in Ireland of Council Directive 92/43/EEC on habitats and protection of wild fauna and flora (as amended) and for the implementation of Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of wild birds.	- They provide, among other things, for: the appointment and functions of authorized officers; identification, classification and other procedures relative to the designation of Community sites. - The Regulations have been prepared to address several judgments of the CJEU against Ireland, notably cases C-418/04 and C-183/05, in respect of failure to transpose elements of the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive into Irish law.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Waste Management Act 1996, as amended	To make provision in relation to the prevention, management and control of waste; to give effect to provisions of certain acts adopted by institutions of the European communities in respect of those matters; to amend the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992, and to repeal certain enactments and to provide for related matters.	The Waste Management Act contains a number of key legal obligations, including requirements for waste management planning, waste collection and movement, the authorisation of waste facilities, measures to reduce the production of waste and/or promote its recovery.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
European Communities Environmental Objectives (FPM) Regulations 2009 (S.I. 296 of 2009)	The purpose of these Regulations is to support the achievement of favourable conservation status for freshwater pearl mussels	- Set environmental quality objectives for the habitats of the freshwater pearl mussel populations named in the First Schedule to these Regulations that are within the boundaries of a site notified in a candidate list of European sites, or designated as a Special Area of Conservation, under the European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 (S.I. No. 94/1997). - Require the production of sub-basin management plans with programmes of measures to achieve these objectives. - Set out the duties of public authorities in respect of the sub-basin management plans and programmes of measure.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2010 (S.I. 9 of 2010), as amended (S.I. No. 366 of 2016)	To amend the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010) to make further provision to implement Commission Directive 2014/80/EU of 20 June 2014 amending Annex II to Directive 2006/118/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration.	The substances and threshold values set out in Schedule 5 to S.I. No. 9 of 2010 have been reviewed and amended where necessary, based on existing monitoring information and international guidelines on appropriate threshold values. - Part A of Schedule 6 has been amended to include changes to the rules governing the determination of background levels for the purposes of establishing threshold values for groundwater pollutants and indicators of pollution. - Part B of Schedule 6 has been amended to include nitrites and phosphorus (total) / phosphates among the minimum list of pollutants and their indicators which the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) must consider when establishing threshold values. - Part C of Schedule 6 amends the information to be provided to the Minister by the EPA with regard to the pollutants and their indicators for which threshold values have been established.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
European Communities (Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters) Regulations 2014 (S.I. No. 31 of 2014)	These Regulations, which give effect to Ireland's 3rd Nitrates Action Programme, provide statutory support for good agricultural practice to protect waters against pollution from agricultural sources	The Regulations include measures such as: - Periods when land application of fertilisers is prohibited - Limits on the land application of fertilisers - Storage requirements for livestock manure; and - Monitoring of the effectiveness of the measures in terms of agricultural practice and impact on water quality.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and

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			cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015	An Act to provide for the approval of plans by the Government in relation to climate change for the purpose of pursuing the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy.	When considering a plan or framework, for approval, the Government shall endeavour to achieve the national transition objective within the period to which the objective relates and shall, in endeavouring to achieve that objective, ensure that such objective is achieved by the implementation of measures that are cost effective and shall, for that purpose, have regard to: - The ultimate objective specified in Article 2 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change done at New York on 9 May 1992 and any mitigation commitment entered into by the European Union in response or otherwise in relation to that objective, - The policy of the Government on climate change, - Climate justice, - Any existing obligation of the State under the law of the European Union or any international agreement referred to in section 2; and - The most recent national greenhouse gas emissions inventory and projection of future greenhouse gas emissions, prepared by the Agency.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
The Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan (2018 – 2020)	- National Implementation Plan 2018 - 2020 is in direct response to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and provides a whole-of-government approach to implement the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). - The Plan provides a 'SDG Matrix' which identifies the responsible Government Departments for each of the 169 targets. It also includes a 'SDG Policy Map' indicating the relevant national policies for each of the targets.	The Plan identifies four strategic priorities to guide implementation: - Awareness: raise public awareness of the SDGs; - Participation: provide stakeholders opportunities to engage and contribute to follow-up and review processes, and further develop national implementation of the Goals; - Support: encourage and support efforts of communities and organisations to contribute towards meeting the SDGs, and foster public participation; and - Policy alignment: develop alignment of national policy with the SDGs and identify opportunities for policy coherence.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Infrastructure and Capital Investment Plan (2016-2021)	€27 billion multi-annual Exchequer Capital Investment Plan, which is supported by a programme of capital investment in the wider State sector, and which over the period 2016 to 2021 will help to lay the foundations for continued growth in Ireland.	- This Capital Plan reflects the Government's commitment to supporting strong and sustainable economic growth and raising welfare and living standards for all. - It includes allocations for new projects across a number of key areas and funding to ensure that the present stock of national infrastructure is refreshed and maintained.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
European Union (Birds and Natural Habitats) (Sea-Fisheries) Regulations 2013 (S.I. 290 of 2013)	These regulations have been drafted to implement the responsibilities of the Minister for Agriculture Food and the Marine in relation to sea fisheries in Natura 2000 sites, in accordance with the Habitats and Birds Directives as transposed by the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011).	- Regulation 3 provides for the submission of a Fisheries Natura Plan in relation to planned fisheries; - Regulation 4 provides for a screening of a Fisheries Natura Plan to determine whether or not an appropriate assessment is required; - Regulation 5 provides for an appropriate assessment of a Fisheries Natura Plan and also provides for public and statutory consultation; - Regulation 6 provides for the Minister to make a determination to adopt a Fisheries Natura Plan. The Minister may amend, withdraw or revoke a plan; - Regulation 7 provides for publication of the adopted Fisheries Natura Plan; - Regulation 8 provides for a Risk Assessment of unplanned fisheries and also provides for public and statutory consultation on the assessment; - Regulation 9 provides for the issue of a Natura Declaration to prohibit, restrict including restricting by permit, control, etc. of sea fishing activities; - Regulation 10 provides for Natura Permits to be issued where required by Natura Declarations; and - Regulations 11 to 31 deal with functions of authorised officers and related matters, offences, etc.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Ireland's National Renewable Energy Action Plan 2010 (Irish Government submission to the European Commission)	The National Renewable Energy Action Plan (NREAP) sets out the Government's strategic approach and concrete measures to deliver on Ireland's 16% target under Directive 2009/28/EC.	The NREAP sets out the Member State's national targets for the share of energy from renewable sources to be consumed in transport, electricity and heating and cooling in 2020, and demonstrates how the Member State will meet its overall national target established under the Directive.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the

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			achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Strategy for Renewable Energy (2012-2020)	- The Government's overarching strategic objective is to make renewable energy an increasingly significant component of Ireland's energy supply by 2020, so that at a minimum it will achieve its legally binding 2020 target in the most cost-efficient manner for consumers. - Of critical importance is the role which the renewable energy sector plays in job creation and economic activity as part of the Government's action plan for jobs.	This document sets out five strategic goals, reflecting the key dimensions of the renewable energy challenge to 2020: - Increasing on and offshore wind, - Building a sustainable bioenergy sector, - Fostering R&D in renewables such as wave & tidal, - Growing sustainable transport; and - Building out robust and efficient networks.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Climate Mitigation Plan 2017	The Plan represents an initial step to set Ireland on a pathway to achieve the deep decarbonisation required in Ireland by mid-century in line with the Government's policy objectives.	The National Mitigation Plan focuses on the following issues: - Climate Action Policy Framework - Decarbonising Electricity Generation - Decarbonising the Built Environment - Decarbonising Transport An Approach to Carbon Neutrality for Agriculture, Forest and Land Use Sectors	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Policy Position on Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (2014)	- The National Policy Position provides a high-level policy direction for the adoption and implementation by Government of plans to enable the State to move to a low carbon economy by 2050. - Statutory authority for the plans is set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015.	National climate policy in Ireland: - Recognises the threat of climate change for humanity; - Anticipates and supports mobilisation of a comprehensive international response to climate change, and global transition to a low-carbon future; - Recognises the challenges and opportunities of the broad transition agenda for society; and - Aims, as a fundamental national objective, to achieve transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Clean Air Strategy [in preparation]	The Clean Air Strategy will provide the strategic policy framework necessary to identify and promote integrated measures across government policy that are required to reduce air pollution and promote cleaner air while delivering on wider national objectives.	- Having a National Strategy will provide a policy framework by which Ireland can develop the necessary policies and measures to comply with new and emerging EU legislation. - The Strategy should also help tackle climate change. - The Strategy will consider a wider range of national policies that are relevant to clean air policy such as transport, energy, home heating and agriculture. - In any discussion relating to clean air policy, the issue of people's health is paramount and this will be a strong theme of the Strategy.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
EirGrid's Grid25 Strategy and associated Grid25 Implementation Programme 2017-2022	EirGrid's mission is to develop, maintain and operate a safe, secure, reliable, economical and efficient transmission system for Ireland; <i>"Our vision is of a grid developed to match future needs, so it can safely and reliably carry power all over the country to the major towns and cities and onwards to every home, farm and business where the electricity is consumed and so it can meet the needs of consumers and generators in a sustainable way."</i>	Grid25, EirGrid's roadmap to uprate the electricity transmission grid by 2025, continues to be implemented so as to increase the capacity of the grid, to satisfy future demand, and to help Ireland meet its target of 40 per cent of electricity from renewable energy by 2020.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Offshore Renewable Energy Development Plan (OREDP) 2014	- The OREDP sets out key principles, policy actions and enablers for delivery of Ireland's significant potential in the area of the offshore renewable energy - The overarching objective of the Government's energy policy is to ensure secure and sustainable supplies of competitively priced energy to all consumers. - The OREDP sets out a vision: "Our offshore renewable energy resource contributing to our economic development and sustainable growth,	Three high level goals, of equal importance, based on the concept of sustainable development have been identified for the OREDP: - Ireland harnesses the market opportunities presented by offshore renewable energy to achieve economic development, growth and jobs - Increase awareness of the value, opportunities and societal benefits of developing offshore renewable energy - Offshore renewable energy developments do not adversely impact the rich marine environment and its living and non-living resources	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory

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	generating jobs for our citizens, supported by coherent policy, planning and regulation, and managed in an integrated manner".		framework for environmental protection and management.
All Island Grid Study 2008	- The All Island Grid Study is the first comprehensive assessment of the ability of the electrical power system and, as part of that, the transmission network ("the grid") on the island of Ireland to absorb large amounts of electricity produced from renewable energy sources. - The objective of this five-part study is to assess the technical feasibility and the relative costs and benefits associated with various scenarios for increased shares of electricity sourced from renewable energy in the all island power system.	Key conclusions of the study: - The presented results indicate that the differences in cost between the highest cost and the lowest cost portfolios are low (7%), given the assumptions made and costs included in the Study. - All but the high coal-based portfolio lead to significant reductions of CO2 emissions compared to portfolio 1 - All but the high coal-based portfolio lead to reductions on the dependency of the all island system on fuel and electricity imports. - The limitations of the study may overstate the technical feasibility of the portfolios analysed and could impact the costs and benefits resulting. Further work is required to understand the extent of such impact. - Timely development of the transmission networks, requiring means to address the planning challenge, is a precondition for implementation of the portfolios considered. - Market mechanisms must facilitate the installation of complementary, i.e. flexible, dispatchable plant, so as to maintain adequate levels of system security.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways (2018)	- The objective of this Strategy is to assist in the strategic development of nationally and regionally significant Greenways in appropriate locations constructed to an appropriate standard in order to deliver a quality experience for all Greenways users. - It also aims to increase the number and geographical spread of Greenways of scale and quality around the country over the next 10 years with a consequent significant increase in the number of people using Greenways as a visitor experience and as a recreational amenity.	- A Strategic Greenway network of national and regional routes, with a number of high capacity flagship routes that can be extended and/or link with local Greenways and other cycling and walking infrastructure; - Greenways of scale and appropriate standard that have significant potential to deliver an increase in activity tourism to Ireland and are regularly used by overseas visitors, domestic visitors and locals thereby contributing to a healthier society through increased physical activity; - Greenways that provide a substantially segregated off road experience linking places of interest, recreation and leisure in areas with beautiful scenery of different types with plenty to see and do; and - Greenways that provide opportunities for the development of local businesses and economies, and - Greenways that are developed with all relevant stakeholders in line with an agreed code of practice.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Water Resources Plan [in preparation]	- This is a plan on how to provide a safe, secure and reliable water supply to customers for the next 25 years, without causing adverse impact on the environment. - The objective of this Plan is to set out how we intend to maintain the supply and demand for drinking water over the short, medium and long term whilst minimising the impact on the environment.	The key objectives of the plan are to: - Identify areas where there are current and future potential water supply shortfalls, taking into account normal and extreme weather conditions - Assess the current and future water demand from homes, businesses, farms, and industry - Consider the impacts of climate change on Ireland's water resources - Develop a drought plan advising measures to be taken before and during drought events - Develop a plan detailing how we deal with the material that is produced as a result of treating drinking water - Identify, develop and assess options to help meet potential shortfalls in water supplies - Assess the water resources available at a national level including lakes, rivers and groundwater	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture Development (2014-2020)	Vision: <i>"Aquaculture in RC is economically, socially and ecologically sustainable, with a developed infrastructure, strong human potentials and an organized market. The consumption of aquaculture products is equal or above EU average, while the technological development of the sector is among the best in the EU."</i>	General development and growth objectives of marine and freshwater aquaculture (2014 – 2020): - Strengthen the social, business and administrative environment for aquaculture development - Increase in the total production to 24,050 tonnes while adhering to the principles of economic, social and ecological sustainability - Improvement of the perception and increase in the national consumption of National products	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Seafood Operation Programme 2014	- The Operational Programme (OP) supported by the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) in Ireland aims at achieving key national development priorities along with the EU's "Europe 2020" objectives. - The OP will support the general reform of the EU's Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the development of its Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) in Ireland.	The OP strategy is designed around the Irish national priorities in the agri-food sector: 'Act Smart' by encouraging knowledge and innovation, 'Think Green' through a responsible and sustainable use of resources, 'Achieve Growth' in order to maintain and create jobs. Funding aims at increasing the competitiveness of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors through innovation and skills, while promoting a more efficient and sustainable use of resources. Funding will also help local coastal communities to improve their livelihood by supporting small-scale fisheries and through significantly increased support for Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs).	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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Construction 2020, A Strategy for a Renewed Construction Sector	- Construction 2020 sets out a package of measures agreed by the Government and is aimed at stimulating activity in the building industry. - The Strategy aims both to increase the capacity of the sector to create and maintain jobs, and to deliver a sustainable sector, operating at an appropriate level. It seeks to learn the lessons of the past and to ensure that the right structures and mechanisms are in place so that they are not repeated.	This Strategy therefore addresses issues including: - A strategic approach to the provision of housing, based on real and measured needs, with mechanisms in place to detect and act when things are going wrong; - Continuing improvement of the planning process, striking the right balance between current and future requirements; - The availability of financing for viable and worthwhile projects; - Access to mortgage finance on reasonable and sustainable terms; - Ensuring we have the tools we need to monitor and regulate the sector in a way that underpins public confidence and worker safety; - Ensuring a fit for purpose sector supported by a highly skilled workforce achieving high quality and standards; and - Ensuring opportunities are provided to unemployed former construction workers to contribute to the recovery of the sector.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland (1997)	The overall aim of this Strategy is to ensure that economy and society in Ireland can develop to their full potential within a well-protected environment, without compromising the quality of that environment, and with responsibility towards present and future generations and the wider international community.	The Strategy addresses all areas of Government policy, and of economic and societal activity, which impact on the environment. It seeks to re-orientate policies as necessary to ensure that the strong growth Ireland enjoys and seeks to maintain will be environmentally sustainable.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025 and National Landscape Character Assessment (pending preparation)	- The National Landscape Strategy will be used to ensure compliance with the European Landscape Convention and to establish principles for protecting and enhancing the landscape while positively managing its change. It will provide a high-level policy framework to achieve balance between the protection, management and planning of the landscape by way of supporting actions. - Landscape Strategy Vision: <i>"Our landscape reflects and embodies our cultural values and our shared natural heritage and contributes to the well-being of our society, environment and economy. We have an obligation to ourselves and to future generations to promote its sustainable protection, management and planning."</i>	The objectives of the National Landscape Strategy are to: - Implement the European Landscape Convention by integrating landscape into the approach to sustainable development; - Establish and embed a public process of gathering, sharing and interpreting scientific, technical and cultural information in order to carry out evidence-based identification and description of the character, resources and processes of the landscape; - Provide a policy framework, which will put in place measures at national, sectoral - including agriculture, tourism, energy, transport and marine - and local level, together with civil society, to protect, manage and properly plan through high quality design for the sustainable stewardship of the landscape; - Ensure that we take advantage of opportunities to implement policies relating to landscape use that are complementary and mutually reinforcing and that conflicting policy objectives are avoided in as far as possible.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Hazardous Waste Management Plan (EPA) 2014-2020	This Plan sets out the priorities to be pursued over the next six years and beyond to improve the management of hazardous waste, taking into account the progress made since the previous plan and the waste policy and legislative changes that have occurred since the previous plan was published. Section 26 of the Waste Management Act 1996 as amended, sets out the overarching objectives for the National Hazardous Waste Management Plan. In this context, the following objectives are included as priorities for the revised Plan period: - To prevent and reduce the generation of hazardous waste by industry and society generally; - To maximise the collection of hazardous waste with a view to reducing the environmental and health impacts of any unregulated waste; - To strive for increased self-sufficiency in the management of hazardous waste and to minimise hazardous waste export; - To minimise the environmental, health, social and economic impacts of hazardous waste generation and management.	The revised Plan makes 27 recommendations under the following topics: - Prevention - Collection - Self-sufficiency - Regulation - Legacy issues - North-south cooperation - Guidance and awareness - Implementation	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Ports Policy 2013	The core objective of National Ports Policy is to facilitate a competitive and effective market for maritime transport services.	National Ports Policy introduces clear categorisation of the ports sector into Ports of National Significance (Tier 1), Ports of National Significance (Tier 2) and Ports of Regional Significance.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Marine Spatial Plan for Ireland (In/pending preparation)	It is intended that the Marine Spatial Plan will be finalised in 2020, and forwarded to the European Commission at that time, ahead of the due date for submission by Member States of their plans in March 2021.	The Marine Spatial Plan will be a succinct strategic document that will deal with, inter alia, the following environmental, social and economic issues: Key marine activities such as fisheries, tourism, transport, offshore renewable energy generation, oil and gas exploration and production, aquaculture, and how they interact;	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise.

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		- Climate change and related impacts; - Communities and health; - Cultural heritage; - Marine environment and biodiversity; - Transboundary interactions with other jurisdictions.	Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Ministerial Guidelines such as Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines and Flood Risk Management Guidelines	The Department produces a range of guidelines designed to help planning authorities, An Bord Pleanála, developers and the general public and cover a wide range of issues amongst others, architectural heritage, child care facilities, landscape, quarries and residential density.	The Minister issues statutory guidelines under Section 28 of the Act which planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála are obliged to have regard to in the performance of their planning functions.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
HSE Healthy Ireland Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013-2025	The vision is: <i>"A Healthy Ireland, where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone's responsibility."</i>	These four goals are interlinked, interdependent and mutually supportive: - Goal 1: Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life - Goal 2: Reduce health inequalities - Goal 3: Protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing - Goal 4: Create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Our Sustainable Future: A framework for Sustainable Development for Ireland 2012	A medium to long term framework for advancing sustainable development and the green economy in Ireland. It identifies spatial planning as a key challenge for sustainable development and sets a series of measures to address these challenges.	Sets out the challenges facing us and how we might address them in making sure that quality of life and general wellbeing can be improved and sustained in the decades to come.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009 – 2020 (2009)	- Outlines a policy for how a sustainable travel and transport system can be achieved. - Sets out five key goals: - To reduce overall travel demand. - To maximise the efficiency of the transport network. - To reduce reliance on fossil fuels. - To reduce transport emissions. - To improve accessibility to transport.	- Others lower level aims include: - reduce distance travelled by private car and encourage smarter travel, including focusing population growth in areas of employment and to encourage people to live in close proximity to places of employment - ensuring that alternatives to the car are more widely available, mainly through a radically improved public transport service and through investment in cycling and walking - improving the fuel efficiency of motorised transport through improved fleet structure, energy efficient driving and alternative technologies - strengthening institutional arrangements to deliver the targets	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Investing in our Future: A Strategic Framework for Investment in Land Transport (SFILT) – Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport	SFILT sets out a set of priorities to guide the allocation of the State's investment to best develop and manage Ireland's land transport network over the coming decades.	The three priorities stated in SFILT are: - Priority 1: Achieve steady state maintenance (meaning that the maintenance and renewal of the existing transport system is at a sufficient level to maintain the system in an adequate condition); - Priority 2: Address urban congestion; and - Priority 3: Maximise the value of the road network. In delivering on the steady state maintenance objective set out in SFILT, the Plan includes for: - Planned replacement programme for the bus fleet operated under Public Service Obligation ("PSO") contracts; - Tram refurbishment and asset renewal in the case of light rail; and - To the extent within the Authority' remit, support for the operation of the existing rail network within the GDA.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland – The Energy Policy Framework 2007 – 2020 (2007)	- White paper setting out a framework for delivering a sustainable energy future in Ireland. - Outlines strategic Goals for: - Security of Supply - Sustainability of Energy - Competitiveness of Energy Supply	The underpinning Strategic Goals are: - Ensuring that electricity supply consistently meets demand - Ensuring the physical security and reliability of gas supplies to Ireland - Enhancing the diversity of fuels used for power generation - Delivering electricity and gas to homes and businesses over efficient, reliable and secure networks - Creating a stable attractive environment for hydrocarbon exploration and production - Being prepared for energy supply disruptions	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Adaptation Framework (NAF) 2018 and associated regional, local and sectoral adaptation plans	NAF specifies the national strategy for the application of adaptation measures in different sectors and by local authorities in their administrative areas in order to reduce the vulnerability of the State to the negative effects of climate change and to avail of any positive effects that may occur	- Adaptation under this Framework should seek to minimise costs and maximise the opportunities arising from climate change. - Adaptation actions range from building adaptive capacity (e.g. increasing awareness, sharing information and targeted training) through to policy and finance-based actions. - Adaptation actions must be risk based, informed by existing vulnerabilities of our society and systems and an understanding of projected climate change. - Adaptation actions taken to increase climate resilience must also consider impacts on other sectors and levels of governance	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Governments White Paper 'Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future' (2015 – 2030)	The White Paper sets out a vision and a framework to guide Irish energy policy between now and 2030. A complete energy policy update informed by the vision to transform Ireland into a low carbon society and economy by 2050.	2030 will represent a significant milestone, meaning: - Reduced GHG emissions from the energy sector by between 80% and 95% - Ensuring that secure supplies of competitive and affordable energy remain available to citizens and businesses.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Renewable Energy Action Plan (2010)	Sets out the Member State's national targets for the share of energy from renewable sources to be consumed in transport, electricity and heating and cooling in 2020, and demonstrates how the Member State will meet its overall national target established under the Directive.	Including Ireland's 16% target of gross final consumption to come from renewables by 2020.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Energy Efficiency Action Plan for Ireland (2009 – 2020)	This is the second National Energy Efficiency Action Plan for Ireland.	The Plan reviews the original 90 actions outlined in the first Plan and updates/renews/removes them as appropriate.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Wildlife Act of 1976 Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000	The act provides protection and conservation of wild flora and fauna.	- Provides protection for certain species, their habitats and important ecosystems - Give statutory protection to NHAs - Enhances wildlife species and their habitats - Includes more species for protection	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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Actions for Biodiversity (2017-2021) Ireland's National Biodiversity Plan	Sets out strategic objectives, targets and actions to conserve and restore Ireland's biodiversity and to prevent and reduce the loss of biodiversity in Ireland and globally.	- To mainstream biodiversity in the decision-making process across all sectors. - To substantially strengthen the knowledge base for conservation, management and sustainable use of biodiversity. - To increase awareness and appreciation of biodiversity and ecosystems services. - To conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider countryside. - To conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the marine environment. - To expand and improve on the management of protected areas and legally protected species. - To substantially strengthen the effectiveness of international governance for biodiversity and ecosystem services.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Broadband Plan (2012)	Sets out the strategy to deliver high speed broadband throughout Ireland.	The Plan sets out: - A clear statement of Government policy on the delivery of High-Speed Broadband. - Specific targets for the delivery and rollout of high-speed broadband and the speeds to be delivered. - The strategy and interventions that will underpin the successful implementation of these targets. - A series of specific complementary measures to promote implementation of Government policy in this area.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations of 2003 (SI 722 of 2003) European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations of 2003 (SI 350 of 2014) European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface waters) Regulations of 2009 (SI 272 of 2009)	- Transpose the Water Framework Directive into legislation. - Outlines the general duty of public authorities in relation to water. - Identifies the competent authorities in charge of water policy (amended to Irish Water in 2013) and gives EPA and the CER the authority to regulate and supervise their actions.	- Implements River basin districts and characterisation of RBDs and River Basin Management Plans. - Requires the public to be informed and consulted on the Plan and for progress reports to be published on RBDs. - Implements a Register of protected areas, Classification systems and Monitoring programmes for water bodies. - Allows the competent authority to recover the cost of damage/destruction of status of water body. - Outlines environmental objectives and programme of measures and environmental quality standards for priority substances. - Outlines criteria for assessment of groundwater. - Outlines environmental objectives to be achieved for surface water bodies. - Outlines surface water quality standards. - Establishes threshold values for the classification and protection of surface waters against pollution and deterioration in quality.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations of 2010 (SI 9 of 2010)	Transpose the requirements of the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC into Irish Legislation.	- Outlines environmental objectives to be achieved for groundwater bodies of groundwater against pollution and deterioration in quality. - Sets groundwater quality standards. - Outlines threshold values for the classification and protection of groundwater.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Water Pollution Acts 1977 to 1990	The Water Pollution Acts allow Local Authorities the authority regulate and supervise actions relating to water in their division.	The Water Pollution Acts enable local authorities to: - Prosecute for water pollution offences. - Attach appropriate pollution control conditions in the licensing of effluent discharges from industry, etc., made to waters. - Issue notices ("section 12 notices") to farmers, etc., specifying measures to be taken within a prescribed period to prevent water pollution. - Issue notices requiring a person to cease the pollution of waters and requiring the mitigation or remedying of any effects of the pollution in the manner and within the period specified in such notices; - Seek court orders, including High Court injunctions, to prevent, terminate, mitigate or remedy pollution/its effects. - Prepare water quality management plans for any waters in or adjoining their functional areas.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Water Services Act 2007 Water Services (Amendment) Act 2012 Water Services Act (No. 2) 2013	- Provides the water services infrastructure. - Outlines the responsibilities involved in delivering and managing water services. - Identifies the authority in charge of provision of water and waste water supply.	Key strategic objectives include: - Ensuring Irish Water delivers infrastructural projects that meet key public health, environmental and economic objectives in the water services sector. - Ensuring the provision of adequate water and sewerage services in the gateways and hubs listed in the National Spatial Strategy, and in other locations where services need to be enhanced.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and

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	Irish Water was given the responsibility of the provision of water and waste water services in the amendment act during 2013, therefore these services are no longer the responsibility of the 34 Local Authorities in Ireland.	- Ensuring good quality drinking water is available to all consumers of public and group water supplies, in compliance with national and EU drinking water standards - Ensuring the provision of the remaining infrastructure needed to provide secondary waste water treatment, for compliance with the requirements of the EU Urban Waste water Treatment Directive. - Promoting water conservation through Irish Water's Capital Investment Plan, the Rural Water Programme and other measures. - Monitoring the on-going implementation of septic tanks inspection regime and the National Inspection Plan for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems. - Ensuring a fair funding model to deliver water services. - Overseeing the establishment of an economic regulation function under the CER.	cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Irish Water's Water Services Strategic Plan 2015 and associated Proposed Capital Investment Plan (2014-2016)	This Water Services Strategic Plan sets out strategic objectives for the delivery of water services over the next 25 years up to 2040. It details current and future challenges which affect the provision of water services and identifies the priorities to be tackled in the short and medium term.	Six strategic objectives as follows: - Meet Customer Expectations. - Ensure a Safe and Reliable Water Supply. - Provide Effective Management of Waste water. - Protect and Enhance the Environment. - Support Social and Economic Growth. - Invest in the Future.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Raised Bog SAC Management Plan and Review of Raised Bog Natural Heritage Areas	Aims to meet nature conservation obligations while having regard to national and local economic, social and cultural needs	- Ensure that the implications of management choices for water levels, quantity and quality are fully explored, understood and factored into policy making and land use planning. - Review the current raised bog NHA network in terms of its contribution to the national conservation objective for raised bog habitats and determine the most suitable sites to replace the losses of active raised bog habitat and high bog areas within the SAC network and to enhance the national network of NHAs.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Food Harvest 2020	Food Harvest 2020 is a roadmap for the Irish food industry, as it seeks to innovate and expand in response to increased global demand for quality foods. It sets out a vision for the potential growth in agricultural output after the removal of milk quotas.	Seeks for the improvement of all agricultural sectors at all levels in terms of sustainability, environmental consideration and marketing development.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Agri-vision 2015 Action Plan	Outlines the vision for agricultural industry to improve competitiveness and response to market demand while respecting and enhancing the environment	not applicable	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Rural Environmental Protection Scheme (REPS) Agri-Environmental Options Scheme (AEOS) Green, Low-Carbon, Agri-environment Scheme (GLAS)	- Agri-environmental funding schemes aimed at rural development for the environmental enhancement and protection. - GLAS is the new replacement for REPS and AEOS which are both expiring.	- Establish best practice farming methods and production methods in order to protect landscapes and maximise conservation. - Protect biodiversity, endangered species of flora and fauna and wildlife habitats. - Ensure food is produced with the highest regard to the environment. - Implement nutrient management plans and grassland management plans. - Protect and maintain water bodies, wetlands and cultural heritage.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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National Rural Development Programme	The National Rural Development Programme, prepared by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, sets out a national programme based on the EU framework for rural development and prioritises improving the competitiveness of agriculture, improving the environment and improving the quality of life in rural areas	At a more detailed level, the programme also: - Supports structural change at farm level including training young farmers and encouraging early retirement, support for restructuring, development and innovation; - Aims to improve the environment, biodiversity and the amenity value of the countryside by support for land management through funds such as Natura 2000 payments etc.; and - Aims to improve quality of life in rural areas and encouraging diversification of economic activity through the implementation of local development strategies such as non-agricultural activities	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Forestry Programme (2014-2020)	Represents Ireland's proposals for 100% State aid funding for a new Forestry Programme for the period 2014 – 2020.	Measures include the following: - Afforestation and Creation of Woodland - NeighbourWood Scheme - Forest Roads - Reconstitution Scheme - Woodland Improvement Scheme - Native Woodland Conservation Scheme - Knowledge Transfer and Information Actions - Producer Groups - Innovative Forest Technology - Forest Genetic Reproductive Material - Forest Management Plans	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
River Basin Management Plan	River Basin Management Plans set out the measures planned to maintain and improve the status of waters.	- Aim to protect and enhance all water bodies in the RBD and meet the environmental objectives outlined in Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive. - Identify and manages water bodies in the RBD. - Establish a programme of measures for monitoring and improving water quality in the RBD. - Involve the public through consultations.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Peatlands Strategy (2015-2025)	This Strategy aims to provide a long-term framework within which all of the peatlands within the State can be managed responsibly in order to optimise their social, environmental and economic contribution to the well-being of this and future generations.	Objectives of the Strategy: - To give direction to Ireland's approach to peatland management. - To apply to all peatlands, including peat soils. - To ensure that the relevant State authorities and state-owned companies that influence such decisions contribute to meeting cross-cutting objectives and obligations in their policies and actions. - To ensure that Ireland's peatlands are sustainably managed so that their benefits can be enjoyed responsibly. - To inform appropriate regulatory systems to facilitate good decision making in support of responsible use. - To inform the provision of appropriate incentives, financial supports and disincentives where required. - To provide a framework for determining and ensuring the most appropriate future use of cutover and cutaway bogs. To ensure that specific actions necessary for the achievement of its objectives are clearly identified and delivered by those involved in or responsible for peatlands management or for decisions affecting their management.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Flood Risk Management Plans arising from National Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Programme	The national Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) programme commenced in Ireland in 2011 and is being overseen by the Office of Public Works. The CFRAM Programme is intended to deliver on core components of the National Flood Policy, adopted in 2004, and on the requirements of the EU Floods Directive.	CFRAM Studies have been undertaken for all River Basin Districts. The studies are focusing on areas known to have experienced flooding in the past and areas that may be subject to flooding in the future either due to development pressures or climate change. Flood Risk and Hazard mapping, including Flood Extent Mapping, was finalised in 2017. The final outputs from the studies are the CFRAM Plans, finalised in 2018. The Plans define the current and future flood risk in the River Basin Districts and set out how this risk can be managed.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Draft National Bioenergy Plan 2014 - 2020	The Draft Bioenergy Plan sets out a vision as follows: Bioenergy resources contributing to economic development and sustainable growth, generating jobs for citizens, supported by coherent policy, planning and regulation, and managed in an integrated manner.	Three high level goals, of equal importance, based on the concept of sustainable development are identified: To harness the market opportunities presented by bioenergy in order to achieve economic development, growth and jobs.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all

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		- To increase awareness of the value, opportunities and societal benefits of developing bioenergy. - To ensure that bioenergy developments do not adversely impact the environment and its living and non-living resources.	environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Draft Renewable Electricity Policy and Development Framework (DCCAE) 2016	Goal: To optimise the opportunities in Ireland for renewable electricity development on land at significant scale, to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, in accordance with European and Irish law, including Directive 2009/28/EC: On the promotion of the use of energy from renewable resources.	Objective: To develop a Policy and Development Framework for renewable electricity generation on land to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, with particular focus on large scale projects for indigenous renewable electricity generation. This will, inter alia, provide guidance for planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for the Transport Sector (DTTAS) 2017- 2030	This Framework sets targets to achieve an appropriate level of alternative fuels infrastructure for transport, which is relative to national policy and Irish market needs. Non-infrastructure-based incentives to support the use of the infrastructure and the uptake of alternative fuels are also included within the scope of the Framework.	Targets for alternative fuel infrastructure include the following: - AFV forecasts - Electricity targets - Natural gas (CNG, LNG) targets - Hydrogen targets - Biofuels targets - LPG targets - Synthetic and paraffinic fuels targets	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Food Wise 2025 (DAFM)	Food Wise 2025 sets out a ten-year plan for the agri-food sector. It underlines the sector's unique and special position within the Irish economy, and it illustrates the potential which exists for this sector to grow even further.	Food Wise 2025 identifies ambitious and challenging growth projections for the industry over the next ten years including: 85% increase in exports to €19 billion. 70% increase in value added to €13 billion. 60% increase in primary production to €10 billion. - The creation of 23,000 additional jobs all along the supply chain from producer level to high-end value-added product development.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) NI	The SPPS consolidates some twenty separate policy publications into one document and sets out strategic subject planning policy for a wide range of planning matters. It also provides the core planning principles to underpin delivery of the two-tier planning system with the aim of furthering sustainable development.	The overall objective of the planning system is to further sustainable development and improve well-being for the people of the North.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Cycle Network Scoping Study 2010	- Outlines objectives and actions aimed at developing a strong cycle network in Ireland - Sets out 19 specific objectives, and details the 109 actions, aimed at ensuring that a cycling culture is developed	- Sets a target where 10% of all journeys will be made by bike by 2020 - Proposes the planning, infrastructure, communication, education and stakeholder participations measures required to implement the initiative	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

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Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
National Policy Framework for Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport in Ireland 2017 to 2030	- This National Policy Framework on Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport represents the first step in communicating our longer-term national vision for decarbonising transport by 2050, the cornerstone of which is our ambition that by 2030 all new cars and vans sold in Ireland will be zero-emissions capable. - By 2030 it is envisaged that the movement in Ireland to electrically-fuelled cars and commuter rail will be well underway, with natural gas and biofuels developing as major alternatives in the freight and bus sectors.	This policy set out to achieve five key goals in transport: - Reduce overall travel demand - Maximise the efficiency of the transport network - Reduce reliance on fossil fuels - Reduce transport emissions - Improve accessibility to transport These goals remain the cornerstone of transport policy and are fully aligned to the objectives of this National Policy Framework.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Tourism Action Plan 2019-2021	The Tourism Action Plan 2019-2021 sets out actions that the Tourism Leadership Group has identified as priorities to be progressed until 2021 in order to maintain sustainable growth in overseas tourism revenue and employment. Each action involves specific tourism stakeholders, both in the public and private sectors, all of whom we expect to proactively work towards the completion of actions within the specified timeframe.	The Plan contains 27 actions focusing on the following areas: - Policy Context - Marketing Ireland as a Visitor Destination - Enhancing the Visitor Experience - Research in the Irish Tourism Sector - Supporting Local Communities in Tourism - Wider Government Policy - International Context - Co-ordination Structures	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Tourism Policy Statement: People, Place and Policy – Growing Tourism to 2025	The main goal of this policy statement is to have a vibrant, attractive tourism sector that makes a significant contribution to employment across the country; is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable; helps promote a positive image of Ireland overseas, and is a sector in which people want to work.	The Tourism Policy Statement sets three headline targets to be achieved by 2025: - Overseas tourism revenue of €5 billion per year net of inflation excluding carrier receipts; 250,000 people employed in tourism; and 10 million overseas visitors to Ireland per year.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Draft Renewable Electricity Policy and Development Framework (DCCAE)	Goal: To optimise the opportunities in Ireland for renewable electricity generation on land at significant scale, to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, in accordance with European and Irish law, including Directive 2009/28/EC: On the promotion of the use of energy from renewable resources.	Objective: To develop a Policy and Development Framework for renewable electricity generation on land to serve both the All Island Single Electricity Market and any future regional market within the European Union, with particular focus on large scale projects for indigenous renewable electricity generation. This will, inter alia, provide guidance for planning authorities and An Bord Pleanála. Methodology: Development of the Policy and Development Framework is to be informed by the carrying out of an SEA, including widespread consultation with stakeholders and public, and with AA under the Habitats Directive.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
National Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for the Transport Sector (DTTAS) 2017- 2030	This Framework sets targets to achieve an appropriate level of alternative fuels infrastructure for transport, which is relative to national policy and Irish market needs. Non-infrastructure-based incentives to support the use of the infrastructure and the uptake of alternative fuels are also included within the scope of the Framework.	Targets for alternative fuel infrastructure include the following: - AFV forecasts - Electricity targets - Natural gas (CNG, LNG) targets - Hydrogen targets - Biofuels targets - LPG targets Synthetic and paraffinic fuels targets	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
People Place and Policy - Growing Tourism to 2025, (DTTAS, 2014)	Growing Tourism to 2025 is a policy framework for the development of tourism within the Country.	The framework establishes the overall tourism goal of Government; - Employment in the tourism sector will be 250,000 by 2025, compared with around 200,000 at present. - There will be 10 million visits to Ireland annually by 2025. The Government's ambition is that overseas tourism revenue will reach €5 billion in real terms by 2025.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

SEA Environmental Report for relevant Proposed Material Alterations the Draft Louth CDP 2021-2027

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
Tourism Development and Innovation – A strategy for Investment 2016-2022, (Fáilte Ireland, 2016)	This strategy sets out the framework and mechanism for the delivery of investment to cities, towns, villages, communities and businesses across the country. It identifies priorities to support innovation in the sector to retain and grow the country's competitiveness in the marketplace. Its ultimate aim is to strengthen the appeal of Ireland for international visitors.	The objectives of the Tourism Development and Innovation Strategy are: - To successfully and consistently deliver a world class visitor experience; - To support a tourism sector that is profitable and achieves sustainable levels of growth and delivers jobs; - To facilitate communities to play an enhanced role in developing tourism in their locality, thereby strengthening and enriching local communities; and - To recognise, value and enhance Ireland's natural environment as the cornerstone of Irish tourism.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Regional/ County/Local Level			
Eastern and Midlands Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy,	The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy provides a long-term strategic planning and economic framework for the Eastern and Midlands Region in order to support the implementation of the National Planning Framework.	The Eastern and Midlands Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy includes provisions for its 12 constituent local authorities: Fingal County Council; Dublin City Council; South Dublin County Council; Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council; Louth County Council; Kildare County Council; Meath County Council; Wicklow County Council; Longford County Council; Laois County Council; Offaly County Council; and Westmeath County Council.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Integrated Implementation Plan 2019-2024	The Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035, which established an overall framework for transport investment over the next two decades and was subject to full SEA and Stage 2 AA, is a key policy shaping the six-year Integrated Infrastructure Plan. The priorities in the Integrated Infrastructure Plan align with the objectives and priorities set out in the Transport Strategy, focused on improving public and sustainable transport.	The Implementation Plan identifies investment proposals for a number of areas including: - Bus; - Light Rail; - Heavy Rail; - Integration Measures and Sustainable Transport Investment; - Integrated Service Plan; and - Integration and Accessibility.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Regional Development Strategy 2035 (Northern Ireland)	- Spatial strategy for the future development of Northern Ireland. - Strategic planning framework to facilitate and guide public and private sectors.	Aims to provide long-term policy direction with a strategic spatial perspective.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
NI Regional Landscape Character Assessment	In recognising the importance of sustaining local identity, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) has commissioned Landscape Character Assessments of Northern Ireland from environmental consultants, which resulted in the identification of distinct character areas within Northern Ireland.	The Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment provides a strategic overview of the landscape in Northern Ireland and subdivides the countryside into 26 Regional Landscape Character Areas based upon information on people and place and the combinations of nature, culture and perception which make each part of Northern Ireland unique.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
NI Regional Seascape Character Assessment	The aim of this study is to provide a strategic understanding of different areas of regional seascape character along the entire Northern Ireland coast, complementing similar assessments undertaken elsewhere in the UK. This will contribute to the aims of the European Landscape Convention through promoting the protection, management and planning of the seascape, and to support the European cooperation in landscape issues.	- Identify and map the different regional seascape character areas. - Describe the key features and characteristics of each seascape character area. - Relate the description of each seascape character area to its neighbouring terrestrial landscape character areas (as described in the NI Landscape Character Assessment, 2000) and take account of boundaries identified in relation to neighbouring seascape areas for the British and Irish coastline.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

SEA Environmental Report for relevant Proposed Material Alterations the Draft Louth CDP 2021-2027

Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
NPWS Conservation Plans and/or Conservation Objectives for SACs and SPAs	Management planning for nature conservation sites has a number of aims. These include: - To identify and evaluate the features of interest for a site - To set clear objectives for the conservation of the features of interest - To describe the site and its management - To identify issues (both positive and negative) that might influence the site - To set out appropriate strategies/management actions to achieve the objectives	- Conservation objectives for SACs and SPAs (i.e. sites within the Natura 2000 network) have to be set for the habitats and species for which the sites are selected. - These objectives are used when carrying out appropriate assessments for plans and projects that might impact on these sites.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Groundwater Protection Schemes	A Groundwater Protection Scheme provides guidelines for the planning and licensing authorities in carrying out their functions, and a framework to assist in decision-making on the location, nature and control of developments and activities in order to protect groundwater.	A Groundwater Protection Scheme aims to maintain the quantity and quality of groundwater, and in some cases improve it, by applying a risk assessment-based approach to groundwater protection and sustainable development.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Climate Action Charter (CAC) for Louth (2019)	The charter acknowledges that climate change is happening and that actions must be taken to mitigate and adapt to our changing climate.	Each Chapter in the County Development Plan must be read with this Climate Action Charter at its core. The CAC actions include: - To plan and develop the county with climate action including adaptation, mitigation and improvement at its core; and - To reduce negative climate impacts and promote climate improvement/mitigation and be climate resilient in our planning. The actions detailed in the Charter underpin all policies, objectives, goals and strategies of the CDP and all other strategic plans whether they are local, regional or national.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Local Economic and Community Plans (LECPs), including the Louth LECP 2016-2022	The overarching vision for each LECP is: “to promote the well-being and quality of life of citizens and communities	The purpose of the LECP, as provided for in the Local Government Reform Act 2014, is to set out, for a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of the relevant local authority area, both by itself directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Land Use Plans: - those in force in County Louth, including: Ardee Local Area Plan 2010-2016; and Dunleer Local Area Plan 2017- 2023; Dundalk and Drogheda Development Plan (as extended); - those in force in other adjoining planning authorities, including: Meath County Development Plan 2020-2026 and Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025, (as varied); and - those in force in adjoining planning authorities in Northern Ireland including plans for counties Armagh and Down.	- Outline planning objectives for land use development (including transport and tourism objectives). - Strategic framework for planning and sustainable development including those set out in National Planning Framework and Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies. - Set out the policies and proposals to guide development in the specific Local Authority area.	- Identify future infrastructure, development and zoning required. - Protect and enhances amenities and environment. - Guide planning authority in assessing proposals. - Aim to guide development in the area and the amount of nature of the planned development. - Aim to promote sustainable development. - Provide for economic development and protect natural environmental, heritage.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Louth Tourism and Heritage Action Plan 2016-2021	The aim: to ensure that Louth has adequate infrastructure in place to attract an increased number of visitors to the county; extend their 'dwell time'; and maximise their 'spend' in order to gain increased revenue and create additional sustainable local jobs across the county.	It seeks to capitalise on Louth's opportunities and enhance local economies by adopting a partnership approach with the Louth Tourism Officers and other sectoral players; including Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland, and the Northern Ireland Tourism Board.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and

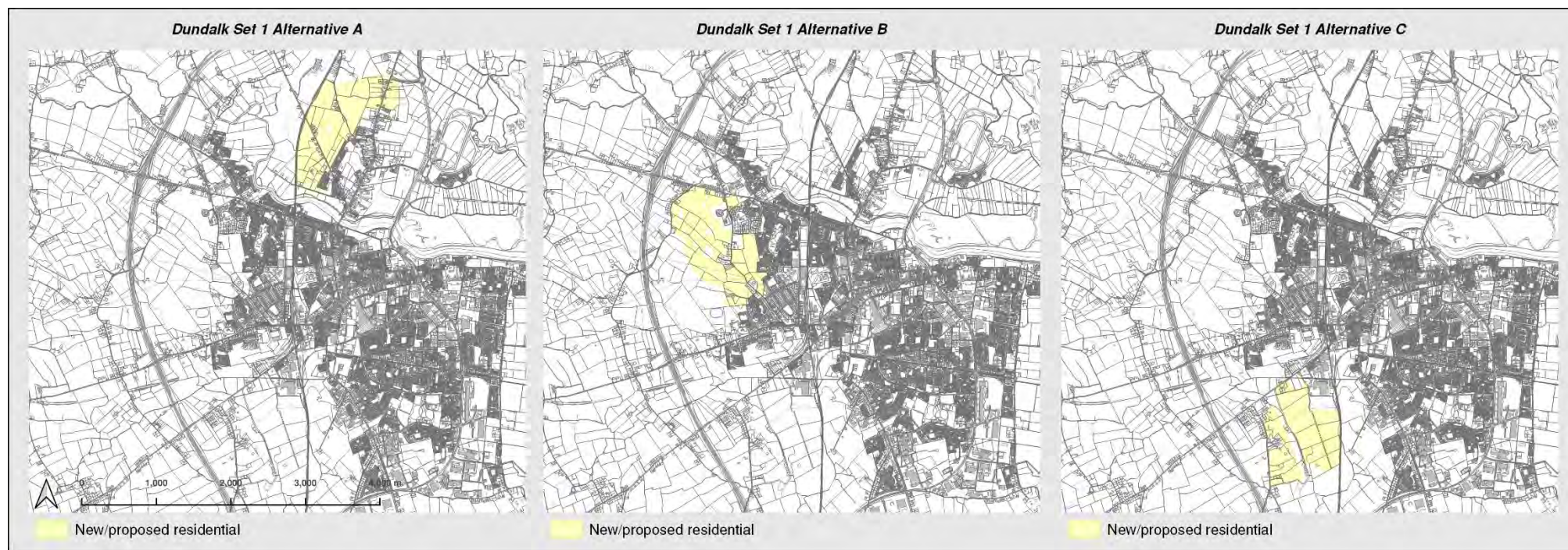
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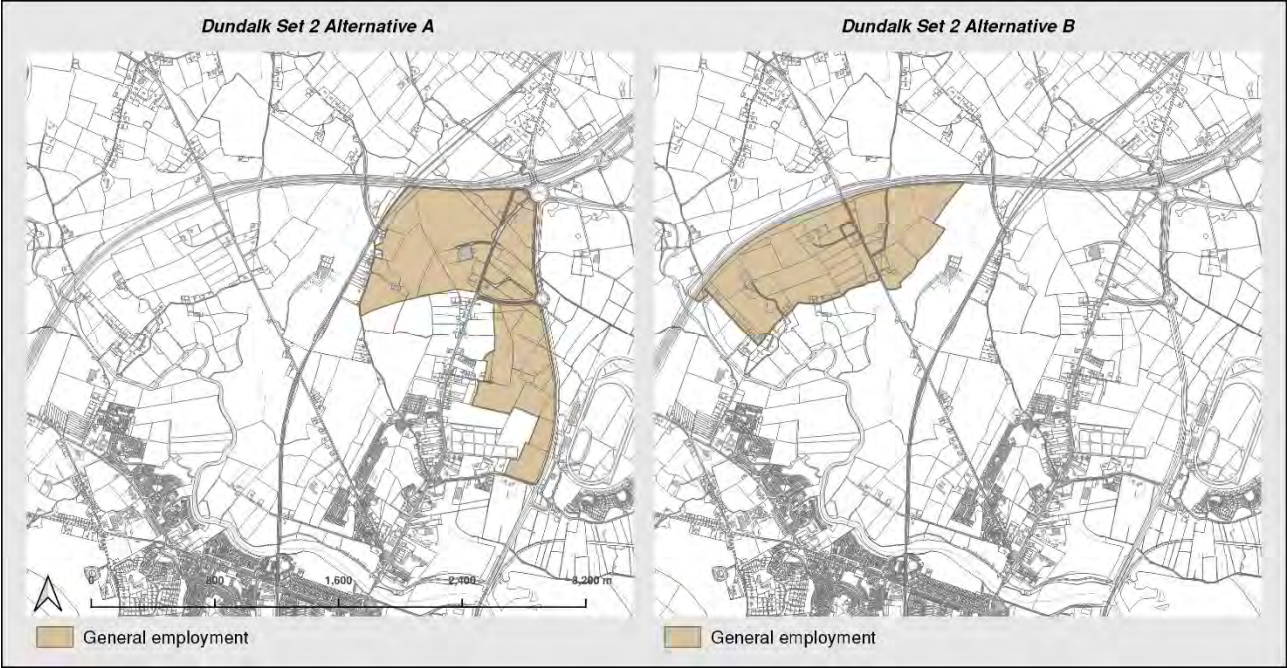
Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
			cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Draft Louth Biodiversity Action Plan 2020-2025	Aims to protect, conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services across all spectrums.	• Outlines the status of biodiversity and identifies species of importance. • Outlines objectives and targets to be met to maintain and improve biodiversity. Aims to increase awareness.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
County Louth Landscape Character Assessment (2002)	Characterises the geographical dimension of the landscape.	• Identifies the quality, value, sensitivity and capacity of the landscape area. • Guides strategies and guidelines for the future development of the landscape.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Eastern and Midlands Regional Waste Management Plan 2015-2021	These plans give effect to national and EU waste policy, and address waste prevention and management (including generation, collection and treatment) over the period 2015-2021.	• To manage wastes in a safe and compliant manner, a clear strategy, policies and actions are required.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Louth Noise Action Plan 2018-2023	Noise Action Plans are prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Noise Regulations 2006, Statutory Instrument 140 of 2006. These Regulations give effect to the EU Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise. This Directive sets out a process for managing environmental noise in a consistent manner across the EU and the Noise Regulations set out the approach to meeting the requirements of the Directive in Ireland.	The main purpose of Noise Action Plans is to: • Inform and consult the public about noise exposure, its effects and the measures which may be considered to address noise problems Address strategic noise issues by requiring competent authorities to draw up action plans to manage noise issues and their effects Reduce noise, where possible, and maintain the environmental acoustic quality where it is good	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Louth County Council's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (CCAS) 2019-2024	Respond to the impact that climate change is having, and will continue to have. Attempt to climate change adaptation and mitigation.	These Plans include actions for: • Local Adaptation Governance and Business Operations; Infrastructure and Built Environment; Land use and Development; Drainage and Flood Management; Natural Resources and Cultural Infrastructure; and Community Health and Wellbeing.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Boyne Valley Tourism Strategy 2016-2020, (Boyne Valley Tourist Office 2016)	The 2016-2020 Strategy is designed to focus on areas of growth potential, identify key projects that will act as a stimulus for tourism development and bring the Boyne Valley tourism brand to the next level.	The Strategy sets out a pathway for the Boyne Valley to become one of the leading tourism destinations in Ireland based on a collaborative destination marketing approach and return on marketing investment focus.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with

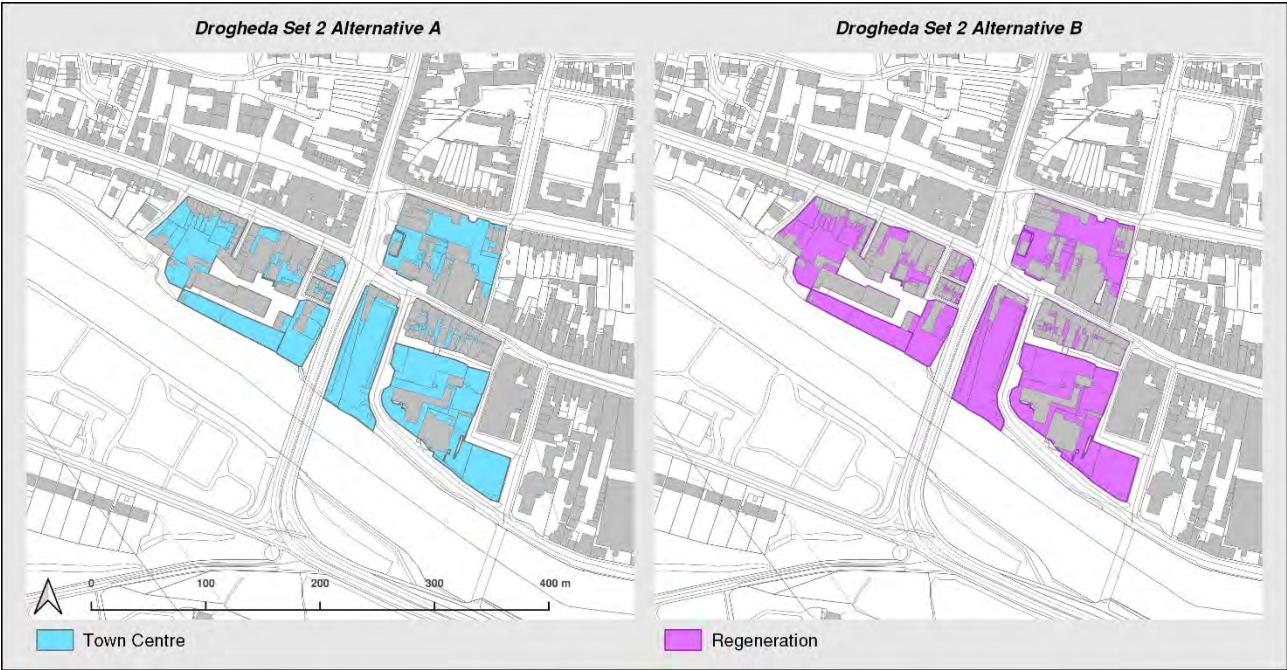
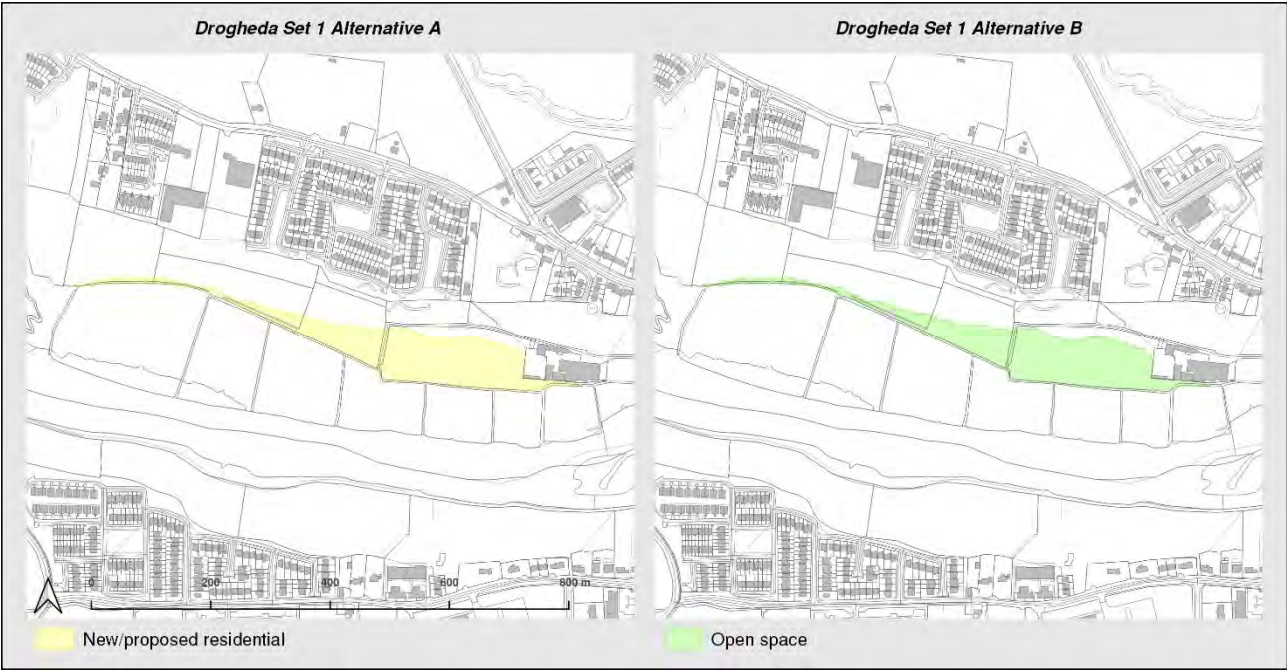
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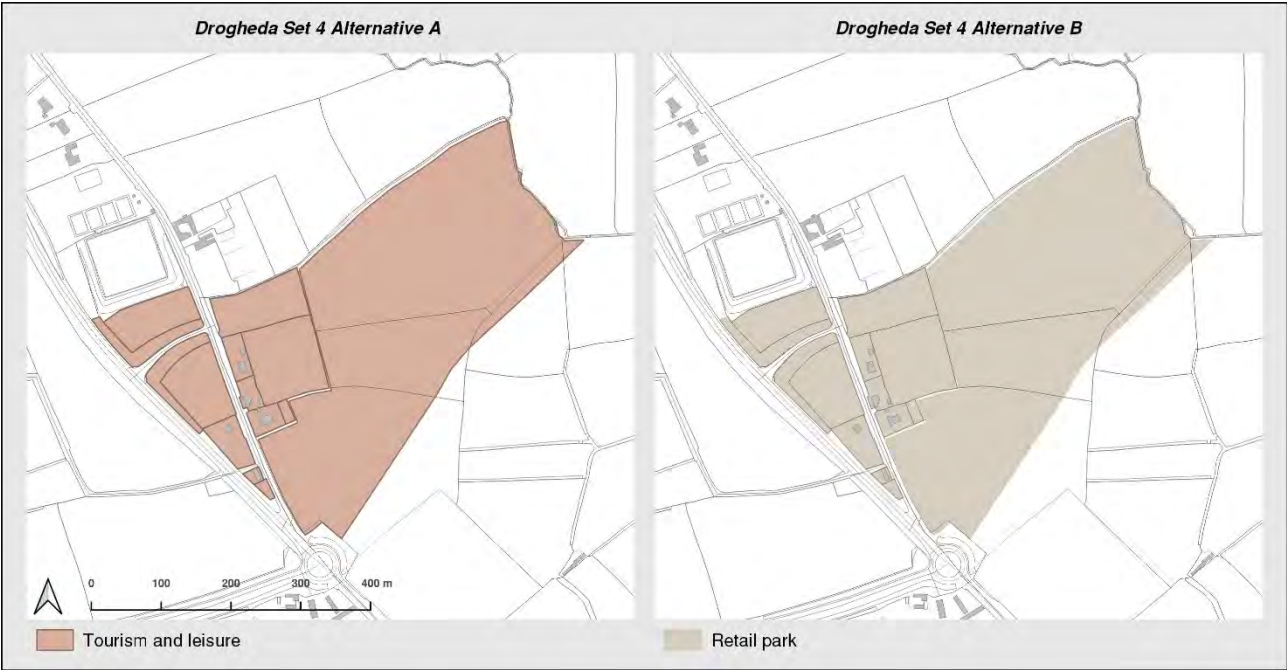
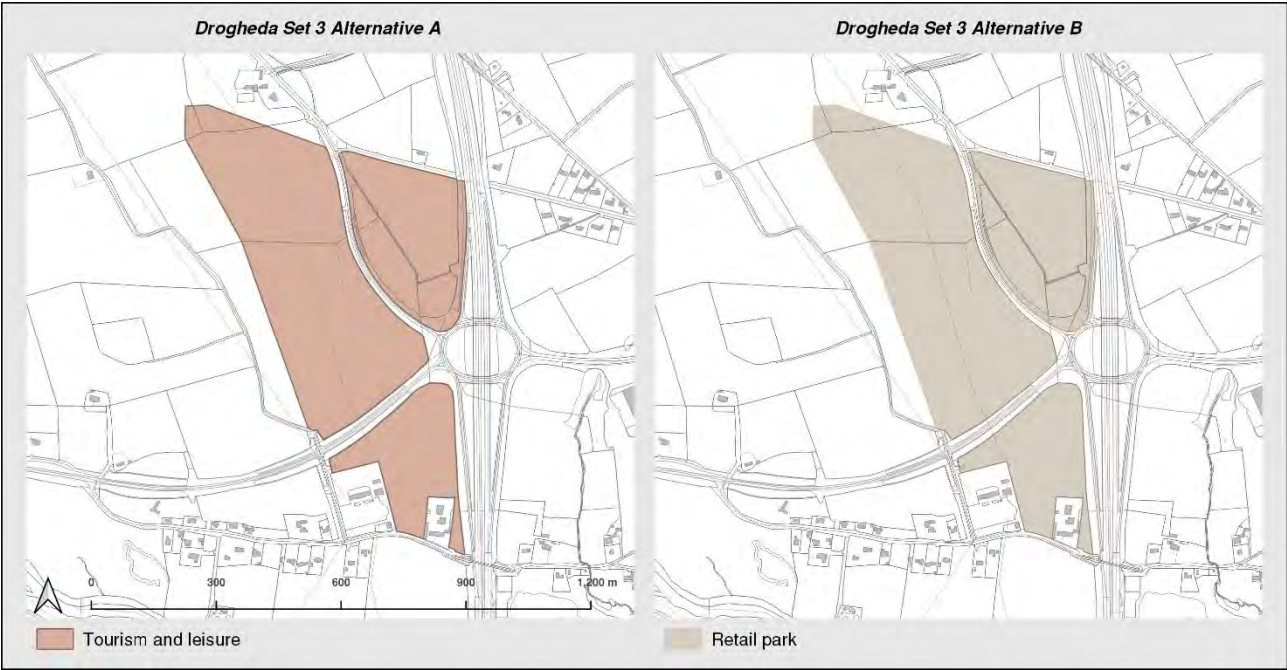
Legislation, Plan, etc.	Summary of high-level aim/ purpose/ objective	Summary of lower level objectives, actions etc.	Relevance to the Plan
			other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Boyne Valley Food Strategy 2016-2021	The overarching strategic vision of the Boyne Valley Food Strategy 2016-2021 is 'for the Boyne Valley region to be recognised as the leading national food and drinks destination. To be the stand out food region within Ireland's Ancient East.'	One of the main pillars of the strategy is to create a Louth/Meath food network which supports and facilitates the growth of the local food community in both counties and to develop the Boyne Valley Region as the Food Champion within Ireland's Ancient East.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Fáilte Ireland Tourism plans, strategies, including those relating to the Ireland's Ancient East and Hidden Heartlands brands	Fáilte Ireland's work includes preparing various plans and strategies for Ireland's Hidden Heartlands, the Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's Ancient East and other brands and initiatives. These plans are subject to their own environmental assessment processes and any project arising is required to be consistent with and conform with the provisions of all adopted/approved Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes, including provisions for the protection and management of the environment.	Some of Fáilte Ireland's plans and strategies include various projects relating to land use and infrastructural development, including those relating to development of land on or on land and the carrying out of land use activities. Many of these projects exist already while some are not currently in existence. The Statutory Policies, Strategies, Plans and Programmes that provide for different projects undergo a variety of environmental assessments. These assessments ensure that environmental effects are considered, including: those arising from new and intensified uses and activities; and those arising from various sectors such as tourism.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.
Various existing, planned and emerging projects provided for by the above plans and programmes	These projects have been provided for by higher-level plans and programmes.	These projects will contribute towards the development of the area to which the Plan relates and/or wider area and will contribute towards environmental protection and management.	Where new land use developments or activities occur as a result of this legislation, plan, programme, etc., individually or in combination with others, potential in-combination effects (see Section 1.1) may arise. Implementation of the Plan needs to comply with all environmental legislation and align with and cumulatively contribute towards – in combination with other users and bodies and their plans etc. – the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management.

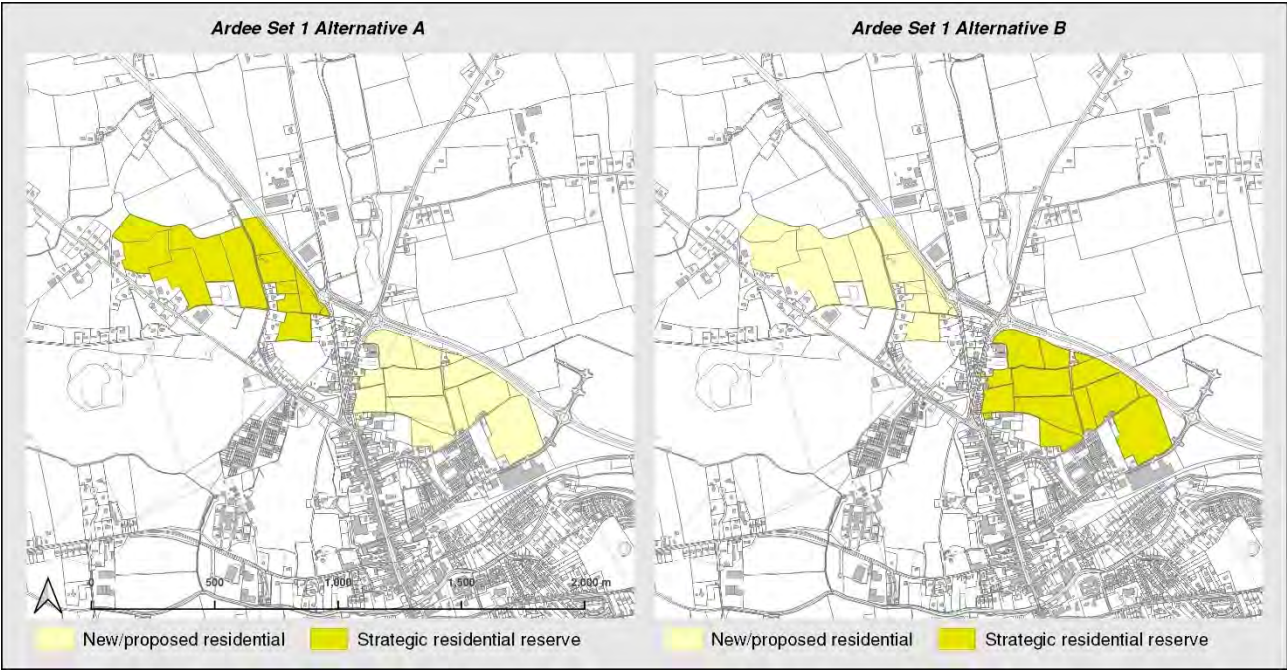
Appendix II Indicative Mapping of Land Use Zoning Alternatives

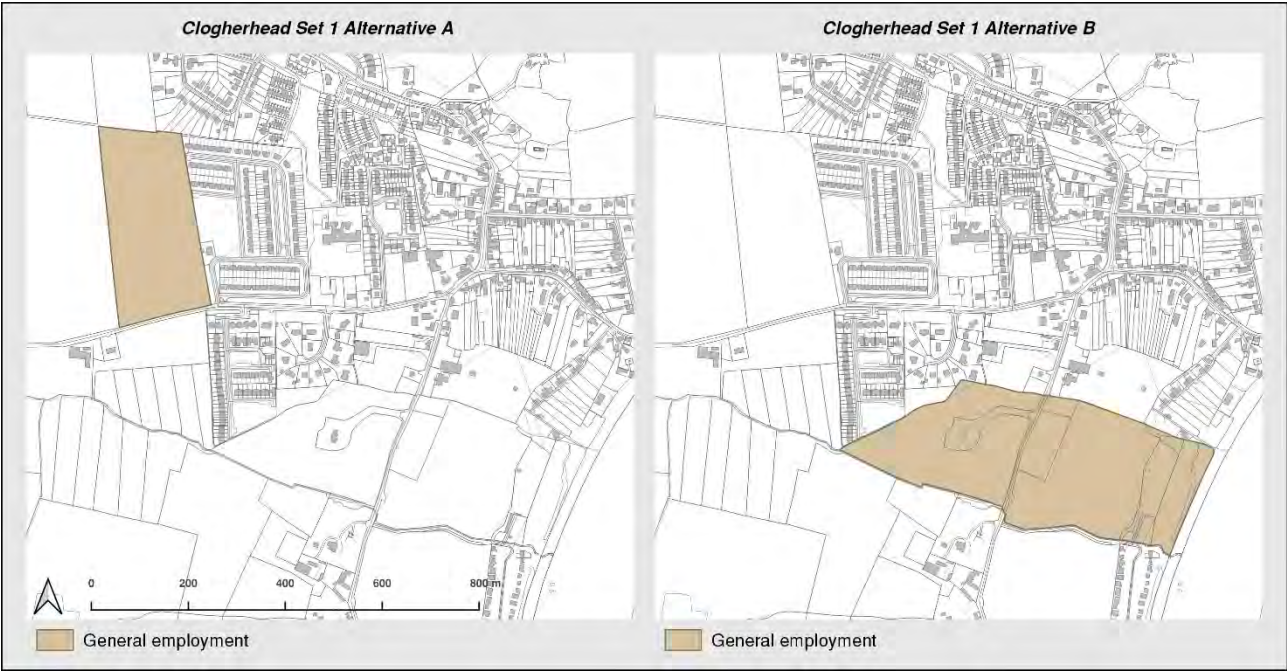
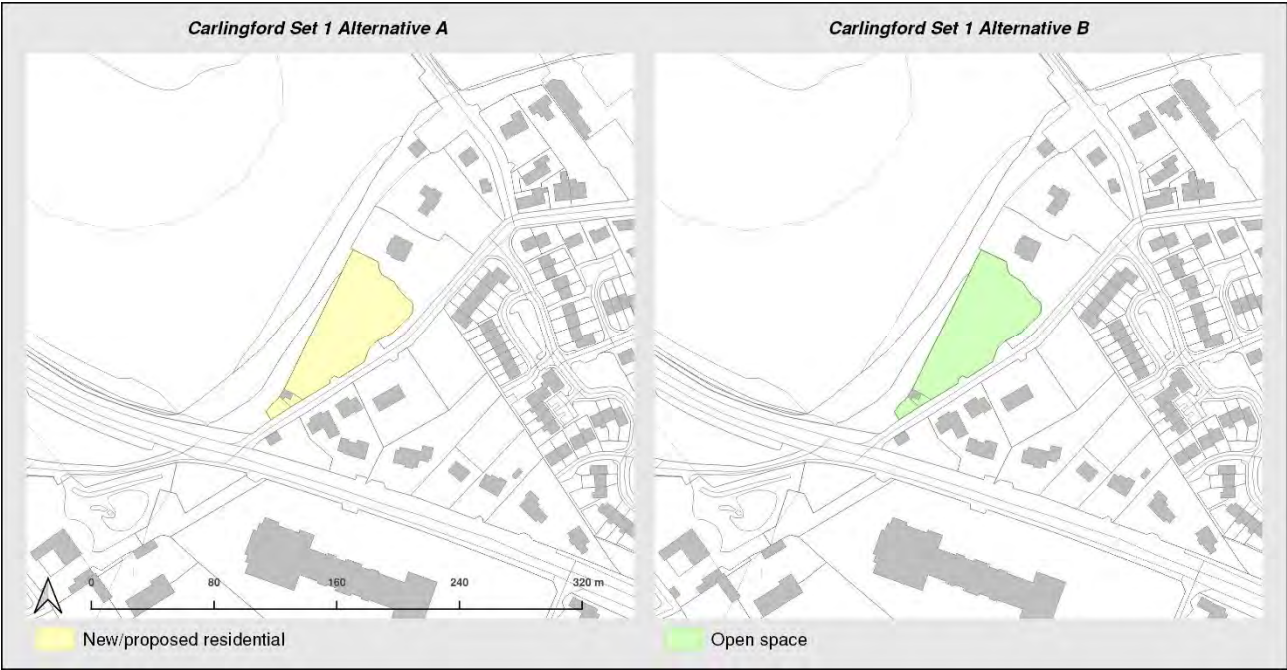


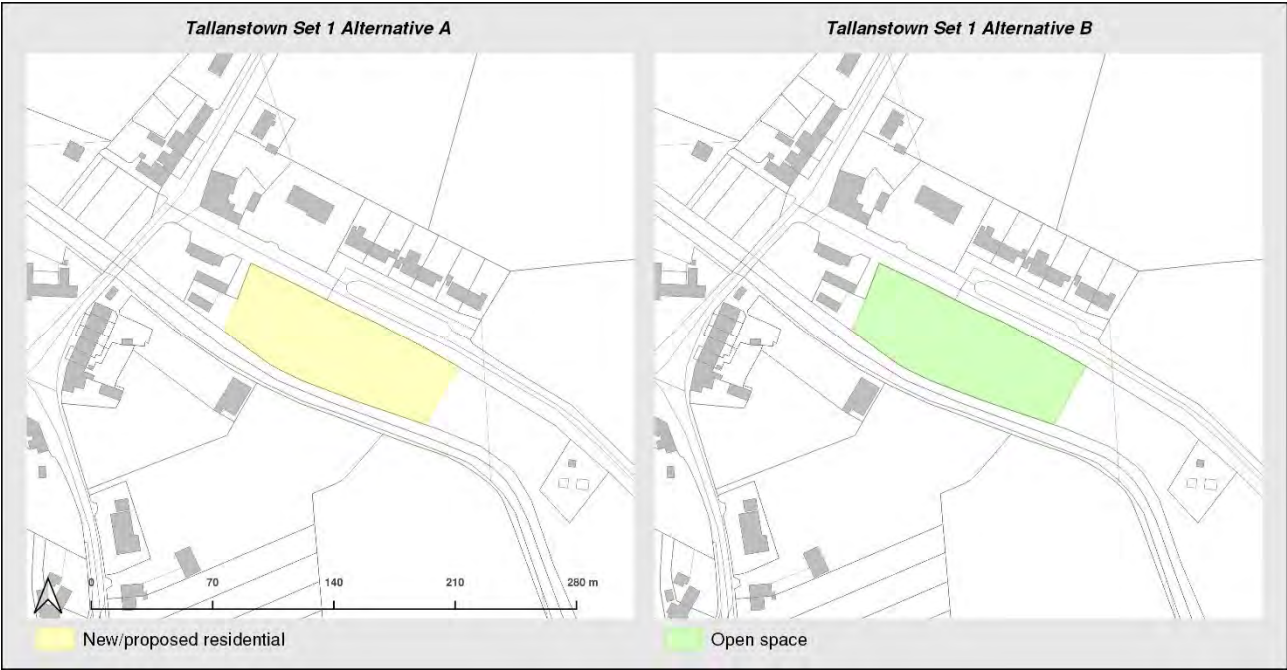












Appendix III SEA Screening for PMAs

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT

FOR
PROPOSED MATERIAL ALTERATIONS
TO THE
**DRAFT 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



JUNE 2021

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Section 1 Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

This is the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report for the Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Louth County Development Plan (CDP) 2021-2027.

SEA is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme, or alteration to a plan or programme, before a decision is made to adopt it. The SEA Directive¹ requires, inter alia, that SEA is undertaken for certain plans, programmes or alterations to these. Screening is the process for deciding whether a particular plan - or alteration to a plan -, other than those for which SEA is mandatory, would be likely to have significant environmental effects, and would thus warrant SEA.

The purpose of this report is to inform whether or not to undertake SEA on the Proposed Material Alterations to the Louth CDP. Requirements in relation to the screening of Proposed Material Alterations to CDPs are provided under Section 12 (7) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

This report should be read in conjunction with the CDP and all other associated documents including the:

- Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027;
- Appropriate Assessment (AA) Natura Impact Report (including information on AA Screening) for Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Louth CDP 2021-2027.
- SEA Environmental Report for the Draft Louth CDP 2021-2027;
- AA Natura Impact Report for the Draft Louth CDP 2021-2027; and
- AA Screening Report for Proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Louth CDP 2021-2027.

1.2 Process so far

The CDP has been progressed to date in compliance with Section 12 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

SEA² was undertaken on and informed the CDP in order to comply with the SEA Directive and transposing Regulations – the SEA Environmental Report that accompanied the CDP on public display contains the findings of the assessment.

AA³ was also undertaken on the CDP (informing both the CDP and the SEA) in order to comply with the Habitats Directive and transposing Regulations. An AA Natura Impact Report was prepared that contains the findings of this assessment.

The CDP associated SEA and AA documents were placed on public display and submissions were invited. Submissions were responded to in a Chief Executive's Report and Elected Members decided upon Proposed Material Alterations to the CDP and these are the subject of this report.

¹ 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

² Strategic Environmental Assessment is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme, or alteration to a plan or programme, before a decision is made to adopt it.

³ Appropriate Assessment is an impact assessment process concerning European Sites designated on foot of habitats and species.

1.3 SEA Environmental Report (October 2020)

The SEA Environmental Report for the CDP contains the information specified in Annex I of the SEA Directive and Schedule 2B of the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 436 of 2004) as amended by the Planning and Development (SEA) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 201 of 2011). The relevant sections of the SEA Environmental Report that address these information requirements are detailed on Table 1.1 below.

The assessment undertaken on relevant Proposed Material Alterations (the findings of which are presented later in this document) has used the information contained in the SEA Environmental Report.

Table 1.1 Information contained within the SEA Environmental Report that accompanies the County Development Plan

Information Required to be included in the Environmental Report	Corresponding Section of this Report
(A) Outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	Sections 2, 5 and 8
(B) Description of relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the evolution of that environment without implementation of the plan or programme	Section 4
(C) Description of the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	Sections 4, 7 and 8
(D) Identification of any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme, particularly those relating to European protected sites	Section 4
(E) List environmental protection objectives, established at international, EU or National level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and describe how those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account when preparing the Plan	Sections 5, 7, 8, 9 and Appendix I
(F) Describe the likely significant effects on the environment	Sections 7 and 8
(G) Describe any measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse environmental effects of implementing the plan or programme	Section 9
(H) Give an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives considered, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken (including any difficulties)	Sections 3, 6, 7, 8 and Appendix II
(I) A description of proposed monitoring measures	Section 10
(J) A non-technical summary of the above information	Appendix III Non-Technical Summary
(K) Interrelationships between each environmental topic	Addressed as it arises within each Section

Section 2 SEA Screening

2.1 Introduction

The section examines whether each Proposed Material Alteration to the CDP would be likely to have significant environmental effects (and thus would warrant the undertaking of SEA).

This examination takes account of relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A '*Criteria for determining whether a plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment*' of the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations, as amended, (see Section 2.5).

2.2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

SFRA is being undertaken to inform the preparation of the Draft Plan and the Proposed Material Alterations. The SFRA process has informed this report.

The SFRA has considered the Proposed Material Alterations and finds that all Proposed Material Alterations, apart from one, comply with "The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities" (DEHLG/OPW, 2009). Proposed Material Alteration Reference 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.

2.3 Appropriate Assessment

AA is an impact assessment process concerning *Natura 2000*, or *European*, sites - these sites have been designated or proposed for designation by virtue of their ecological importance. The Habitats Directive⁴, its transposing Birds and Natural Habitats Regulations 2011 (as amended) and the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) provide the requirement to screen for effects on European Sites. If the effects are deemed to be *significant, potentially significant or uncertain* then Stage 2 AA must be undertaken.

The County Development Plan is being subject to Stage 2 AA and a Draft Natura Impact Report was placed on public display alongside the Draft Plan. At adoption of the Plan, the Natura Impact Report will be finalised and an AA determination made by the Council.

An AA screening process has been undertaken on the Proposed Material Alterations. This process has determined that Stage 2 AA for certain Alterations is necessary. An AA Natura Impact Report contains the findings of this assessment for the Proposed Material Alterations, has informed this SEA Screening Report and accompanies the Proposed Material Alterations.

2.4 Screening Analysis of Individual Proposed Material Alterations

The analysis of individual Proposed Material Alteration is undertaken considering interactions Strategic Environmental Objectives (see Table 2.1). Table 2.2 examines whether each part of the Proposed Material Alterations would be likely to have significant environmental effects (and thus would warrant the undertaking of SEA).

Table 2.2 is supplemented by Table 2.3 which provides details on:

- The likely significant effects of implementing the Draft Plan, if unmitigated;
- Key mitigation measure(s) that are already contained within the Draft Plan; and

⁴ Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

- Residual non-significant adverse effects arising from the Draft Plan.

Effects encompass the full range of effects⁵, including those arising cumulatively – such as those potentially arising as a result of interactions with other plans and programmes.

The examination of Proposed Material Alterations also takes into account relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A *'Criteria for determining whether a plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment'* of the SEA Regulations, as amended, (see Section 2.5).

Table 2.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	BFF	No net contribution to biodiversity losses or deterioration	• To preserve, protect, maintain and, where appropriate, enhance the terrestrial, aquatic and soil biodiversity, particularly EU designated sites and protected species • Ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function • Safeguard national, regional and local designated sites and supporting features which function as stepping stones for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species • Enhance biodiversity in line with the National Biodiversity Strategy and its targets • To protect, maintain and conserve the County's natural capital
Population and Human Health	PHH	Improve quality of life for all ages and abilities based on high-quality, serviced, well connected and sustainable residential, working, educational and recreational environments	• Promote economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable development and environmental protection and management • Ensure that existing population and planned growth is matched with the required public infrastructure and the required services • Safeguard the County's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being
Soil (and Land)	S	Ensure the long-term sustainable management of land	• Protect soils against pollution, and prevent degradation of the soil resource • Promote the sustainable use of infill and brownfield sites over the use of greenfield within the County • Safeguard areas of prime agricultural land and designated geological sites
Water	W	Protection, improvement and sustainable management of the water resource	• Ensure that the status of water bodies is protected, maintained and improved in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive • Ensure water resources are sustainably managed to deliver proposed regional and County growth targets in the context of existing and projected water supply and waste water capacity constraints ensuring the protection of receiving environments • Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and areas that are vulnerable to current and future erosion • Integrate sustainable water management solutions (such as SuDS, porous surfacing and green roofs) into development proposals
Material Assets	MA	Sustainable and efficient use of natural resources	• Optimise existing infrastructure and provide new infrastructure to match population distribution proposals in the County • Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all which encourages a broad energy generation mix to ensure security of supply – wind, wave solar, tidal, biomass, energy from waste and traditional fossil fuels • Promote the circular economy, reduce waste, and increase energy efficiencies • Ensure there is adequate sewerage and drainage infrastructure in place to support new development • Reduce the energy demand from the transport sector and support moves to electrification of road and rail transport modes • Encourage the transition to a zero-carbon economy by facilitating the development of a grid infrastructure to support renewables and international connectivity. Reduce the average energy consumption per capita including promoting energy efficient buildings, retrofitting, smart- buildings, cities and grids
Air	A	Support clean air policies that reduce the impact of air pollution on the environment and public health	• To avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole resulting from emissions to air from all sectors with particular reference to emissions from transport, residential heating, industry and agriculture. • Maintain and promote continuing improvement in air quality through the reduction of emissions and promotion of renewable energy and energy efficiency. • Promote continuing improvement in air quality. • Reduction of emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, ammonia and fine particulate matter which are responsible for acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone pollution • Meet Air Quality Directive standards for the protection of human health — Air Quality Directive • Significantly decrease noise pollution by 2020 and move closer to WHO recommended levels.

⁵ These include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects

Environmental Component	SEO Code	Guiding Principle	Strategic Environmental Objectives
Climatic Factors	C	Achieving transition to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient economy that is cognisant of environmental impacts	• To minimise emissions of greenhouse gasses. • Integrate sustainable design solutions into the County's infrastructure (e.g. energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure). • Contribute towards the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with national targets. • Promote development resilient to the effects of climate change • Promote the use of renewable energy, energy efficient development and increased use of public transport
Cultural Heritage	CH	Safeguard cultural heritage features and their settings through responsible design and positioning of development	• Protect places, features, buildings and landscapes of cultural, archaeological or architectural heritage
Landscape	L	Protect and enhance the landscape character	• To implement the Plan's framework for identification, assessment, protection, management and planning of landscapes having regard to the European Landscape Convention

Table 2.2 Screening Analysis of Individual Proposed Material Alterations⁶**Ref SEA Screening Consideration**

- 1** This alteration would further contribute towards provisions related to this sector/topic that are already contained within the Draft Plan. Taking into account the measures that have been already integrated into the Draft Plan that provide for and contribute towards environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development, it is determined that all potential effects arising from this Proposed Alteration: either are present already (beneficial) and will be further contributed towards; and/or will be mitigated so as not to be significant (adverse). **Consequently, SEA is not required.** Refer also to Table 2.3 and Section 2.5.
- 2** A future assessment/feasibility study/ investigation of potential would not result in different environmental outcomes or effects. **Consequently, SEA is not required.** Was such an assessment to be followed by recommendations, such as varying the Plan, such recommendations would have to be subject to SEA and AA screening and other requirements as appropriate.
- 3** The update to terminology/language/wording/mapping would not change the effects arising from the Plan. As such, this alteration would not be considered as being likely to result in significant environmental effects. **Consequently, SEA is not required.**
- 4** This Proposed Alteration relates to Plan text that sets the context for, summarises and/or provides clarification to Plan provisions. It does not interact with existing Plan provisions to an extent that it would have additional significant environmental effects. **Consequently, SEA is not required.**
- 5** This amendment adds more detail but would not have additional significant environmental effects. **Consequently, SEA is not required.**
- 6** This Proposed Alteration provides consistency with other parts of the Plan and/or with the wider planning and policy framework. It would not interact with Plan provisions to the extent that it would have environmental effects. **Consequently, SEA is not required.**
- 7** Removal of this provision would remove the potential for any environmental effects; however, removal of the provision would not be likely to result in any environmental effects. **Consequently, SEA is not required.**
- 8** There is no planning justification for these Proposed 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, including ecology, soil, water, air and climatic factors and material assets. **Taking into account the above, SEA is required.**
- 9** As this alteration could potentially impact upon the protection of a European site, Stage 2 AA is required. Consequently, **SEA is advised as prudent.**

Alteration Ref.	Screening Consideration Ref.	Alteration Ref.	Screening Consideration Ref.	Alteration Ref.	Screening Consideration Ref.	Alteration Ref.	Screening Consideration Ref.	Alteration Ref.	Screening Consideration Ref.	Alteration Ref.	Screening Consideration Ref.	Alteration Ref.	Screening Consideration Ref.
1	1	48	1	95	1	142	1,4,2	189	1	DROG6	1	ARD6	1
2	1	49	4,5,6	96	1	143	1	190	1	DROG7	1	ARD7	1
3	1	50	4,6	97	1	144	1,4,2	191	1	DROG8	1	DLR1	8
4	4	51	1	98	1	145	1	192	1	DROG9	1	DLR2	8
5	1	52	1	99	1	146	1,4	193	1	DLK1	8	DLR3	8
6	1	53	1	100	1	147	1	194	1	DLK2	1	L3-1	1
7	1	54	1	101	1	148	1	195	1	DLK3	1	L3-2	8
8	4	55	1	102	1	149	1	196	1	DLK4	8	L3-3	1
9	1	56	4	103	1	150	1	197	1	DLK5	1	L3-4	1
10	1	57	4	104	4	151	1	198	1	DLK6	1	L3-5	8
11	1	58	4	105	3	152	1	199	1	DLK7	8	L3-6	8
12	1	59	4	106	3	153	1	200	1	DLK8	1	L3-7	8
13	3,4,6	60	4	107	1	154	1	201	1	DLK9	1	L3-8	1
14	1	61	4	108	1	155	1	202	1	DLK10	1	L3-9	1
15	4,5	62	1	109	3	156	1	203	1	DLK11	1	L3-10	1
16	1	63	4,5	110	3	157	1	204	1	DLK12	1	L3-11	1
17	4,6	64	1	111	1	158	1	205	1	DLK13	8	L4-1	1
18	1	65	1	112	4,6	159	1,2	206	1	DLK14	8	L4-2	1
19	3	66	1	113	4,6	160	1	207	1	DLK15	8	L4-3	1
20	5	67	1	114	4	161	1	208	1	DLK16	8	L4-4	1
21	1	68	4	115	4	162	4	209	1	DLK17	8	L4-5	1
22	1	69	1	116	4,6	163	1,4	210	1	DLK18	8	L4-6	1
23	10	70	4	117	4,6	164	1	211	1	DLK19	1	L4-7	1
24	1	71	4	118	1,4	165	1	212	1	DLK20	1	L4-8	1
25	1,9,10	72	4	119	4	166	1	213	1	DLK21	1	L4-9	8
26	1	73	3	120	1	167	3	214	1	DLK22	1	L4-10	1
27	1	74	1	121	1	168	7	215	1	DLK23	1	L5-1	8
28	1	75	4,6	122	1,6	169	4,5	216	1	DLK24	1	L5-2	8

⁶ For detail on Proposed Material Alterations please refer to Proposed Material Alterations document.

SEA Screening Report for Proposed Material Alterations

Alteration Ref.	Screening Consideration Ref.	Alteration Ref.	Screening Consideration Ref.	Alteration Ref.	Screening Consideration Ref.	Alteration Ref.	Screening Consideration Ref.	Alteration Ref.	Screening Consideration Ref.	Alteration Ref.	Screening Consideration Ref.	Alteration Ref.	Screening Consideration Ref.
29	1	76	4,6	123	1,6	170	4,6	217	1	DLK25	1	L5-3	8
30	1	77	1	124	1	171	4	Vol 2 - 1	1	DLK26	1	L5-4	8
31	2	78	1	125	1	172	1	Vol 2 - 2	1	DLK27	1	L5-5	8
32	4	79	4	126	1	173	7	Vol 2 - 3	1	DLK28	1	L5-6	8
33	1,6	80	1	127	1	174	1	Vol 2 - 4	1	DLK29	1	L5-7	8
34	1	81	4	128	1	175	1	Vol 3 - 1	4	DLK30	1	L5-8	8
35	4	82	4	129	1	176	1	Vol 3 - 2	4	DLK31	1	L5-9	8
36	1	83	4	130	1,6	177	1	Vol 3 - 3	4	DLK32	1	L5-10	1
37	1	84	1	131	4	178	1	Vol 3 - 4	4	DLK33	1	L5-11	8
38	1	85	4	132	4,6	179	1	Vol 5 - 1	1	DLK34	1	L5-12	8
39	1	86	4	133	4	180	1	Vol 5 - 2	4	DLK35	1	L5-13	8
40	1	87	4,6	134	1	181	1	Vol 5 - 3	4	DLK36	1	Mapping Errors	1,3
41	1	88	1,6	135	4,6	182	1	Vol 5 - 4	4	DLK37	1	Miscellaneous	1,3,4
42	1	89	1,6	136	1	183	1	Vol 5 - 5	4	DLK38	1		
43	4	90	1,6	137	1	184	1	DROG1	1	ARD1	8		
44	8	91	1	138	1,6	185	1	DROG2	8	ARD2	1		
45	1	92	1	139	4	186	1	DROG3	1	ARD3	8		
46	1	93	1	140	1,4,2	187	1	DROG4	1	ARD4	1		
47	3	94	1	141	1,4,2	188	1	DROG5	1	ARD5	1		

Table 2.3 Detail of effects⁷, if unmitigated, mitigation measures for potential effects and residual adverse effects

Environmental Component	Environmental Effects (including Transboundary including Transboundary), in combination with the wider planning framework Effects include in-combination effects that are planned for through the wider planning framework including the NPF and associated NDP 2018, the Eastern and Midland RSES, adjacent Development Plans and lower-tier land use plans.			Mitigation Measures, integrated into the Plan	SEO Codes
	Significant Positive Effect, likely to occur	Potentially Significant Adverse Environmental Effects, if unmitigated	Likely Residual Adverse Non-Significant Effects		
All	All	All	All	1.7.2 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT 1.7.3 APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT 1.7.4 STRATEGIC FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT (SFRA) 1.7.5 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION Ecosystems Services Approach and Natural Capital	All
Biodiversity and Flora and Fauna	- Contribution towards protection of ecology (including designated sites, ecological connectivity, habitats) by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond. - Contribution towards the maintenance of existing green infrastructure and associated ecosystem services, listed species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats. - Contribution towards protection and/or maintenance of biodiversity and flora and fauna by contributing towards the protection of natural capital including the environmental vectors of air, water and soil. Biodiversity and flora and fauna includes biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites, Wildlife Sites and Areas of Special Scientific Interest) and Annexed habitats and species (including birds and bats), listed/protected species, ecological connectivity and non-designated habitats (including terrestrial and aquatic habitats), and disturbance to biodiversity and flora and fauna – including terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity and flora and fauna. - Sustains existing sustainable rural management practices – and the communities who support them – to ensure the continuation of long-established managed landscapes and the flora and fauna that they contain.	Arising from both construction and operation of development and associated infrastructure: - Loss of/damage to biodiversity in designated sites (including European Sites, Wildlife Sites and Areas of Special Scientific Interest) 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.	- Loss of an extent of non-protected habitats and species arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces. - Losses or damage to ecology (these would be in compliance with relevant legislation).	NBG 1-15, 19-22, 29-35, 41-42, 44-49, 57 ENV 8-11, 31, 36-38 TOU 18-20, 34	BFF
Population and Human Health	- Promotion of economic growth to encourage retention of working age population and funding of sustainable development and environmental protection and management. - Contribution towards appropriate provision of infrastructure and services to existing population and planned growth by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond - Contribution towards the protection of human health by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond. - Contributes towards protection of human health as a result of contributing towards the protection of natural capital including environmental vectors, including air and water.	- Potential adverse effects arising from flood events. - Potential interactions if effects arising from environmental vectors.	Potential interactions with residual effects on environmental vectors – please refer to residual adverse effects under "Soil", "Water" and "Air and Climatic Factors" below.	Also see measures under other environmental components including Soil, Water and Air and Climatic Factors. ENV 3, 6, 7, 12-14 ENV 26-28 IU 52	PHH
Soil	- Contribution towards the protection of soils (including those used for agriculture) and designated sites of geological heritage by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond. - Contribution towards the protection of the environment from contamination the highest standards of remediation, and where appropriate consultations with the EPA and other relevant bodies, will be required to resolve any instances of environmental pollution created by contaminated land.	- Potential adverse effects on the hydrogeological and ecological function of the soil resource, including as a result of development on contaminated lands. - Potential for riverbank and coastal erosion.	Loss of an extent of soil function arising from the replacement of semi-natural land covers with artificial surfaces.	Also see measures under other environmental components including Water. ENV 14 NBG 16-18 ENV 40, 42, 44, 46, 49-54 IU 23	S
Water	Contribution towards the protection of water by facilitating development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that have relatively low levels of environmental sensitivities and are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop more sensitive, less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond.	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.	- Any increased loadings as a result of development to comply with the River Basin Management Plan. - Flood related risks remain due to uncertainty with regard to extreme weather events – however such risks will be mitigated by measures that have been	Also see measures under other environmental components including Soil and Material Assets.	W

⁷ Environmental effects of implementing the Plan, including in combination with the wider planning framework e.g. the National Planning Framework and associated National Development Plan 2018, the Eastern and Midlands Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, adjacent Development Plans and lower-tier land use plans.

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	- Contributions towards the protection of water resources including the status of surface and groundwaters and water-based designations. - Contribution towards flood risk management and appropriate drainage.	Increase in flood risk and associated effects associated with flood events.	integrated into the Plan.	ENV 15-23 ENV 32-65 IU 18-23 IU 24-29	
Material Assets	- Contribution towards appropriate provision of infrastructure and services to existing population and planned growth by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond. - Contribution towards compliance with national and regional water services and waste management policies. - Contribution towards increase in renewable energy use by facilitating renewable energy and electricity transmission infrastructure developments. - Contribution towards limits in increases in energy demand from the transport sector by facilitating sustainable compact growth. - Contribution towards reductions in average energy consumption per capita including promoting energy efficient buildings, retrofitting, smart buildings, cities and grids.	- 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 development with adequate drinking water (water services infrastructure and capacity ensures the mitigation of potential conflicts). - 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.	- Exceedance of capacity in critical infrastructure risks remain, including due to uncertainty with regard to climate – however, such risks will be mitigated by: measures, including those requiring the timely provision of critical infrastructure, and compliance with the Water Framework Directive and associated River Basin Management Plan. - Residual wastes to be disposed of in line with higher-level waste management policies. - Any impacts upon public assets and infrastructure to comply with statutory planning/consent-granting framework.	Also see measures under other environmental components including Population and Human Health and various land use/compact development/phasing provisions from the Plan. IU 1-17 ENV 18, 20-24, 30, 42, 47, 66 10.11.12 10.11.13 10.11.14 TOU 35	MA
Air and Climatic Factors	- Contribution towards climate mitigation and adaptation by facilitating compact development of lands (including those within and adjacent to the County's settlements) that are served (or can be more easily served) by infrastructure and services, thereby helping to avoid the need to develop less well-served lands elsewhere in the County and beyond. - In combination with other plans, programmes etc., contribution towards the objectives of the wide policy framework relating to climate mitigation and adaptation, and associated contribution towards maintaining and improving air quality and managing noise levels, including through measures relating to: - Sustainable compact growth; - Sustainable mobility, including walking, cycling and public transport; - Drainage, flood risk management and resilience; - Sectors including agriculture, residential heating and infrastructure; Sustainable infrastructure design solutions including energy efficient buildings; green infrastructure).	- 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 adaptation measures including those relating to flood risk management.	- An extent of travel related greenhouse gas and other emissions to air. This has been mitigated by provisions which have been integrated into the Plan, including those relating to sustainable compact growth and sustainable mobility. - Interactions between noise emissions and sensitive receptors. Various provisions have been integrated into the Plan to ensure that noise levels at sensitive receptors will be minimised.	Also refer to the overall approach to compact development and sustainability provided by the Plan CA 1-7 IU 29-30, 32-33, 44-51, 54-55, 58-60, 62-67, 73-74, 76, 80 HOU 9, 14, 15, 21, 30, 36, 38 CS 2, 5, 16 SS 4, 5, 13, 17, 18, 21, 22, 31, 32 TOU 21 MOV 1-7, 10, 12, 22, 24, 38 NBG 19-21, 33-35, 46, 51 ENV 3, 6, 7, 12, 29, 30, 31, 36, 38 EE 22, 58, 60 SC 15	AC
Cultural Heritage	- Contributes towards protection of cultural heritage elsewhere in the County by facilitating development within existing settlements. - Contributes towards protection of cultural heritage within existing settlements by facilitating brownfield development and regeneration.	Potential effects on protected and unknown archaeology⁸ and protected architecture⁹ arising from construction and operation activities.	Potential effects on known architectural and archaeological heritage and unknown archaeology however, these will occur in compliance with legislation.	BHC 1-38	CH
Landscape	Contributes towards protection of wider landscape and landscape designations by facilitating development within existing settlements.	Occurrence of adverse visual impacts and conflicts with the appropriate protection of designations relating to the landscape.	Landscapes will change overtime as a result of natural changes in vegetation cover combined with new developments that will occur in compliance with the Plan's landscape protection measures.	NBG 23-57	L

⁸ 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.

⁹ 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.

2.5 Schedule 2A

PART 1

1. *The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: the degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources*

The Material Alterations propose a number of text and map-based changes to the Draft Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 were determined to require full SEA and these will be considered in the SEA Environmental Report.

Table 2.4 Proposed Material Alterations Requiring SEA¹⁰

Alteration Ref.	Screening Consideration Ref.	Alteration Ref.	Screening Consideration Ref.
23	10	L3-2	8
25	1,9,10	L3-5	8
44	8	L3-6	8
DROG2	8	L3-7	8
DLK1	8	L4-9	8
DLK4	8	L5-1	8
DLK7	8	L5-2	8
DLK13	8	L5-3	8
DLK14	8	L5-4	8
DLK15	8	L5-5	8
DLK16	8	L5-6	8
DLK17	8	L5-7	8
DLK18	8	L5-8	8
ARD1	8	L5-9	8
ARD3	8	L5-11	8
DLR1	8	L5-12	8
DLR2	8	L5-13	8
DLR3	8		

Taking the examination of the various other Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4 into account, arising from the degree to which these Proposed Material Alterations and the Draft County Development Plan set a framework for projects and other activities, the other Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

2. *The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: the degree to which the plan influences other plans, including those in a hierarchy*

The Material Alterations are being proposed to the Draft Plan. The Draft Plan relates to the proper planning and sustainable development of County Louth.

The Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 were determined to require full SEA and these will be considered in the SEA Environmental Report.

Taking the above and the examination of the various other Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4 into account, arising from the degree to which these Proposed Material Alterations and the Draft County Development Plan influence other plans, the other Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

¹⁰ For detail on Proposed Material Alterations please refer to Proposed Material Alterations document.

3. *The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: the relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development*

The Draft Plan - to which the Proposed Material Alterations relate - has undergone SEA. This process integrated environmental considerations into the Plan and found that the Plan contributes to environmental protection and management and sustainable development.

The Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 were determined to require full SEA and these will be considered in the SEA Environmental Report.

Taking the above and the examination of the various other Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4 into account, arising from the degree to which these Proposed Material Alterations and the Draft County Development Plan are relevant for the integration of environmental considerations with a view to promoting sustainable development, the other Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

4. *The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: environmental problems relevant to the plan*

Environmental problems arise where there is a conflict between current environmental conditions and legislative targets.

Through its provisions relating to environmental protection and management, the Draft Plan contributes towards ensuring that environmental conditions do not get worse and, where possible, they contribute towards its amelioration.

The Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 were determined to require full SEA and these will be considered in the SEA Environmental Report.

Taking the above and the examination of the various other Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4 into account, arising from environmental problems relevant to these Proposed Material Alterations and the Draft County Development Plan, the other Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

5. *The characteristics of the plan having regard, in particular, to: the relevance of the plan for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans linked to waste-management or water protection)*

The Draft County Development Plan relates to the land use and town planning sector and have fulfilled requirements in relation to SEA. These processes integrated considerations with regard to EU and national legislation on the environment, including those relating to the waste management and the Water Framework Directive.

The Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 were determined to require full SEA and these will be considered in the SEA Environmental Report.

Taking the above and the examination of the various other Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4 into account, arising from the relevance of these Proposed Material Alterations and the Draft County Development Plan for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment, the other Proposed Material Alterations would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects.

PART 2

1. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects

SEA is determined as being required for the Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 while other Proposed Material Alterations would not necessitate SEA as they would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4).

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the cumulative nature of the effects

SEA is determined as being required for the Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 while other Proposed Material Alterations would not necessitate SEA as they would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4).

3. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the transboundary nature of the effects

SEA is determined as being required for the Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 while other Proposed Material Alterations would not necessitate SEA as they would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4).

4. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)

SEA is determined as being required for the Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 while other Proposed Material Alterations would not necessitate SEA as they would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4).

5. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)

SEA is determined as being required for the Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 while other Proposed Material Alterations would not necessitate SEA as they would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4).

6. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:

a) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;

SEA is determined as being required for the Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 while other Proposed Material Alterations would not necessitate SEA as they would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4).

b) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values, and;

SEA is determined as being required for the Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 while other Proposed Material Alterations would not necessitate SEA as they would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4).

c) intensive land-use.

SEA is determined as being required for the Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 while other Proposed Material Alterations would not necessitate SEA as they would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4).

7. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to: the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status

SEA is determined as being required for the Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 while other Proposed Material Alterations would not necessitate SEA as they would not be likely to result in significant environmental effects (see responses under Schedule 2A Part 1 above and the examination of the various Proposed Material Alterations provided under Section 2.4).

Section 3 Conclusion

Most Proposed Material Alterations are determined not to result in likely significant effects. Taking into account the measures that have been already integrated into the Draft Plan that provide for and contribute towards environmental protection, environmental management and sustainable development, it is identified that all potential effects arising from most Proposed Alterations: either are present already (beneficial) and will be further contributed towards; or will be mitigated so as not to be significant (adverse). In addition, some alterations merely added clarifications or amended context setting text for Plan provisions and these will not result in significant environmental effects. Consequently, these Proposed Material Alterations do not require SEA.

The Proposed Material Alterations identified on Table 2.4 are advised as requiring SEA and consideration in an SEA Environmental Report.

The SEA Environmental Report prepared for the Draft Plan will be finalised in advance of adoption of the Plan. An SEA Statement will be prepared following adoption, which will detail how environmental considerations were integrated into the Plan and how consultations on the SEA and associated Plan-preparation process were taken into account. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and the Appropriate Assessment reports will be finalised in a similar manner at adoption, taking into account how environmental considerations were integrated into the Plan and how consultations were taken into account.