

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

This Plan builds on a review of the previous County Development Plan which has guided development in the county for the last six years. The review of the development plan has taken into account recent key development trends and national, regional and local policy developments. This plan provides an outlook and vision for the future development of the county up to 2019 with a longer term view also taken beyond 2019.

### 1.1 Background Summary

County Monaghan is located in the Border, Midlands and Western Region as defined under the National Spatial Strategy (NSS). It is one of three Ulster Counties bordering with Northern Ireland. The county shares 108 miles of border with Northern Ireland, giving the county the longest share of border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of all southern counties.

Monaghan is one of the country's landlocked counties, characterised by rolling drumlin hills and wetlands, its topography having been shaped during the last Ice Age. It contains 129,093 acres of land or 1.9% of the total area of the Republic of Ireland. Of this total, 69% of the area is dedicated to agriculture (mainly grassland), 4% to forestry and 1.7% covered by lakes. There are five major towns in the county: Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay, each having separate planning authorities with the exception of Ballybay (Ballybay although designated as a town council in the Local Government 2001 Act, is not a planning authority for its functional area). Monaghan, remains a predominantly rural county with approximately 80% of its population living in population centres of less than 1000 people.

### 1.2 Legal Basis

Section 9 (1) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 states that:

*'Every planning authority shall every six years make a development plan'*

In March 2007, for the first time, the elected members of Monaghan County Council and the elected members of the town councils of Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, and Clones adopted development plans for their respective functional areas concurrently. The Monaghan County Development Plan 2007-2013, incorporating the development plans for the towns of Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay became effective in April 2007.

These plans incorporated the aims, objectives, policies and guidelines to provide for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Monaghan.

#### 1.2.1 Content of Development Plan

Section 10 of the Act (as amended by Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010) prescribes the content of the Plan. It states that a development plan must **set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of an area.**

The Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 introduced the requirement to include a core strategy within all development plans. The core strategy must show that the development objectives in the development plan are consistent, as far as practicable, with national and regional development objectives set out in the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines.

The Act also states that development plans must also include the following objectives:

- (i) The zoning of land in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- (ii) The provision or facilitation of infrastructure, including transport, energy, and communication facilities, water supplies, waste recovery and disposal facilities
- (iii) The conservation and protection of the environment, including archaeological and natural heritage
- (iv) The encouragement, pursuant to Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, of the management of features of the landscape, such as traditional field boundaries, important for the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network
- (v) The promotion of compliance with environmental standards and objectives included in river basin management plans
- (vi) The integration of the planning and sustainable development of the county with the social, community and cultural requirements of the area and its population
- (vii) The preservation of the character of the landscape, including the preservation of views and prospects, and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty and interest
- (viii) The protection of structures of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest
- (ix) The preservation of the character of architectural conservation areas
- (x) The development and renewal of areas in need of regeneration
- (xi) The provision of accommodation for travellers
- (xii) The preservation, improvement and extension of amenities and recreational amenities
- (xiii) The control, having regard to the provisions of the Major Accidents Directive and any regulations giving effect to it, of the siting of new establishments, modification of existing establishments and development in the vicinity of such establishments
- (xiv) The provision or facilitation of the provision, of services for the community, including, in particular, schools, crèches and other education and childcare facilities
- (xv) The protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of any Gaeltacht within the area of the development plan
- (xvi) The promotion of sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas including the promotion of measures to reduce energy demand, reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions, and address the necessity of climate change adaptation
- (xvii) The preservation and identification on maps and by list of public rights of way giving access to seashore, mountain, lakeshore, riverbank or other place of natural beauty or recreational utility
- (xviii) Landscape, in accordance with relevant policies or objectives of the Government relating to providing a framework for identification, assessment, protection, management and planning of landscapes having regard to the European Landscape Convention

This Plan consists of a written statement and maps. The zoning maps give a graphic representation of the proposals of the Plan and various objectives of the Councils. They do not purport to be accurate survey maps, and should any conflict arise between the maps and the statement, the statement shall have precedence.

### **1.2.2 Preparation of the Draft Development Plan**

Section 11 of the Act outlines the process to be followed in adopting a development plan.

The first stage requires:

- The publication of a notice of intention to review the current plan and make a new plan
- The serving of this notice on the Minister, certain government departments, prescribed bodies, state organisations and authorities
- The invitation to all interested parties and the public to make submissions and observations

Following the period of consultation, the Manager must prepare a report that contains:

- a list of the names of all persons or bodies who made a submission
- a summary of the issues raised in the submissions
- his opinion of the issues raised, having regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, statutory obligations and government policies
- his recommendations on policies to be included in the draft development plan

Within sixteen weeks of the closure of the consultation period, this report must be presented to the elected members of the planning authority for their consideration. Members have ten weeks to issue their directions to the Manager on the preparation of the draft development plan.

The Manager shall then, within twelve weeks, prepare a draft development plan and submit it to the elected members for their consideration. Members have eight weeks to consider and amend it by resolution prior to the draft plan being deemed the final draft plan.

### **1.2.3 Publication of the Draft Plan and Making of the Plan**

Section 12 of the Act provides for the notification of the making of a draft development plan to the Minister, certain government departments, prescribed bodies, state organisations and authorities and owners and occupiers of proposed protected structures. The draft plan is placed on public display for a period of at least ten weeks, during which submissions may be received from the public and interested parties.

Within twenty-two weeks of the notification, following the period of public display of the draft plan, the Manager must prepare and present to the elected members, a report that contains:

- A list of the names of all persons or bodies that made a submission on the draft plan
- A summary of the issues raised in the submissions

- His response to the issues raised, having regard to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, statutory obligations and government policies and the original directions of the elected members

Within twelve weeks the elected members must consider the draft Plan and this report before adopting or amending the draft plan as the development plan.

If members propose an amendment that is a material alteration to the published draft plan, a further four week period of public display and consultation is required, together with a further report by the Manager on the submissions received, before the draft plan is amended and adopted as a development plan, by resolution.

### **1.3 Development Plan Guidelines**

*Development Plans – Guidelines for Planning Authorities* were published by DEHLG in 2007. The guidelines are designed to assist the process of preparing and implementing development plans, and outline best practice on a number of issues. They also provide advice on the structure and presentation of development plans in terms of policy statements, objectives, maps and supporting information. Regard should be had to the advice in the Guidelines when preparing policies and objectives in the development plan.

The aim of the guidelines is to:-

- improve the quality and consistency of development plans, and thereby improve the quality and consistency of decisions on planning applications,
- strengthen the strategic content of development plans, in the context of the hierarchy of plans envisaged under the 2000 Act, and
- encourage consensus building in the preparation, implementation and review of development plans.

The guidelines state that development plans should

- create a clear strategic framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area over the duration of the plan, consistent with longer-term planning and sustainable development aims, including those set out in the National Spatial Strategy and any Regional Planning Guidelines in force.
- set out an over-arching vision for the development of the area to which the plan relates.
- give spatial expression to the economic, social and cultural aims of the County or City Development Strategy.
- be grounded in public and political consensus around the plan's strategic framework.
- provide a clear framework for public and private sector investment in infrastructure and in development in the area, having regard to both national and regional plans and policies.
- protect and enhance the amenities of the area.
- offer clear guidance to developers in framing development proposals and to the planning authority in assessing such proposals.
- establish a policy framework within which more detailed plans (such as local area plans or plans for architectural conservation areas) can be drawn up for specific parts of the planning authority's area.
- be capable of implementation and monitoring.

### 1.4 Principles of Sustainable Development

In preparing and making a Development Plan, the Planning and Development Act, 2000 requires that elected members are restricted to considering the proper planning and sustainable development<sup>1</sup> of the area.

Sustainability is the key concept in planning, merging the social, economic and environmental aspects of society to protect the quality of life. The maintenance of a balance between human activity, economic activity and the environment is critical to provide for the future needs of society. The challenge of sustainable development is to improve the quality of life of all citizens while maintaining a rich and diverse environment, to provide for economic and social activity whilst protecting our natural resources.

#### 1.4.1 Sustainable Development - A Strategy for Ireland

Following its commitment to the principles and agenda for sustainable development, agreed at the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992, the Irish government adopted *Sustainable Development – A Strategy for Ireland* (1996) to provide an analysis and framework to integrate and prioritise sustainable development into every sector of Irish life.

The government established Comhar, the National Sustainable Development Council to facilitate participation and implementation of sustainable development in Ireland. Government Departments and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) were given key roles to develop measures and indicators of sustainable development.

In January 2012, Comhar was integrated into the work of National Economic and Social Council (NESC). NESC will now develop its work in a way that integrates sustainable development issues into its analysis of significant national challenges.

#### 1.4.2 Draft Sustainable Development Strategy Framework for Ireland

The draft Sustainable Development Strategy Framework for Ireland concentrates on gaps in integrating sustainable principles into public policy making in Ireland across a range of economic, social and environmental policy areas where limited progress has been made and which still present formidable challenges. Drawing on the model established by the EU Sustainable Development Strategy, the draft Framework for Sustainable Development formed a central element of Ireland's contribution to the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June 2012. The objective of the conference was to assess the progress to date and identify the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development. The objectives of the draft Framework are to identify and prioritise policy areas and mechanisms where a sustainable development approach will add value and enable continuous improvement of quality of life for current and future generations and set out clear measures, responsibilities and timelines in an implementation plan. This draft Framework includes matters such as conservation and management of natural resources, climate change and clean energy, sustainable agriculture, sustainable transport, social inclusion, and sustainable communities and spatial planning.

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<sup>1</sup> Sustainable development is "development which meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundtland Report, 1987)

### **1.4.3 National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012**

The National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012 builds on measures established under the first National Climate Change Strategy (2000), and provides a framework for achieving emissions reductions. Its purpose is:

- to show clearly the measures by which Ireland will meet its 2008 - 2012 Kyoto Protocol commitment;
- to show how these measures position us after 2012, and to identify the areas in which further measures are being researched and developed;
- to take a long term view, having regard to likely future commitments and the economic imperative for action; and,
- the promotion of sustainable development including the integration of climate change considerations into all policy areas.

### **1.4.4 National Biodiversity Plan 2010-2015**

Biodiversity is the variety and number of every living thing on earth. This includes humans, animals, birds, plants and all the other small creatures. Biodiversity is important for its economic, medicinal, social and environmental value to humans, and also for its value in itself. Throughout the island of Ireland there has been a decline in many of the native species through habitat loss, competition, development and agriculture. It is important that we help preserve and encourage biodiversity both for present and future generations.

There are many impacts on the biodiversity of an area. Developments associated with agricultural activities, wind-farms, afforestation, urban development and certain infrastructural works within, or close to, areas of ecologically sensitive sites, must be carefully planned and managed. Wastewater discharges, runoff from agriculture, leachate from landfills and contaminated sites, and nutrient input from forestry, can all have detrimental effects on water quality, resulting in subsequent impacts to biodiversity. Certain development works on shorelines and floodplains, and the associated infilling of wetlands, are a potential environmental problem within the Region. Invasive non-native plant and animal species are one of the greatest threats to biodiversity.

### **1.4.5 Local Agenda 21 (1997)**

Local Agenda 21 is a process which facilitates sustainable development at community level. It is an approach, based on participation which respects the social, cultural, economic and environmental needs of the present and future citizens of a community in all its diversity, and which relates that community and its future to the regional, national and international community of which it is a part.

Local authorities assumed the responsibility to incorporate the principles of sustainability into their plans and actions. The development of Local Agenda 21 Plans form a crucial part in the implementation of sustainable policies and actions, through the County Development Boards. The County Development Strategy 2002-2012 identified a shared vision for the county as *“an inclusive, outward-looking, progressive county, which enjoys a diverse, vibrant economy, a sustainable environment and a high quality of life for all”*

Local Agenda 21 and sustainable development is now woven into the fabric of local government. The development of the County Development Boards and partnership approach provide the mechanisms for public participation and inclusion in local government. The Development Plan is the main instrument for the regulation and control of physical planning and development. The policies and actions identified within the plan must concur with the principles of sustainable development to insure that the total costs of development, economic, social and environmental are accounted for.

In order to maintain and develop good quality of life for all, proper long-term economic and social development must account for our natural and built resources. Our natural environment in Monaghan is unique. The natural assets of the county, our surroundings, landscape, flora, fauna, heritage and built environment, require protection from unsustainable development.

#### **1.4.6 Strategic Environmental Assessment**

In accordance with EU Directive (2001/42/EC) a formal Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been carried out as part of the preparation of the draft development plans for the five planning authorities in County Monaghan. This is a formal, systematic evaluation of the draft development plans prepared in accordance with the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004).

The objective of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 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 plans with a view to promoting sustainable development' (Article 1 SEA Directive). The SEA Directive requires that certain Plans and Programmes, prepared by statutory bodies, which are likely to have a significant impact on the environment, be subject to the SEA process.

While separate plans will be adopted by each of the Local Authorities, they will be prepared concurrently to provide comprehensive and cohesive policies and objectives for the development of the county as a whole. The Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019 will be produced as a single composite document incorporating the development plans for the towns of Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay and will, collectively, set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the entire county of Monaghan.

As the current development plans are included within a single document and the development plans for the period 2013-2019 will also be included within a single document, it is considered practical and appropriate that the Strategic Environmental Assessment of these plans is carried out as a single holistic process. In carrying out a Strategic Environmental Assessment for these plans in this way, it is considered that the assessment of the likely environmental effects of the policies and objectives of these interrelated development plans and their in combination effects can be best ascertained.

The policies and objectives of the draft development plans have been systematically assessed through the Strategic Environmental Assessment and have been rejected, amended or approved with appropriate mitigation included where relevant. The SEA document or Environmental Report is a supporting document which should be read and considered in parallel with this document.

### 1.4.7 Habitats Directive Assessment (Appropriate Assessment)

The Habitats Directive Assessment (HDA) is a requirement of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) - the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna - as transposed into Irish law through the *European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations, 1997 (S.I. No. 94 of 1997)*. It is further supported by the *European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, (S.I. No. 477 of 2011)*.

The purpose of the HDA is to assess the potential impact of the implementation of the draft development plans on the Natura 2000 network, both in-situ and ex-situ and to ascertain as to whether there will be adverse impacts on the integrity of these sites. The HDA follows guidance from the European Commission and directions from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The HDA follows the key procedural stages as laid out in EU and National Guidance.

The stages are as follows:

- Stage 1: Screening;
- Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment;
- Stage 3: Assessment of alternative solutions;
- Stage 4: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain.

Again, while separate plans will be adopted by each of the Local Authorities, they will be prepared concurrently to provide comprehensive and cohesive policies and objectives for the development of the county as a whole. As stated previously, the plans will be produced as a single composite document incorporating the development plans for the towns of Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay and will, collectively, set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the entire county of Monaghan.

Again as the current development plans are included within a single document and the development plans for the period 2013-2019 will also be included within a single document, it is considered practical and appropriate that the Appropriate Assessment of these plans is carried out as a single holistic process. In carrying out an Appropriate Assessment for these plans in this way, it is considered that the assessment of the likely environmental effects of the policies and objectives of these interrelated development plans and their in combination effects can be best ascertained.

The policies and objectives of the draft development plans have also been systematically assessed through the Habitats Directive Assessment to determine their impact on the Natura 2000 network, both in-situ and ex-situ. The Habitats Directive Assessment Report is a supporting document which should be read and considered in parallel with these draft development plans.



## Spatial Strategies

### 1.5 Spatial Strategies

County and Town Development Plans form part of a hierarchy of plans, strategies and frameworks established at European, national, regional and county level. County and Town Development Plans are primarily land use and spatial plans that comply and operate within a hierarchy of plans and guidelines consisting of the following:-



#### 1.5.1 European Spatial Development Perspective

The European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), agreed by EU member states in 1999 aims to maintain the individual characteristics of each country while simultaneously increasing integration between Member States. The ESDP aims to deliver economic and social cohesion and balance competitiveness across and within the EU. It identified the role spatial planning plays in reducing inter-regional disparities.

The ESDP established a number of common strategic objectives for community policies and development initiatives relevant to the Border Region. The strategic guidelines include the development of a polycentric/multi-centred urban system to strengthen partnership between urban and rural areas, and promote integrated transport and communications concepts. The future of urban regions within Europe is dependent on a combination of policies involving economic competitiveness, social cohesion and environmental quality, as essential requirements in delivering a sustainability agenda. Development processes influencing such policies provide a combination of factors, including the restructuring of economic activities resulting in shifts towards technology based industries and internationally traded services. Secondly, the agglomeration of commercial economic activities is being encouraged through clustering of enterprises, so as to achieve economies of scale. Finally, the emergence of economic corridors within regions which are experiencing strong development pressures, particularly along the main transport axis which link urban areas and smaller settlements.

The ESDP has three underlying objectives:

- i. Economic and Social Cohesion across the Community.
- ii. Conservation of natural resources and cultural heritage
- iii. Balanced competitiveness across the EU.

### 1.5.2 National Spatial Strategy

The National Spatial Strategy 2002 – 2020 (NSS) published by the DEHLG in 2002 sets out a vision for the future development of Ireland. It aims to provide a framework to achieve a better balance of social, economic, physical development and population growth between the regions over a 20 year period.

In the late 1990s, disparities between and within regions in Ireland remained despite average per-capita income and output exceeding the EU averages. The growth of large urban areas such as Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Galway resulted in migration of population, employment and investment to these centres at the expense of the regions.

The resultant growth of unsustainable development patterns in and around these urban centres, especially the Greater Dublin Area, impeded national competitiveness, diminished the quality of life and contrasted with the lack of investment and declining population in the regions.

Future population distribution projections, based on current trends, identified an acceleration of the population drift from the regions to the Greater Dublin Region, with a subsequent concentration of investment and services in five urban areas. The NSS seeks to build up the regions to counteract the unsustainable growth in the Greater Dublin Area, without impacting negatively on national competitiveness or economic growth.

The Strategy recognises that unbalanced development is affecting quality of life and seeks to renew both urban and rural environments through balanced regional development.

The role of the NSS is to:

- i. Support a better balance of activity and development between different regions and areas
- ii. Guide Government departments and agencies in formulating and implementing policy and public investment decisions
- iii. Set a national context for spatial planning to inform regional planning guidelines and strategies and county development plans
- iv. Provide a framework for the spatial development of an all-island economy
- v. Inform strategic investment, transport and other infrastructure policy decisions
- vi. Support the spatially-balanced provision of key infrastructure
- vii. Set out principles of good spatial planning practice

To achieve balanced regional development the NSS stated that the potential for economic activity in the regions must be fostered by:

- i. Integrating strategies for physical, economic and social development
- ii. Creating sufficient numbers of people to provide an adequate labour market and support services at a regional level
- iii. Clustering of businesses and firms with inter-related activities
- iv. Creation of effective inter-regional transport, communicative and energy infrastructure.
- v. Providing access to educational and healthcare services at a regional level
- vi. Creating a high-quality built-environment supporting regional cultural venues for the arts, theatre and sport.

### **1.5.3 Key Concepts of the NSS – Critical Mass, Gateways and Hubs**

The NSS identified a number of key concepts, one of which was the need to develop 'critical mass' in identified urban centres. This was seen as a size and concentration of population that enabled a range of services and facilities to be supported that would in turn attract higher levels of economic activity and improved quality of life.

The NSS identified four gateways in addition to the five "engines of national and regional growth" identified in the NDP. These were Dundalk, Sligo, Letterkenny/Derry and Athlone / Tullamore / Mullingar and their function as regional growth centres to deliver a more spatially balanced Ireland and to drive development in the regions.

Whilst recognising Dublin's pivotal role in the national economic success, the NSS identified the need to balance growth throughout the island with the identification of nine distinct regions.

The NSS proposed the development of the nine gateways located strategically in the regions to provide social, economic infrastructure and support services at a national scale. The NSS envisages gateway centres with populations in excess of 100,000, rail, national road and airport links, hosting third-level education institutions, regional health centres, large clusters of international scale enterprises, integrated public transport networks and "city-level" amenity, cultural and sports facilities

In support of the gateways, the Strategy proposed the development of nine hubs - large towns, in excess of 20,000 population, with significant national and regional-based industries, linked to the gateways, supporting services and economic activity at a regional level and energising medium-sized and smaller towns in the area.

The following map taken from the National Spatial Strategy outlines the spatial layout of the gateways and hubs.

### **1.5.4 Rural Communities**

The NSS stated that the medium-sized and smaller towns would have complementary roles and would in turn support the renewal of the villages and rural economy in their hinterland. The local authority's role as service provider and in improving the environmental attractiveness of towns and villages to strengthen their role as residential and local service centres was emphasised.

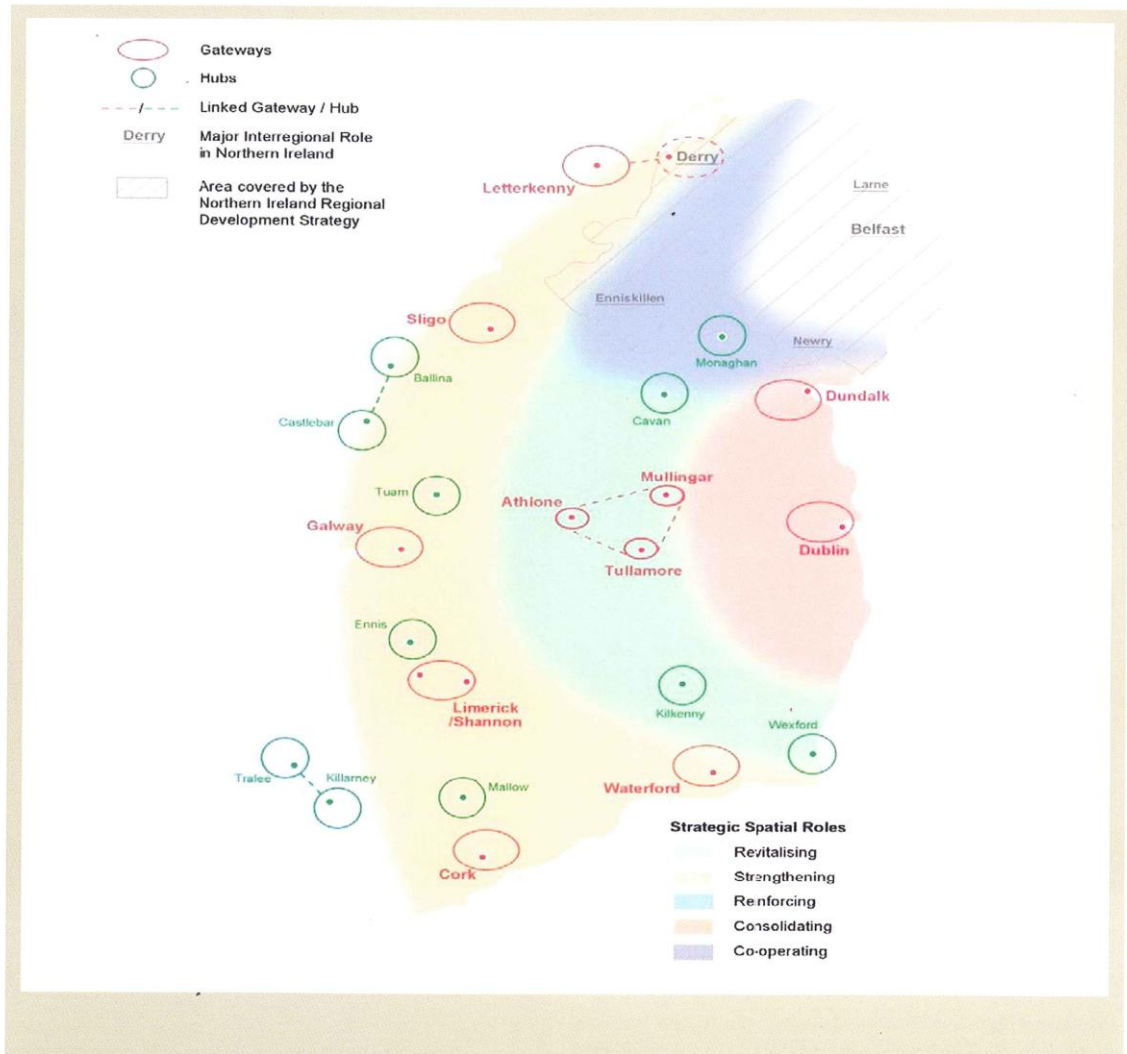
The NSS, while acknowledging the traditional rural-based sectors of employment in agriculture, forestry and fishing, recognised the need for rural areas to support and develop tourism, local enterprise and other sectors to support their communities and local economies. The NSS classified four "Rural Area Types" and "Policy Responses" to sustain population and support existing services.

It should be noted that the hierarchical structure proposed in the NSS is to be supported in future public and private investment proposals. The development of inter-regional transportation and communication infrastructure together with health, educational and environmental services are also considered key to the successful implementation of the NSS.

A copy of the National Spatial Strategy is available at [www.nationalspatialstrategy.ie](http://www.nationalspatialstrategy.ie)

### Map 1.1 Gateways and Hubs

The following map is an extract from the National Spatial Strategy which outlines the spatial layout of gateways and hubs in Ireland.



### **1.5.5 National Development Plan 2007-2013**

The National Development Plan 2007–2013 (NDP) integrates strategic development frameworks for regional development, for rural communities, for all-island co-operation, and for protection of the environment with common economic and social goals.

The NDP sets out a strong framework for the promotion of regional development, with a particular focus on investment in Gateway centres, stressing that strong urban centres are directly related to regional growth and development, affecting employment, incomes and quality of life throughout the regions.

The NDP also seeks to support diversification in the rural economy stating that all rural communities require proper access to the wider national economy through physical infrastructure and services such as broadband, the Rural Transport Initiative, and major investment in non national roads and rural water.

Significant Irish Government investment in North/South projects is explicit in the NDP and includes a high quality road linking the Letterkenny-Derry Gateway with Dublin, upgrading of higher education capacity in the border region, and restoration of the Ulster Canal.

The NDP provides for a strategy for balanced regional development and land use to progress compact and sustainable urban development. This includes investment priorities for Climate Change Strategy, promotion of renewable energy, agriculture, and built and natural heritage preservation.

## Regional Planning Guidelines

### 1.6 Regional Planning Guidelines

The key concept within the NSS is that of balanced regional development, underpinned by strong self-sufficient communities. The regional planning guidelines (RPGs) are in effect a regional spatial strategy, which provide a long-term (12–20 year) strategic planning framework for the development of the region.

Section 21 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, provided for each regional authority to prepare and adopt regional planning guidelines (RPG). These must be reviewed every six years and new guidelines can be made as a result of the review.

Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) for the region were first made by the Border Regional Authority in 2004 and subsequent guidelines were adopted in September 2010 for the period 2010 to 2022. The Border Region, which stretches from Donegal, through Leitrim, Sligo, Cavan, Monaghan to Louth, is a diverse region linked by its continuous boundary with Northern Ireland.

The RPGs comprise of a population and settlement strategy, a regional economic strategy, an infrastructure strategy and policies for environment and amenities, social infrastructure, and a regional flood risk appraisal.

The RPGs for the Border Region provide a strategic planning framework and sets out to deliver the following key strategic goals:-

- To foster the development of the Region's most important asset, its people by providing an improved quality of life for all people and communities living, working and visiting the Region.
- To ensure the development of the Gateways, Hubs, Drogheda and Carrick-on-Shannon as the strategic drivers of growth for the Region and to facilitate integrated sustainable development between urban and rural areas;
- To improve intra and inter regional connectivity and mobility throughout the Region through the development of Strategic Radial Corridors and Strategic Links;
- To promote innovation, economic growth, competitiveness and the development potential of the Region, and to facilitate emerging sectors in the Region that will provide sustainable jobs for the future;
- To protect and enhance the quality of the natural environment and built heritage of the Region;
- To co-ordinate a regional approach to the key environmental challenges facing the Region;
- To co-ordinate and integrate key issues in National and Regional Spatial Planning Strategies and in particular, the National Spatial Strategy and the National Development Plan, and associated inter-regional development initiatives that support and promote strategic links;
- To co-ordinate and integrate key aspects of cross border spatial planning strategies, and in particular, the Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland and associated inter-regional development initiatives, that support and promote strategic links between the two economies.
- To exploit the Region's unique location at the interface between two economies, by putting in place the drivers for economic growth, through the development of the Eastern Corridor, Atlantic Arc and the Central Border Area.

Section 27 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), requires that local authority development plans must be consistent with the regional planning guidelines in force for its area.

### **1.6.1 Population and Settlement Strategy**

The Strategy identifies the diversity and range of the region and the existence of three sub-regions within the functional area of the Authority:

- i. Atlantic Arc (Donegal & Sligo)
- ii. Central Border Region (Cavan & Leitrim)
- iii. Eastern Corridor (Louth & Monaghan)

The guidelines set out a regional settlement hierarchy and allocate population growth targets for the Counties, Gateways, Hubs and Regionally Strategic Towns in the region based on a model of balanced development throughout the region, having regard to the national population targets for the Border Region. These population growths have been translated into housing demand and thresholds for housing land use requirements, and the guidelines set out clear policies relating to urban and rural housing.

### **1.6.2 Regional Economic Strategy**

The guidelines identify the following as existing and potential areas for growth and development:-

- agri food sector
- internationally traded services
- renewable energy and environmental products/services
- life sciences
- tourism
- natural resource sector
- creative sector
- caring sector
- retail sector

Policies to accelerate Gateway and Hub development, to facilitate and promote sectoral opportunities, for infrastructure improvements, and develop a Regional Retail Planning Strategy are included.





### **1.6.3 Infrastructure Strategy**

The Guidelines identify transport, water services, energy and communications as the main networks of infrastructure in the region. Strategic radial corridors and links are set out and sustainable transport modes are promoted. Water conservation, water quality improvement, and improved water services in smaller settlements are stated as necessary to facilitate balanced regional growth. The guidelines promote the

facilitation of energy networks and renewable energy sources, and stress the importance of telecommunications networks as a key piece of economic and social infrastructure.

### **1.6.4 Environment and Amenities**

The Guidelines support the implementation of the National Climate Change Strategy and the National Biodiversity Plan. The protection of natural heritage, landscape, water quality and built heritage are required by the Guidelines and the importance of amenities and recreation to provide a good quality of life is stressed.

### **1.6.5 Social Infrastructure and Community Facilities**

Ensuring that the Border Region is an attractive place to live and work, providing a high quality of life is a core objective of the Guidelines. The importance of social infrastructure, healthcare, community development, education, leisure facilities, cultural facilities and social inclusion are stated, and development plans are required to facilitate the provision of social infrastructure and community development through land use planning.

### **1.6.6 Flooding**

The Guidelines refer to the Flood Risk Management Guidelines published jointly by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Office of Public Works in November 2009 and states that the precautionary approach should be adopted. Avoidance, reduction and mitigation through a sequential approach and justification test is iterated, and an integrated approach to flooding across administrative boundaries is advocated.

The Border Regional Planning Guidelines may be accessed at [www.border.ie](http://www.border.ie)

## County Development Boards

### 1.7 County Development Boards

County Development Boards (CDBs) were established within each county local authority, following publication by the DoEHLG in 1996 of *Better Local Government – A Programme for Change*. *Better Local Government* provided for the establishment of a more participative democracy involving the social partners, local development agencies, state agencies and local authority. Each CDB was charged with establishing a 10-year Strategy for the economic, social and cultural development of its county. A Community and Enterprise Office within each local authority to develop a partnership approach to service delivery and provide administrative support to the CDBs

#### 1.7.1 County Development Strategy

Monaghan County Development Board (CDB) was established in 2000 and sought to develop a strategy for the county. The County Development Strategy sets out a framework for economic, social and cultural development over a ten-year period. The current County Development Board Strategy covers the period 2002 to 2012. Its purpose is to provide a broad framework, which facilitates better service delivery, enabling groups and organisations to work together towards a common goal.

The Strategy is a template guiding all locally delivered public services and local development activities, to ensure the non-duplication of service delivery, identify gaps in coverage and support opportunities for co-operation in the delivery of new services.

In developing the Strategy, over a two-year period, the CDBs carried out extensive consultation amongst the community and voluntary sector before agreeing a shared vision for Monaghan:

***“Monaghan is an inclusive, outward-looking, progressive county, which enjoys a diverse, vibrant economy, a sustainable environment and a high quality of life for all”***

Monaghan CDB identified 12 key, strategic, aims or “themes” which require to be addressed to achieve the shared vision. Each theme consists of a number of objectives, which require actions to be implemented. Lead agencies have been identified to ensure the completion of the actions, with key result areas and timescales established.

*Monaghan 2002 – 2012 - Integrated Strategy for the Social, Cultural and Economic Development of County Monaghan* was adopted by the Monaghan County Development Board in 2003. The most recent review was carried out in 2009 and 9 key strategic themes were established. The CDB will continue to monitor and evaluate progress on its implementation.

The Strategy provides the socio-economic context for the County and Town Development Plans. In preparing, County and Town Development Plans, planning authorities must have regard to the County Development Strategy and its objectives.

In 2010 an Economic Strategy & Implementation Plan for County Monaghan was adopted. The main objective of this strategy, which covers the period 2010-2014, is to provide an overall vision for economic development in the county relevant to the

current economic climate. The Strategy identified possible future scenarios and has resulted in the establishment of a business leaders forum to support the monitoring, evaluation and review of actions in response to emerging scenarios.

The County and Town Development Plans' land-use and spatial policies and objectives will reflect the socio-economic considerations of the County Development Strategy. The County Monaghan Development Board Strategy and Economic Strategy & Implementation Plan for County Monaghan may be accessed at [www.monaghancdb.ie](http://www.monaghancdb.ie)

## Context of the Development Plan

### 1.8 Context of the Development Plan

#### 1.8.1 Previous Planning Context

The County Monaghan Development Plan (Incorporating the Development Plans for the Towns of Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay) 2007 – 2013 was adopted in March 2007 and thus new plans must be adopted by March 2013 to fulfil legislative requirements.

#### 1.8.2 Guidelines and Circulars issued by the Minister

There are a number of Guidelines and Circulars which must be taken into account by Planning Authorities when preparing a development plan. These are listed below:-

##### Guidelines

- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Local Authorities (2009)
- Architectural Heritage Protection for Places of Public Worship (2003)
- Best Practice Guidance note on Transboundary Consultation and Land Use Plans (2010)
- Best Practice Urban Design Manual Part 1 (2009)
- Best Practice Urban Design Manual Part 2 (2009)
- Childcare Facilities Guidelines (2001)
- Design Standards for New Apartments (2007)
- Development Management Guidelines (2007)
- Development Plan Guidelines (2007)
- Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines (2012)
- Draft Landscape and Landscape Assessment (2000)
- Implementing Regional Planning Guidelines-Best Practice Guidelines (2010)
- Quarries and Ancillary Activities (2004)
- Draft Retail Planning Guidelines (2011)
- The Provision of Schools and the Planning System - Code of Practice for Planning Authorities (2008)
- Sustainable Residential Developments in Urban Areas - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Guidelines (2004)
- Sustainable Rural Housing Development Guidelines (2005)
- Sustainable Rural Housing Development Guidelines Map (2005)
- Taking in Charge of Housing Estates/ Management Companies (2006)
- Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures (1996)
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009)
- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities Technical Appendices (2009)
- Tree Preservation Guidelines
- Wind Energy Development Guidelines (2006)

## Circulars

- PSSP 7/11 Planning & Development (Amendment)(No 2) Regulations 2011
- **PSSP 6/2011** **Further Transposition of the EU Directive 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment**
- PSSP 1/11 Implementation of Regional Planning Guidelines 2011
- PSSP 2/10 Appropriate Assessment under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities
- PPL 1/10 Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010
- PSSP 01/2010 Implementation of new EPA Code of Practice on Wastewater Treatment
- PSSP 4/10 Development Plans
- PSSP 08/2010 Development Plans - determination of national plans, policies and strategies
- PSSP 05/2010 Strategic Environmental Assessment
- PD 07/2009 Waste Water Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations 2007
- SP 04/2009 Regional Planning - Gateways and Hubs Population Targets
- HP AP 2/09 Government Policy on Architecture 2009 – 2015 Towards a Sustainable Future
- SP 05/08 Rural Housing Policies and Local Need Criteria in Development Plans
- PD 03/2008 Wind Energy Development - Planning permission and Grid Connections
- SP 03/2008 Provisions of Schools and the Planning System
- PD 01/2008 Taking in Charge of Residential Developments
- PD 06/2006 Wind Energy Development Guidelines - Clarification
- PD 04/2006 Wind Energy Development Guidelines
- SP 03/05 Sustainable Rural Housing
- SP 02/2005 Implementation of Regional Planning Guidelines
- SP 01/2005 Review of Retail Planning guidelines in so far as they relate to floor space cap on retail warehouses
- BC 08/2004 European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004
- PD 07/2003 Architectural Heritage Protection on places of worship
- SP 05/03 Groundwater protection and the Planning System
- PD 05/2001 Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Childcare Facilities
- PD 03/00 Draft planning guidelines on landscape and landscape assessment

## Guidance Notes

Guidance Notes on Planning and Development Act 2000 Part II - Plans & Guidelines

### **1.8.3 Relationship with other Plans**

In addition, to the NSS, RPGs and CDB Strategy, County and Town Development Plans are informed by other relevant plans, programmes and government policies in operation at national, regional and local level.

At national level, government policy, whether issued directly through central departments or state agencies must inform the Development Plan. Examples of this include the National Development Plan 2007-2013, Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland 1996, The Common Chapter, and the plans of the National Roads Authority, Forfas, EPA, etc. Government Capital Expenditure Programmes and guidelines in areas such as Urban and Village Renewal Programmes, Serviced Land

Initiatives and Road Restoration Programmes also inform the Development Plan process.

At regional level, in addition to the RPGs, the development plans must account for regional plans and policies such as the Waste Management Plan for the North-East Region, and the River Basin Management Plans for Neagh Bann and the Northwest. Interreg funded Programmes must also inform the Plan.

The County and Town Development Plans must have regard to development plans of adjoining planning authorities and co-ordinate policies and objectives with other authorities. To insure co-ordination within the county, and as previously stated, the County and Town Development Plans have been prepared jointly.

At local level, in addition to the CDB Strategy, Town and County Development Plans must account for local initiatives and programmes.

#### **1.8.4 Structure and Format of the Draft Development Plan**

The draft Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019, incorporating the draft Development Plans for Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay has been prepared following a period of intensive public consultation. The public consultation included advertisements placed in the local press, interviews on local radio and postings on the Council website and facebook, seeking submissions and observations. Public meetings with individuals and interested parties were also held.

A report on the consultation process and submissions submitted during this period was presented to Monaghan County Council and each Town Council in September 2011. These reports addressed each submission and outlined the Manager's proposed response to them. The issues raised have been incorporated into the draft development plans.

The draft Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019, incorporating the draft Development Plans for Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay consists of a written statement and maps. The written statement is subdivided into sixteen chapters and twenty two appendices. The attached maps identify land uses proposals and provide clarification to the general and specific objectives contained in the written statement.

**The objectives and policies set out in this document must be read together, and not in isolation, when considering development proposals within the functional areas that make up County Monaghan Local Authorities.**