

Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031

(Volume 1 – Written Statement and Maps)



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Note

The Monaghan County Development Plan 2025 – 2031 was made by the Elected Members of Monaghan County Council on Monday 26th May 2025. In accordance with Section 12(17) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (As Amended) the Development Plan shall have effect 6 weeks from the day that it is made i.e 7th July 2025.

On 4th July 2025 the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage issued a 'Notice of Intention to Issue a Direction' to the Planning Authority under Section 31 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (As Amended).

The Draft Direction addresses Material Alteration Chapter 9, No.2 & Material Alteration MTDP1 No.15. These matters, in accordance with Section 31(4)(c) and Section 31(6) of the Act, **'Shall not have effect'**.

Please note that the sections **highlighted in yellow** in this Written Statement and detailed on Map MTDP 1 are the subject of the Draft Ministerial Direction. For more information refer to www.monaghan.ie/planning/monaghan-county-development-plan-2025-2031-july25/ or www.consult/monaghancoco.ie.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

The Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 provides an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Monaghan over the timescale of the Plan. Spatial planning through the development plan objectives and policies endeavour to achieve balance between the common good and the interests of individuals. It is acknowledged that many of the major issues affecting development in the County are determined by national policy and government funding. The reform of local government in 2014 focussed on what could be achieved locally by working together to bring about a higher quality of life and more sustainable economic development in County Monaghan. Following extensive research and consultation to identify the key challenges, opportunities and priorities from both a community and economic perspective, Monaghan County Council working alongside Monaghan Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) published the first Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for County Monaghan covering the period 2015 to 2021.

The subsequent Monaghan LECP for the period 2023-2029, in contrast to the 2015-2021 LECP, covers both community and economic elements in an integrated and combined way that reflects the cross-cutting nature of elements across the goals, objectives, outcomes, and actions. The aim of the Monaghan LECP 2023-2029 is, “to develop and promote social and economic opportunities for all people living in and visiting County Monaghan”.

The LECP and the County Development Plan are complementary policy documents, which share the same vision to provide an overall strategy for the social, economic, cultural and physical development of the County.

This Development Plan builds on the review of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 but also takes account of more recent key development trends, national, regional and local policy documents as well as EU legislative requirements.

1.1 Plan Area

The Local Government Reform Act 2014 subsumed the administrative areas of Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay Town Councils within the County Monaghan administrative area and established Municipal Districts of Monaghan, Ballybay-Clones, and Carrickmacross-Castleblayney. The Municipal Districts are designed to enhance democratic governance, subsidiarity and accountability while also improving operational efficiency and value for money. Elected Members arising from the recent local elections are elected in the first instance to the Municipal District with the combined District membership constituting the membership of the plenary County Council (18 members). This Plan sets out detailed settlement plans and policies for each of these towns as well as the villages and cluster settlements within the County.

Figure 1.1 County Monaghan Municipal Districts



Source: Local Electoral Area Boundary Committee No.1 Report 2018.

1.2 Plan Title

This Plan is titled Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

1.3 Legal Status

This Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) (the Act) and supersedes the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025. In accordance with Section 9(1) of the Act every planning authority shall every 6 years make a development plan.

The legislation requires that the Development Plan sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County. It must be consistent with national plans, policies and strategies that relate to proper planning and sustainable development. The following mandatory objectives must be included:

- Zoning of land for residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, open space or otherwise, or a mixture of those uses. It should be noted that there shall be no presumption in law that any land zoned in a development plan (including a development plan that has been varied) shall remain so zoned in any subsequent development plan (Section 10(8) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)).
- The provision or facilitation of infrastructure including transport, energy and communication facilities, water supplies, waste recovery and disposal facilities, wastewater services and ancillary facilities.
- The conservation and protection of the environment, including archaeological and natural heritage, and the conservation and protection of European sites and any other sites which may be prescribed.
- 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 and essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species.
- The promotion of compliance with environmental standards and objectives established:
 - (i) for bodies of surface water, by the European Communities (Surface Waters Regulations (2009),
 - (ii) for groundwater, by the European Communities (Groundwater) Regulations 2010, which standards and objectives are included in river basin management plans (within the meaning of Regulation 13 of the European Communities (Water Policy) Regulations, 2003).
- The integration of the planning and sustainable development of County Monaghan with the social, community and cultural requirements of the county and its population.
- 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 or interest.
- The protection of structures, or part of structures, which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.
- The preservation of the character of architectural conservation areas.
- The development and renewal of areas, identified having regard to the core strategy, that are in need of regeneration, having regard to the core strategy in order to prevent:
 - (i) adverse effects on existing amenities in such areas, in particular as a result of the ruinous or neglected condition of any land,
 - (ii) urban blight and decay,
 - (iii) anti-social behaviour, or
 - (iv) a shortage of habitable houses or of land suitable for residential use or a mixture of residential and other uses.
- The provision of accommodation for travellers, and the use of particular areas for that purpose.
- The preservation, improvement and extension of amenities and recreational amenities.
- The control, having regard to the provisions of the Major Accidents Directive and any regulations, under any enactment, giving effect to that Directive of;
 - (i) The siting of new establishments,
 - (ii) Modification of existing establishments, and

- (iii) Development in the vicinity of such establishments for the purposes of reducing risk or limiting the consequence, of a major accident.
- The provision, or facilitation of the provision, of services for the community including in particular schools, crèches and other educational and childcare facilities.
- The protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht including the promotion of Irish as the community language, where there is a Gaeltacht area in the area of the development plan.
- The promotion of sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas including the promotion of measures to:
 - (i) reduce energy demand in response to the likelihood of increases in energy and other costs due to long-term decline in non-renewable resources;
 - (ii) reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and address the necessity of adaption to climate change, taking account of the local authority climate action plan;
 - (iii) address the necessity of adaptation to climate change, in particular, having regard to location, layout and design of new development.
- The preservation and identification on map and by list of public rights of way which give access to mountains, lakeshores, riverbanks or other places of natural beauty or recreational utility.
- The provision of a framework for the identification, assessment, protection, management and planning of landscapes, having regard to the European Landscape Convention.

In accordance with Section 15(1) of the Act, there is a duty on the Planning Authority to take such steps within its powers as may be necessary for securing the objectives of this Plan. The Council recognises the role and importance of infrastructure providers, semi-state bodies and landowners/stakeholders in County Monaghan in realising the objectives of this development Plan.

1.4 Challenges for County Monaghan

During the 2019-2025 plan period more growth took place in the rural areas of County Monaghan than in the urban areas. Therefore, the key challenges facing County Monaghan for this Plan period include the following:

- Promoting the main urban centres as the principal areas for population growth.
- Promoting sustainable economic and community development with the delivery of objectives set out in the Local Economic and Community Plan.
- Facilitating employment generating uses within the settlement centres and in the rural area, where appropriate.
- Facilitating housing in accordance with the provisions of the Core Strategy.
- Delivering community facilities throughout the settlements at an appropriate scale to the level of population growth.
- Ensuring adequate investment in infrastructure that will maintain and facilitate economic development.
- Protecting the built heritage, drumlin landscape, natural heritage and biodiversity and provide for a sustainable resource for tourism activity.
- Providing for the regeneration of the town and village centres including tackling vacancy and dereliction.
- Integrating climate change considerations into strategic objectives.
- Implementing the Habitats Directive for Natura 2000 sites and to recognise that projects that may have an adverse impact on the designated sites will not be permitted unless for imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI).

This Plan sets out the planning policy response of the County Council to these challenges. The aim of this Plan is to ensure that the future development of County Monaghan is promoted and regulated in

a manner that will improve living standards and facilitate social and cultural development for the population of County Monaghan without jeopardising the ability of future generations to do likewise.

1.5 Content and Format

The Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 comprises a written statement with supporting maps and appendices. The written statement includes strategic objectives and policies for the development and use of land within County Monaghan. In the event of any conflict or ambiguity between what is contained within the written statement and the supporting maps, the written statement will take precedence.

1.6 Preparation of the Draft Plan

Section 11 of the Act outlines the statutory process for the preparation of a development plan. A notice was published in the local press, The Northern Standard on 11th May 2023. This notice outlined the intention of the Council to review the 2019-2025 County Development Plan and to prepare a new plan for 2025-2031. It also informed the public that the Planning Authority would carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) as part of the review process and prepare an Environmental Report on the likely significant effects on the environment resulting from the implementation of the Plan together with associated mitigation measures.

1.7 Pre-Draft Consultation

The pre-draft consultation commenced for an eight-week period on 11th May 2023. Widespread consultation was engaged in with the public, interested and relevant bodies, statutory providers, government departments and public agencies. A consultation paper was published and widely distributed as well as being made available online. The consultation paper was also advertised through local press and media. The consultation paper outlined a summary of the key strategic issues for the Development Plan review and provided details of the consultation workshops and how to make a submission. A press release was issued to the Northern Standard newspaper, the Monaghan County Council website and social media pages, as well a radio advert on Northern Sound to promote public participation in the consultation process. Facilitated evening consultation workshops with council staff and elected members were organised in the five towns. These events included formal presentations, question and answer sessions and meetings with members of the public.

1.8 Stakeholder Consultation

All prescribed bodies, stakeholders, schools and service providers were contacted, issued with a link to the consultation paper and invited to make submissions. Submissions received have been included in the Chief Executive's Report. A list of all bodies notified is set out in Appendix 20 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

1.9 Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive's Report was prepared on the submissions and observations received and, on all matters, arising from the consultation meetings. A list of everyone who made a submission, a summary of the issues raised, the opinion of the Chief Executive taking account of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and the statutory obligations of the Local Authority and finally, recommendations on the policies to be contained in the Draft Plan are all outlined in this report. The Chief Executive's Report was circulated to the Elected Members on, 1st March 2024 for their consideration. On the 8th April 2024 the Members issued directions to the Chief Executive to proceed with the preparation of the Draft Plan.

1.10 Strategic Aim

To facilitate sustainable development and to build on the strengths of County Monaghan by supporting the provision of employment opportunities and residential developments within quality

urban and rural environments that provide a high standard of physical and social infrastructure necessary for their respective communities.

1.11 Strategic Objectives

The realisation of the strategic aim will be pursued by seeking to secure the following strategic objectives of the Plan.

Plan Strategic Objectives	
SO 1	To develop to its full potential each part of County Monaghan in economic, social and environmental terms.
SO 2	To sustain traditional settlement patterns while developing the role and function of each town, village, and settlement throughout the County in accordance with the settlement strategy.
SO 3	To promote sustainable compact development forms, including more comprehensive backland development where appropriate, ensuring the efficient use of available public infrastructure and services.
SO 4	To realise the potential of County Monaghan in the context of its strategic location along the border, adjacent to the eastern economic corridor and to improve linkages and communications between County Monaghan and its neighbouring counties.
SO 5	To support balanced economic development throughout the County by delivering improved infrastructure and services.
SO 6	To protect, nurture and enhance the County's rich natural resources, heritage, tourism assets and amenities along with the environmental quality of the natural and built environment in both the urban and rural areas.
SO 7	To prepare and implement a Masterplan and Development Framework for Lough Muckno and its environs, which will act as a blueprint for its evolution and sustainable development as an exemplar recreational and amenity facility, having due regard to constraints and sensitivities associated with the area and relevant environmental protection requirements.
SO 8	To plan for greater social inclusion and to improve the quality of life of all who live and work in County Monaghan.
SO 9	To provide a framework for the management and regulation of development and use of land that will guide day to day planning decisions.
SO 10	To maintain the strategic capacity and safety of the national roads network and to safeguard the investment in national roads.

1.12 Policy Context

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires that the Development Plan shall, so far as is practicable, be consistent with national plans, policies, and strategies.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) which is the overarching planning policy for the State was published in February 2018 under Project Ireland 2040 and contains ten National Strategic Outcomes and numerous National Policy Objectives. This planning framework sets out where development and investment should be guided to shape the national, regional, and local spatial development in economic, environmental, and social terms to 2040. In summary it provides for:

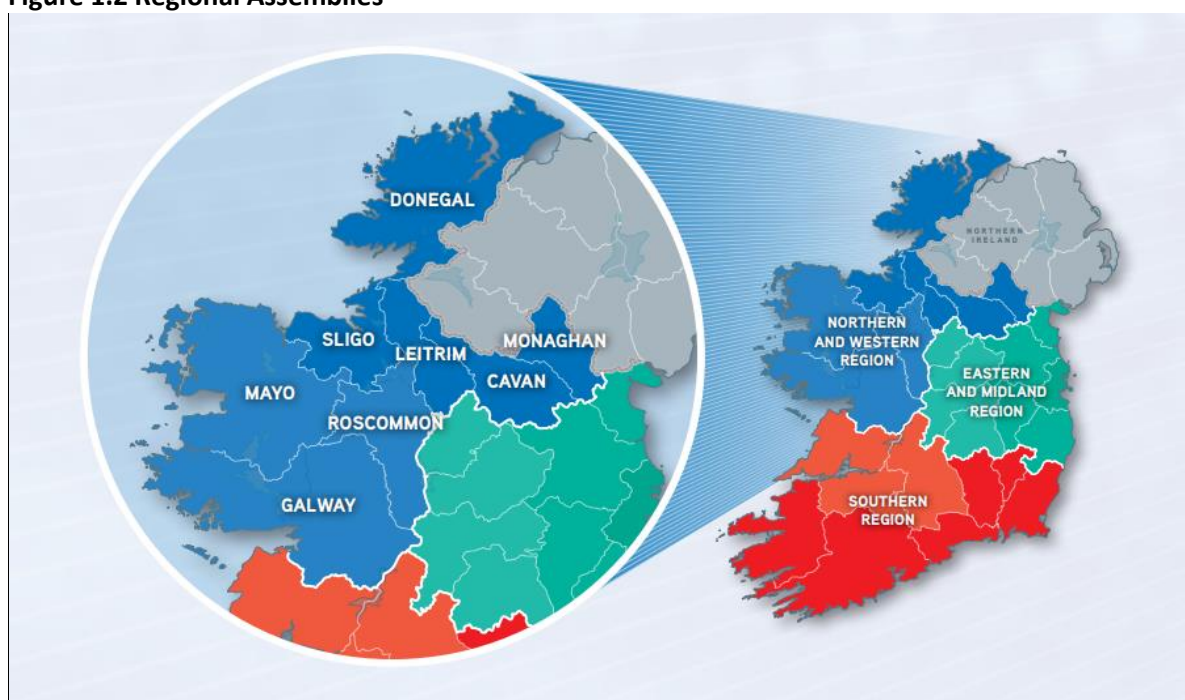
- 50% of overall national population and employment growth to be directed to the five cities of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford.
- Large and smaller towns, villages and rural areas to accommodate the other 50% of population.
- Improved national infrastructure grid in terms of mobility, communications, energy systems and essential public and community services and facilities.

- A more effective balance of growth between Ireland's three regions (Northern and Western, Eastern and Midland, Southern Regions).
- Northern and Western and Southern Regions combined to grow at broadly comparable rates to the Eastern and Midland Region.
- Major new policy emphasis on renewing and developing existing built-up areas rather than continual expansion and sprawl into the countryside.
- Target of at least 40% of new housing nationally to be delivered within the existing built-up areas.
- Significant proportion of national population and economic growth targeted at building up the fabric of smaller towns, villages and rural areas.

County Monaghan is located within the Northern and Western Regional Assembly area (NWRA), along with the counties of Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, Sligo, Mayo, Roscommon and Galway. Although County Monaghan is located within the NWRA the NPF also recognises that it is also part of a North East functional area where a key driver is the Dublin-Belfast cross border economic corridor.

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (RSES) provides a high-level development framework for the Northern and Western Region that supports the implementation of the NPF and the relevant economic policies and objectives of Government. It provides a 12-year strategy to deliver the transformational change that is necessary to achieve the objectives and vision of the Regional Assembly. It sets out the key strategic assets, opportunities and challenges for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly as well as setting out the policy responses to ensure that people's needs for housing, jobs, ease of travel and overall well-being are met up to 2032 and beyond.

Figure 1.2 Regional Assemblies



Source: Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (RSES).

Table 1.1 National Policies and Strategies	
National Planning Framework – Project Ireland 2040 (NPF)	The National Planning Framework (NPF) is a national high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of the Country up to 2040. It is a region focused strategy for managing growth and is linked to the National Development Plan

	(NDP) which is a ten-year investment plan. It is a framework which will guide public and private investment, create and promote opportunities whilst protecting and enhancing the environment.
National Development Plan 2021-2030 (NDP)	This Plan sets out the Government's over-arching investment strategy and budget for the period 2021-2030 which will underpin the National Planning Framework and drive its implementation up to 2030. It is a plan that balances the significant demand for public investment across all sectors and regions of Ireland with a major focus on improving the delivery of infrastructure projects to ensure speed of delivery and value for money. This will guide national, regional and local planning and investment decisions to ensure appropriate regional development that will cater for increased population and ongoing employment development, while supporting the Government's climate ambitions.
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.
National Sustainable Mobility Policy	The National Sustainable Mobility Policy sets out a strategic framework to 2030 for active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport journeys to help Ireland meet its climate obligations. It is accompanied by an action plan to 2025 which contains actions to improve and expand sustainable mobility options across the country by providing safe, green, accessible and efficient alternatives to car journeys. It also includes demand management and behavioural change measures to manage daily travel demand more efficiently and to reduce the journeys taken by private car.
National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI)	Published by the Department of Transport (DoT) in 2021, this policy document recognises the interdependence of transport and spatial planning and supports investment that will help realise compact growth and enhance connectivity.
National Adaptation Framework: Planning for a Climate Resilient Ireland 2024	This framework specifies the national strategy for the application of adaptation measures in different sectors and by local authorities to reduce the vulnerability of Ireland to the negative effects of climate change and to avail of any positive effects that may occur. It sets out an extended suite of guiding principles that underscore the need for smarter, faster and transformative adaptation actions, which demand a pathway planning approach to account for a range of future warming and impact scenarios. It acts as a roadmap for governments, organisations, and communities to plan and implement adaptation strategies. The Framework helps coordinate efforts, allocate resources, and prioritise actions that reduce vulnerability and enhance resilience. A robust framework not only enables more effective responses to immediate climate related challenges but also fosters long-term sustainability by ensuring that adaptation measures are integrated into policymaking, infrastructure development, and local planning.

The White Paper: Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-2030	This is an update of national energy policy, and it sets out a framework to guide policy and the actions of Government up to 2030.
Climate Action Plan 2024	This Plan sets out the roadmap to deliver on Ireland's climate ambition and is updated annually. It aligns with the legally binding economy wide carbon budgets and sectoral ceilings that will enable Ireland to meet 2030 targets and be well placed to meet mid-century decarbonisation objectives. It provides a detailed plan for taking decisive action to achieve a 51% reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050. The Plan lists the actions needed to deliver on Ireland's climate targets and sets indicative ranges of emissions reductions for each sector of the economy.
National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP)2021-2030	This Plan incorporates all planned policies and measures that were identified up to the end of 2019, and which collectively deliver a 30% reduction by 2030 in non-ETS greenhouse gas emissions (from 2005 levels). It aims to assist in the delivery of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions at EU level by 2050. It will be revised to include policies and measures to bring it in line with Ireland's commitment to achieving a 7% annual average reduction in greenhouse gas emissions between 2021 and 2030.
Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030 (NBAP)	This Plan strives for a "Whole-of-Government, Whole-of Society" approach to the governance and conservation of biodiversity. The aim is to ensure an awareness of biodiversity and its importance, of the implications of its loss, and an understanding how to address the biodiversity emergency as part of a renewed national effort to act for nature. The NBAP takes account of the wide range of policies, strategies, conventions, laws and targets at the global, EU and national level that influence our shared environment in order to scale up biodiversity action.
National Broadband Plan (NBP)	The National Broadband Plan (NBP) is the government's initiative to deliver high speed broadband services to all premises in Ireland. This will be delivered through investment by commercial enterprises coupled with intervention by the State in those parts of the country where private companies have no plans to invest.
Water Services Strategic Plan (WSSP); A Plan for the Future of Water Services 2015	This document considers at a national level the way that water services are delivered in Ireland. It sets out strategic objectives for the delivery of water services up to 2040.
Draft Third Cycle Draft River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027	The RBMP sets out the status of waters in the River Basin Districts the proposed environmental objectives and the programme of measures to achieve those objectives by 2027.
People, Place and Policy Growing Tourism to 2025	This was published by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport in 2015 and sets out clear targets for the development of Irish Tourism. It is framed within the context of the tourism sector welcoming 10 million visitors by 2025 with associated revenues of €5bn and sustaining 250,000 persons in employment.
Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025	The vision of this policy is for a thriving rural Ireland which is integral to national economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing and development. It highlights the interdependence of urban and rural areas, and recognises the centrality of people,

	the importance of vibrant and lived in rural places, and the potential to create quality jobs and sustain the environment.
Housing for All- A new Housing Plan for Ireland 2021	Part of the Programme for Government – Our Shared Future, the document Housing for All - a New Housing Plan for Ireland is the government’s housing policy to 2030. The vision over the longer term is to achieve a steady supply of housing in the right locations with economic, social and environmental sustainability built into the system, through increased affordability, eradication of homelessness, increasing housing supply and social housing delivery, and addressing vacancy and underuse of existing stock. The document specifies 213 actions to be taken by government departments, local authorities, state agencies and others.
Table 1.2 Regional Policies and Strategies	
Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (RSES)	The RSES provides a high-level development framework for the Northern and Western Region that supports the implementation of the NPF and the relevant economic policies and objectives of Government. It provides a 12 year strategy to deliver the transformational change that is necessary to achieve the objectives and vision of the Regional Assembly. It sets out the key strategic assets, opportunities, and challenges for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly as well as setting out the policy responses to ensure that people’s needs for housing, jobs, ease of travel and overall well-being are met up to 2032 and beyond.
National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy (2024-2030)	This Plan seeks to influence sustainable consumption and prevent the generation of waste, improve the capture of materials to optimise circularity and enable compliance with policy and legislation. sets out policy for future improvement and development of waste management as well as the means to implement and monitor progress.
Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways (July 2018)	This Strategy aims 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.
Table 1.3 County Monaghan Strategies	
Monaghan County Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024	Monaghan County Council’s Corporate Plan sets out the aims and principles that will inform and guide the activities of the Council. The core values of the Council are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide strong governance, be open to scrutiny and transparent in our dealings with stakeholders. • To provide a public service that has a strong customer and citizen focus. • To be professional, competent and progressive in the design and delivery of our services. • To provide clear direction in economic, social and community development.
Monaghan Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2029	The LECP sets out the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development as well as the local and

	community development of the County both by the Council and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders. The LECP covers both community and economic elements in an integrated and combined way that reflects the cross-cutting nature of elements across the goals, objectives, outcomes, and actions. The aim of the Monaghan LECP 2023-2029 is, “to develop and promote social and economic opportunities for all people living in and visiting County Monaghan”.
Monaghan Biodiversity and Heritage Strategic Plan 2020-2025	This Plan provides a framework for conserving biodiversity and natural heritage at a local level. It includes actions which serve to raise awareness of and enhance the protection, conservation and management of our natural heritage. The plan has an ambitious vision that the role heritage and biodiversity play in relation to climate change mitigation and adaptation, sustainable communities, functioning ecosystems, and health and well-being will be accepted in the County and embedded in the activities of Monaghan County Council. The mission or purpose of the strategic plan is to protect, conserve and advocate for biodiversity, tangible and intangible heritage, contributing to sustainable development and climate change mitigation and adaptation.
County Monaghan Tourism Strategy 2023-2028	This Strategy identifies a series of actions which are designed to enhance tourism in the County. It sets out a clearly articulated, refreshed vision for driving sustainable, innovative, resilient and inclusive tourism sector growth in Monaghan and advocates the coordinated delivery of tourism products, services and experiences to realise the ambition of the strategy.
County Monaghan Walking and Cycling Strategy 2021-2026	This document is a high-level, strategic look at how Monaghan County Council proposes to develop walking and cycling infrastructure, and to promote walking and cycling as activities which support the economic, cultural, and social wellbeing of the people of County Monaghan. The Strategy looks at walking and cycling both as recreational activities and at the crucial role that they play in helping to address Climate Change through the promotion of Active Travel.
Monaghan Retail Strategy 2016-2022	The aim of this Strategy is to promote a vibrant retail sector and to protect the viability and vitality of existing town centres.
Monaghan Local Authority Climate Action Plan (LACAP) 2024 - 2029	The Climate Action Plan 2024 - 2029 seeks to ensure that it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the implementation of international and national objectives on climate change, and • Works closely with the Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA), Climate Action Regional Office (CARO) and other stakeholders to promote climate action policies and objectives, and • Promotes spatial planning policies that are consistent with climate mitigation and adaption.
Monaghan Land Use and Transportation Study 2017	This Study is a short to medium term plan that sets out a transport and land use strategy for Monaghan town.

There are also a number of Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued by Government Departments under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Planning Authorities are required to have regard to any guidelines issued and accordingly this Plan has considered the following guidelines:

- Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DAHG, 2011)
 - Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2009)
 - Childcare Facility Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DELG, 2001)
 - Development Contribution Scheme Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DECLG, 2013)
 - Development Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2007)
 - Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DHLGH, 2022)
 - Core Strategy Guidelines (DEHLG, 2010)
 - Spatial Planning and National Roads, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DECLG, 2012)
 - Landscape and Landscape Assessment-draft (DELG, 2000)
 - The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2009)
 - Provision of Schools and the Planning System (DEHLG, 2008)
 - Quarries and Ancillary Activities - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2004)
 - Retail Planning Guidelines, Guidelines for Planning Authorities and Retail Design Manual (DECLG, 2012)
 - Strategic Environmental Assessment: Guidelines for Regional Assemblies and Planning Authorities (DHLGH, 2022)
 - Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines (DEHLG, 2005)
 - Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and Urban Design Manual Best Practice Guide (DEHLG, 2009)
 - Urban Design Manual, A Best Practice Guide (DEHLG, 2009)
 - Sustainable Urban Housing – Design Standards for New Apartments (DHPLG, 2015)
 - Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DHLGH, January 2024)
 - Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures Guidelines (DELG, 1996)
 - Tree Preservation Guidelines (DELG, 1994)
 - Wind Energy Development Guidelines 2006 and Interim Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Statutory Plans, Renewable Energy and Climate Change, (DHPLG, 2017)
 - Best Practice Guidance on Transboundary Consultation and Land Use Plans (DOENI Planning Service, 2010)
 - Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent ≤ 10) (EPA, 2021)
 - Taking in Charge Procedures for Private Housing Developments (MCC, 2010)
- and any new or updated/subsequent versions(s) that may be published over the plan period.

1.13 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is an environmental assessment of plans and is a statutory requirement of the EU SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) and the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004 as amended by the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011.

It is a process of systematically evaluating and predicting the likely environmental effects of implementing the Plan and it ensures that these effects are appropriately addressed at the earliest stage of decision making. The formal process of carrying out a SEA is an integral part of the preparation of this County Development Plan. The issues considered by the SEA are:

- Biodiversity and flora and fauna,

- Population and human health,
- Soil (especially on greenfield lands),
- Water (including flood risk and the status of rivers, lakes, and groundwater),
- Air and climatic factors (including sustainable mobility and associated effects - energy usage and emissions to air including noise and greenhouse gases),
- Material assets (including provision of adequate and appropriate wastewater and drinking water services and waste management),
- Cultural heritage (architectural and archaeological heritage), and
- Landscape/Geology.

The SEA Environmental Report which accompanies this Plan provides an understanding of the likely environmental consequences of decisions regarding development in County Monaghan. It has guided the preparation of policies and development alternatives for this Plan. A comprehensive suite of environmental mitigation has been developed for the County Development Plan which is presented in Section 8 of the accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Monaghan County Council commits to implementing these mitigation measures during the lifetime of the Plan. A SEA statement has also been prepared, and this summarises how environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan, how consultations were taken into account and the reasoning behind the decisions made in light of other reasonable alternatives.

1.14 Appropriate Assessment (AA)

The EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) requires the Appropriate Assessment (AA) of plans and projects to determine whether the Plan could have significant effects on Natura 2000 sites. This process involves an assessment of the indirect and cumulative impacts of the plan, considered with any current or proposed activities, developments or policies impacting on Natura 2000 sites. This process informs plans of the environmental impacts of alternative actions and contributes to the integration of environmental considerations into plan making.

The formal process of Appropriate Assessment has been carried out as part of the preparation of this Plan. Stage 1 involved screening for AA where it was concluded that the Plan could, in the absence of mitigation, result in adverse impacts on the Natura 2000 network. A Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Report) was carried out. Any risks to the conservation objectives of the Natura 2000 network have been addressed by the inclusion of mitigation measures that will prioritise the avoidance of impacts in the first place and mitigate impacts where these cannot be avoided. With mitigation measures incorporated, it is considered that the Plan will not have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of the Natura 2000 network. The Natura Impact Report is included in Appendix 23 of the Plan and should be read in parallel with this Plan.

1.15 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

Following the implementation of the Floods Directive (2007/60/EC) into Irish legislation, the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG/OPW, 2009) indicate that County Development Plans must establish the flood risk assessment requirements for their function area. Planning authorities must ensure that development is not permitted, and land is not zoned in areas of high flood risk, particularly floodplains, except where there is no suitable alternative. The SFRA which accompanies the Development Plan focuses on land use zoning and flood risk management policy. It is based on the best available emerging information on flood risk indicators, as well as climate change consideration. Flood risk areas have been annotated in green onto the towns and villages maps which accompany this Development Plan. These green lines are for indicative purposes and should always be read in conjunction with the SFRA for this Development Plan 2025-2031. The SFRA is included in Appendix 19.

1.16 County Profile

Monaghan is a relatively small county of approximately 1295km². It is bounded by Counties Cavan, Meath, Louth, Armagh, Tyrone and Fermanagh. It is strategically located on the Donegal/Derry – Dublin corridor, adjacent to the M1 corridor and has strong links to Northern Ireland. The County is a rural one with a quality drumlin landscape interspersed with wetlands and woodlands. Despite its peripheral border location, County Monaghan has a long and proud tradition in the development of unique indigenous industry and as a hub for innovation in business and agriculture nationally.

County Monaghan has a range of unique towns and villages, renowned angling destinations and impressive architectural heritage, coupled with a vibrant population. The roads infrastructure of County Monaghan which includes the N2 national route traversing the middle of the County provides for strong connections to the surrounding counties and the two principal cities of Dublin and Belfast. The settlements within County Monaghan historically evolved along the Great Northern Railway route and the main transport routes. The focus of economic activity for the County exists within the five towns of Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay.

1.17 Population and Demography

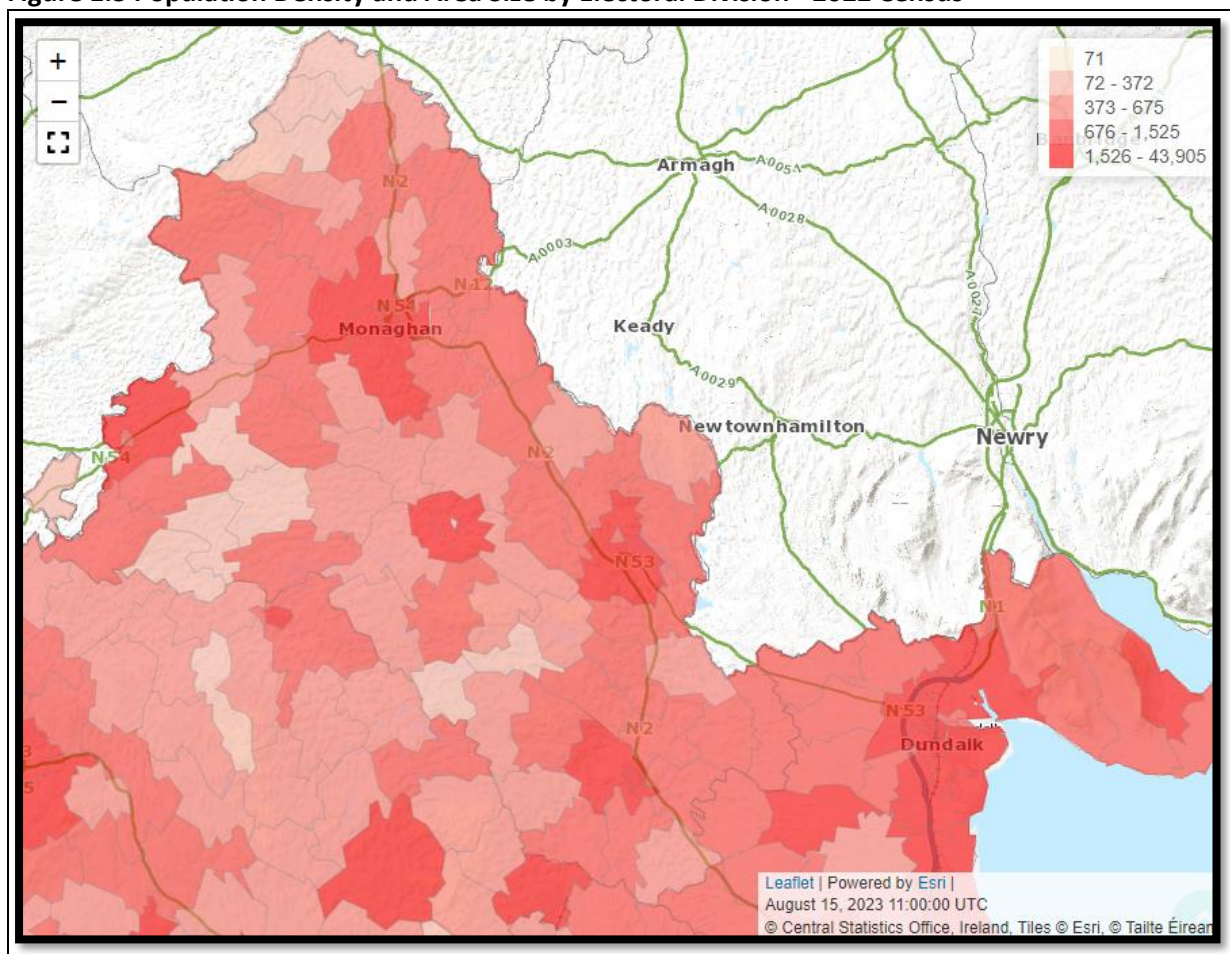
Census 2022 results show that County Monaghan's population has grown more significantly since the Census taken in 2016, increasing by 3,902 persons to 65,288 persons. This represents an increase of 6.4% over the intercensal period, an average annual increase of 1.06% compared to a state average of 1.3%. These figures follow continuous population growth rates for Monaghan since the 1996 Census. Given the change in economic trends nationally over the last ten years, the population growth within County Monaghan is considered reasonable. However, within the border counties Monaghan's population growth is relatively low compared to other counties over the last ten years. Table 1.4 and Figure 1.3 indicate that all five of the main settlements of County Monaghan experienced growth between 2016 and 2022. Having regard to national economic conditions which impacted on population change over the 2016-2022 periods, trends considered over a longer-term period demonstrate more measured and sustainable growth patterns. Taking a longer-term view of County Monaghan over the period 1996-2022 (26 years), the population of the County has increased by almost 13,975 persons demonstrating positive growth patterns, notwithstanding cycles of economic and population decline within this period. Census figures indicate that there is a natural population increase and an increase in migration figures, and this is a trend which is likely to continue with anticipated continued economic growth.

1.18 County Monaghan - Population Change

Census 2022 results show that significant growth has occurred in the rural area, particularly to the north of Monaghan town and the rural area surrounding Carrickmacross in the south of the County. Monaghan remains a predominantly rural county, with only 37.9% of the County's population living within an urban area. The population is quite evenly spread throughout the Municipal Districts (MDs) with Carrickmacross-Castleblayney MD having a slightly larger population than Monaghan MD, and Ballybay-Clones MD having the smallest population.

Figure 1.3 and Table 1.4 indicate that most designated settlements within County Monaghan have experienced varying levels of population growth between 2006 and 2022. This included a 31% and a 25.7% increase in the population of Carrickmacross and Castleblayney respectively. Over this same period Monaghan Town population increased by 17.5%.

Figure 1.3 Population Density and Area Size by Electoral Division - 2022 Census



Source: Central Statistics Office, Ireland.

Table 1.4 Population Change in towns and villages 2006 – 2022				
Town	2006	2011	2016	2022
Monaghan	6720	7325	7678	7894
Carrickmacross	4387	4894	5032	5745
Castleblayney	3124	3634	3607	3926
Clones	1767	1761	1680	1885
Ballybay	1217	1461	1241	1329
Ballinode	400	473	470	433
Emyvale	683	696	701	638
Glaslough	290	348	453	443
Inniskeen	292	265	273	405
Newbliss	317	331	327	352
Rockcorry	292	310	316	302
Scotshouse	-	-	220	317
Scotstown	250	370	361	436
Smithborough	309	363	395	495
Threemilehouse	167	159	156	148
Remaining Area	20,215	22,390	22,910	24,748
Total population	55,816	60,495	61,386	65,288

Despite having a falling population over recent census periods, Clones town has experienced a 12.2% increase in population between 2016 and 2022, whilst Ballybay recorded a 7.1% increase in population for the same period. It is evident from the demographic analysis that the designated settlements function as key local service centres for their surrounding rural catchments, within which a substantial proportion of the County's population reside.

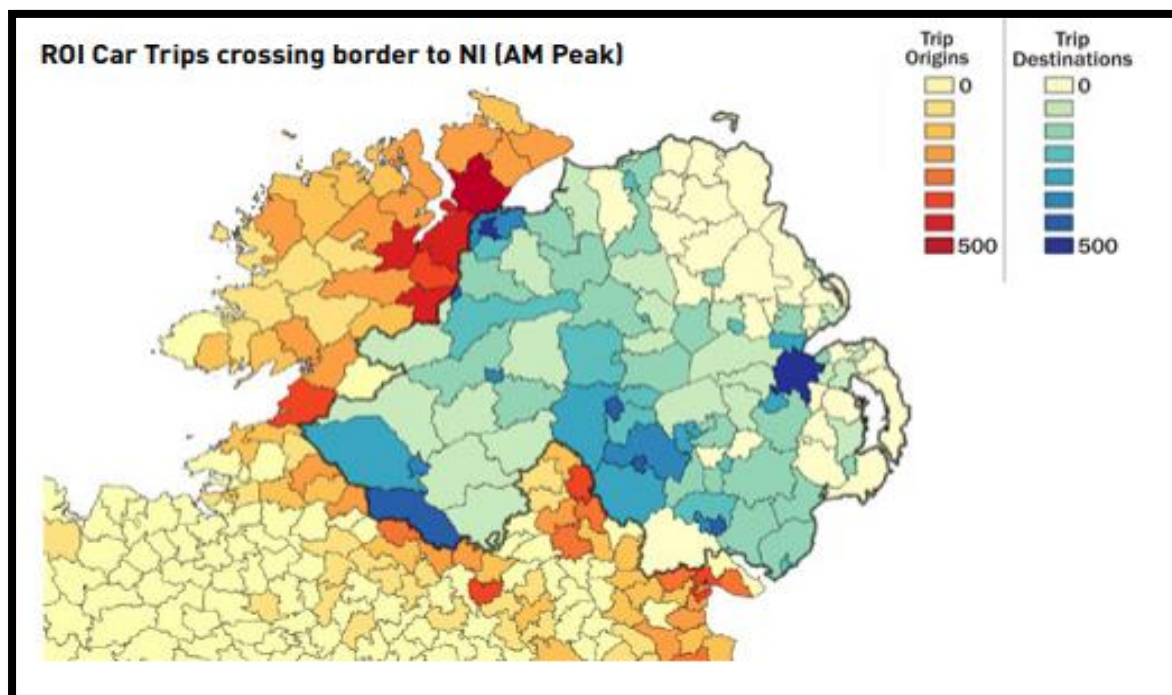
A more pronounced population increase took place in the villages of Glaslough, Inniskeen, Scotstown and Smithborough where growths of 52.8%, 38.7%, 74.4%, and 60.2% were recorded respectively. However, it should be noted that the populations of Ballinode, Emyvale, Glaslough, Rockcorry and Threemilehouse have fallen between 2016 and 2022.

1.19 Cross Border Context

A number of County Monaghan's settlements are located in close proximity to the Northern Ireland border and the high level of cross border social and economic interactions that occur between County Monaghan and those counties in Northern Ireland is difficult to quantify. This level of interdependency is recognised in the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly area. Monaghan County Council is a member of both the Irish Central Border Area Network (along with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council; Fermanagh and Omagh District Council; Mid Ulster District Council and the county councils of Cavan, Donegal, Leitrim, and Sligo), and the East Border Region (along with the councils of Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council; Newry, Mourne and Down District Council; Ards and North Down Borough Council; and the county councils of Louth and Meath). Through its membership of both of these cross-border groups, Monaghan County Council participates in promoting cross-border co-operation and communication at a Local Government level on common regional development concerns and also draws down EU funding which contributes to the economic development, social and cultural development of our region.

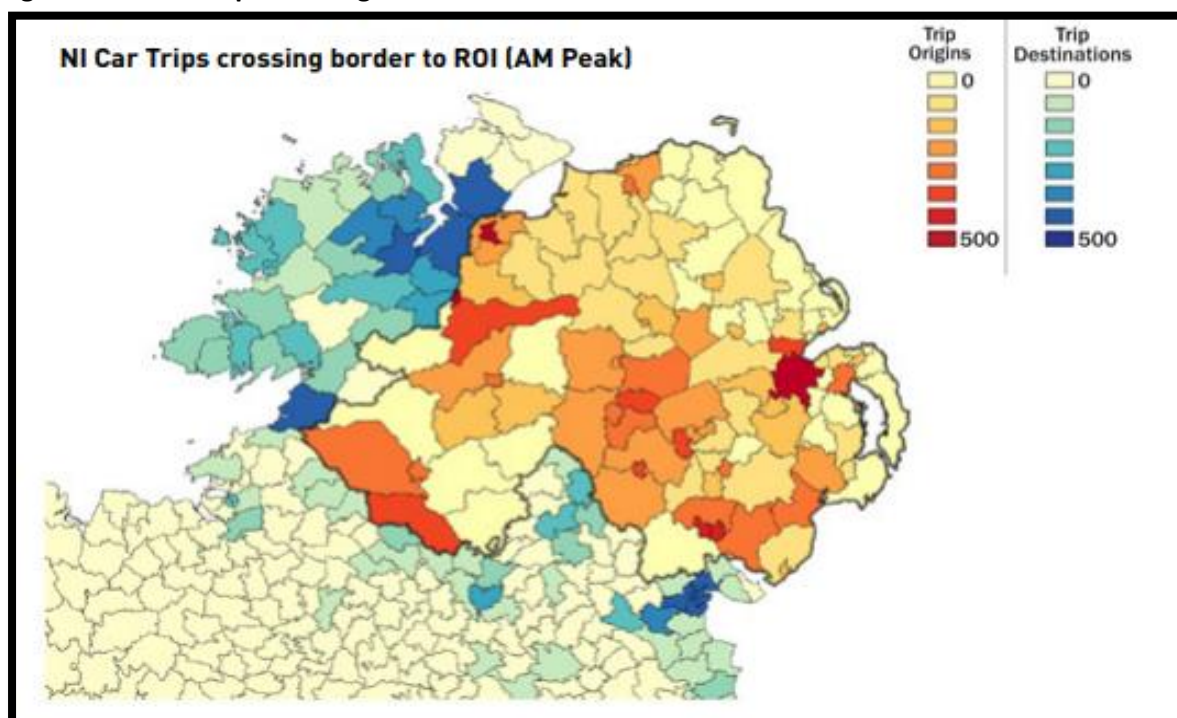
Figures 1.4 and 1.5 shows the spatial extent of commuting flows across the border and can be used as an evidence-based indicator of the influence of the border region in terms of daily economic activity. These are existing functional relationships between urban centres in two jurisdictions that require a specific policy framework to support co-ordinated growth in the border region. Through the Core Strategy it is important to identify the key strategic towns within County Monaghan that due to their proximity to the border have potential for land use opportunities.

Figure 1.4 ROI Car Trips Crossing Border to Northern Ireland



Source: NPF Issues and Choices Paper, February 2017.

Figure 1.5 NI Car trips Crossing Border to ROI



Source: NPF Issues and Choices Paper, February 2017.

1.20 Economic Context

The Development Plan has an important role in driving significant economic development within the County by emphasising the importance of the renewal and regeneration of our towns and villages, especially where they have strengths, opportunities or assets that can be supported. It is also an aim

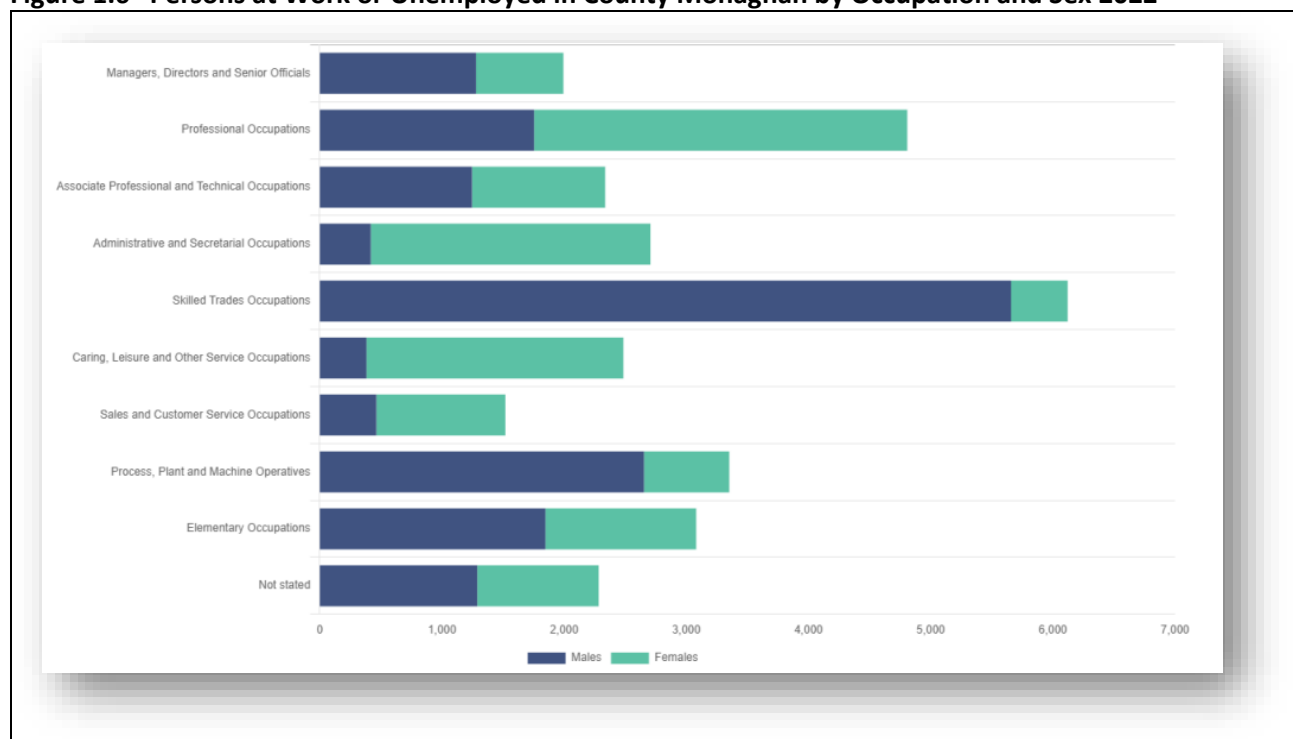
of this Plan to strengthen rural communities by supporting agricultural diversification, tourism and opportunities for rural economic growth where local employment opportunities can be provided.

There have been welcome advancements in the commercial and industrial environment of the County over the last plan period. The continued success of business operations in the County provides much needed local employment opportunities and the importance of building the established local indigenous industry on the small to medium scale cannot be overestimated. The development contribution scheme which is applicable to any development taking place within County Monaghan has the lowest rates nationally.

The levels of office floorspace have not grown significantly throughout the County since the previous plan period. The M-Tek and C-Tek complexes are assisting in establishing business hubs in the two largest towns of the County. The challenge for this Plan is to maintain an appropriate level of growth that provides increased employment opportunities that helps to retain and grow the County's population within an attractive living environment.

Figure 1.6 provides a comparison of the employment levels in the County by broad industrial sector with those of the state in 2022.

Figure 1.6 Persons at Work or Unemployed in County Monaghan by Occupation and Sex 2022



Source: Central Statistics Office, Ireland.

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Chapter 2

Core Strategy

Chapter 2

Core Strategy

2.0 Introduction

Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires that a development plan shall include 'a core strategy which shows that development objectives in the development plan are consistent, as far as practicable, with national and regional development objectives set out in the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and with specific planning policy requirements specified in guidelines' issued by the Minister.

The core strategy of the County Development Plan recognises the role of settlements in driving the development of the County but also identifies the scope of development possible for the County, while remaining consistent with national and regional policy. It also identifies the quantum and location of development for the plan period, consistent with the population targets and settlement hierarchy that reflects the availability of existing services, planned investment, sequential development and environmental requirements.

Core Strategy Strategic Objective	
CSSO 1	To ensure that new development within the County will provide for sustainable and balanced development that enables economic growth, delivery of accessible and high-quality infrastructure and services, and guides population growth in accordance with the settlement strategy.

2.1 National and Regional Policy Context

The National Planning Framework (NPF) 2040 is a high-level strategy that will shape growth and development in Ireland to the year 2040. As a framework document it sets in sequence a process by which more detailed planning documents must follow, including the relevant Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) and County Development Plan. It sets out ten National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) which underpin the overarching vision for the Country and serve as shared goals, as depicted in Figure 2.1.

The NPF contains a number of National Policy Objectives which set out a framework for making cities, towns and villages more attractive and 'liveable' with a target of 30% of new housing to be within the existing urban footprint of our towns and villages. Within this context, under National Policy Objective 11, the NPF applies a 'presumption in favour of development that can encourage more people and generate more jobs and activity within existing cities, towns and villages' and under National Policy Objective 16 it targets the 'reversal of rural decline in the core of small towns and villages through sustainable targeted measures that address vacant premises and deliver sustainable reuse and regeneration outcomes.' Having regard to the foregoing, the main aims of the Core Strategy are:

- To provide for and support strong and sustainable development over the lifetime of the Plan.
- To approach the overall development of the County in an inclusive and integrated way to make sure all aspects of development occur in a consistent manner.
- To ensure the best use of the County's resources to support the sustainable development of infrastructure, amenities and economic investment in the area.
- To achieve a dynamic and vibrant living and working environment for the County's population by making the most of economic, social and physical development for the benefit of communities and visitors alike.
- To identify the scope of development needed to support future population growth.

- To promote and support the integration of land use and transport, public transport accessibility, and to encourage a modal shift to greater use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport.
- To examine and assess existing housing and settlement patterns to ensure all decisions are informed and evidence based.

Figure 2.1: NPF National Strategic Outcomes



Source: National Planning Framework, page 13.

The NPF sets out projected populations for the regions and counties until 2031 (refer to Figure 2.2). The projected population for Monaghan County by 2031 is between 69,000 and 71,000.

The NPF Implementation Roadmap population projection for County Monaghan in 2026 is between 67,000 and 68,000 (refer to Figure 2.2), which represents an average annual growth of between 560 and 660 persons between 2016 and 2026. When extrapolated, this average annual growth envisaged a County Monaghan population of between 64,800 and 65,500 by 2022. Census 2022 indicates that the population of County Monaghan was 65,288, and therefore the County's population is growing in accordance with the projections set out in the NPF.

Figure 2.2: Transitional Regional and County Population Projections to 2031

Northern and Western Regional Assembly			
Regions and Counties	2016	2026	2031
North-West			
Donegal	159,000	173,500-176,500	179,500-183,500
Sligo	65,500	71,500-72,500	74,000-75,500
Leitrim	32,000	35,000-35,500	36,000-37,000
Subtotal	256,500	280,000-284,500	289,500-296,000
West			
Galway	258,000	300,000-308,500	322,000-334,500
Mayo	130,500	142,000-144,500	147,000-150,500
Roscommon	64,500	70,500-71,500	73,000-74,500
Subtotal	453,000	512,500-524,500	542,000-559,500
Mid-Border			
Cavan	76,000	83,000-84,500	86,000-88,000
Monaghan	61,500	67,000-68,000	69,000-71,000
Subtotal	137,500	150,000-152,500	155,000-159,000
Total	847,442	942,500-986,500	961,500-1,014,500

Source - Implementation Roadmap for the National Planning Framework, Appendix 2, page 14.

One of the five growth ambitions of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly 2020-2032 states ‘Compact growth will be pursued to ensure sustainable growth of more compact urban and rural settlements, supported by jobs, houses, services and amenities, rather than continued sprawl and unplanned, uneconomic growth.’ Regional Policy Objective RPO 3.2 aims to ‘deliver at least 30% of all new homes that are targeted in settlements with a population of at least 1,500 within the existing built-up footprints’, while Regional Policy Objective RPO 3.13 seeks ‘to support the role of smaller and medium sized towns, which demonstrate an important role in terms of service provision and employment for their catchments within the economic function of the county. Such settlements will be identified through the Development Plan process as part of the Settlement Hierarchy and the Core Strategy.’ Therefore, this Core Strategy seeks to manage the growth of the towns of Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay having regard to this target and their respective roles and functions.

Regional Policy Objective RPO 3.4 seeks ‘to support the regeneration and renewal of small towns and villages in rural areas’, while Regional Policy Objective RPO 3.3 has a target to ‘deliver at least 20% of all new housing in rural areas on brownfield sites.’ Therefore, this Core Strategy seeks to implement these objectives in a sustainable manner in respect to the villages and rural area.

The aim of this Core Strategy is to provide for sustainable and measured growth in order to meet the projected population growth and housing requirements for County Monaghan over this plan period consistent with both the NPF and RSES.

2.2 Housing Supply Targets

In 2020 the Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning Guidelines were issued by DHLGH under Section 28 of the Act 2000 (as amended). The purpose of these Guidelines is to assist planning authorities in appropriately integrating, in a consistent and coherent approach, the strategic national and regional population parameters into their statutory planning processes, including the

preparation of the County Development Plan and the preparation of the Housing Strategy, informed by the Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) process.

The Department commissioned the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) to further develop work previously undertaken for the NPF to provide a nationally integrated and standardised evidence base for local authorities to estimate overall housing demand. The ESRI research applied an econometric and demographic projection model to four different development scenarios:

- Baseline – projecting a ‘business as usual’ scenario which is based on current trends and medium-term projections for the Irish economy.
- NPF 50:50 City – consistent with the NPF strategy.
- High Migration – incorporating assumptions around high international migration flows into Ireland based on higher economic growth than the baseline.
- Low Migration – incorporating assumptions around lower international migration flows into Ireland based on lower economic growth than the baseline.

The NPF 50:50 City scenario is broadly consistent with the NPF and consequently, the 2018 NPF ‘Roadmap’ document and the population parameters specified therein. Therefore, the identified NPF 50:50 City scenario is the recommended housing demand scenario to be used in planning for the provision of housing to meet projected levels of demand in accordance with the NPF strategy. The housing demand and supply figures for the County issued with the Guidelines envisages a total of 2,184 houses to be delivered in County Monaghan between 2020 and 2026 and a total of 3,641 houses to be delivered between 2020 and 2031, inclusive of those houses that were not delivered in the years 2017 (77), 2018 (163), and 2019 (13).

For the purpose of informing the Core Strategy a Housing Supply Target Methodology (HSTM) Table has been prepared for the plan period using the most up to date figures at time of writing in relation to house completions from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) to determine unmet demand to be incorporated within the plan period. A simplified version of this HSTM table is contained within Section 3.4.2 Housing in Chapter 3 – Housing Strategy.

2.3 Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2023-2031 Population Projections

Using the HNDA Toolkit issued with the Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning Guidelines, the County Monaghan Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2023-2031 (HNDA) projected a county population of 63,373 by 2022 under the NPF 50:50 City Scenario and up to 64,360 under the High Migration Scenario. Census 2022 indicates that the population of County Monaghan was 65,288, which exceeds the projected figures in all four projected population scenarios (refer to Figure 2.3), and therefore the County’s population is growing in excess of all of the projection scenarios set out.

Figure 2.3: Population projections for County Monaghan, 2020-2031 (ESRI/HNDA Toolkit)

Year	Baseline	50:50 City	High Migration	Low Migration
2016 (Actual)	61,386	61,386	61,386	61,386
2020	63,262	62,682	63,267	62,966
2021	63,775	63,052	63,821	63,213
2022	64,237	63,373	64,360	63,437
2023	64,650	63,647	64,888	63,701
2024	65,014	63,876	65,407	64,007
2025	65,332	64,061	65,918	64,300
2026	65,638	64,233	66,423	64,581
2027	65,938	64,395	66,925	64,854
2028	66,233	64,552	67,428	65,124
2029	66,527	64,705	67,934	65,390
2030	66,821	64,857	68,444	65,657
2031	67,117	65,010	68,962	65,927

Source: County Monaghan Housing Need and Demand Assessment, 2023 – 2031, Page 49.

2.4 Projected Population Growth –2025-2031

The population of County Monaghan increased between 2016 and 2022 by 6.4%, an average annual growth of 1.06%, which is significantly greater than the previous population growth for the period between 2011 and 2016, which only had a marginal increase of 1.05%. The projected population growth for the County for the period 2016 to 2026 and also to 2031 is set out within the NPF. National trends, including trends in net migration, and unemployment levels impact on population trends. The number of people migrating from County Monaghan is anticipated to be limited over the plan period due to the improved economic situation, local investment in public facilities, and quality of life factors. Having regard to these considerations, along with recent demographic trends and increased economic activity, both nationally and locally, a rational assumption is being presented that an annual population growth will follow the trend of the last intercensal period which had an average increase of 1.06% per annum. This rate will provide for growth in the County over the plan period.

Table 2.1 County Monaghan Population Targets 2025-2031

2022 Population	Projected Rate of Population Growth 2022-2031	Projected Population by 2031
65,288	Total Population of County Monaghan to have an average annual growth rate of 1.06%	71,516 persons

An aim for this strategy is to build strong urban centres and protect the rural hinterlands. Census 2022 indicated that there was 37.9% of the County's population living in the urban settlements designated as Tier 1-4 settlements in the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025. Notably, this figure relates to the built-up area boundary of these settlements, as defined for the purposes of Census 2022, but excludes some areas considered to constitute part of the five towns and the 14 villages.

This Core Strategy sets out to increase that to at least 40% over the plan period in order to assist in the regeneration of the settlements and to ensure that the social and physical infrastructure of the County is being used as efficiently as is possible. This will be done through:

- Focusing on achieving more intense growth in the County town in accordance with the target set out in the NPF and RSES, whilst establishing a hierarchy of settlements capable of providing a range of services and employment to their local populations and hinterlands.

- Promoting the implementation of the principles and approaches set out in Town Centre First.
- Pursuing the compact urban growth of towns and villages through the development of lands within the existing urban footprint.
- Only permitting development in the rural areas which is appropriate to the rural setting, including those which are consistent with agricultural diversification, to support the strengthening of towns and villages and promote sustainable transport patterns.
- Providing for low density development of residential units on suitable sites within the designated settlements in order to provide an alternative house type choice to rural one-off housing.
- Recognising environmentally sensitive areas within the County which need to be protected but not precluded from appropriate uses and/or development.

2.5 Economic Development Strategy

The Core Strategy must also consider the economic function of the designated settlements to ensure the focus of growth is commensurate to the size and function of the settlements within the County. Chapter 4 (Economic Development) of this Development Plan outlines the approach to economic development within the County and sets out policies and objectives to support the economic development of the County. Supporting economic development is however interlinked with the aims and objectives of other chapters of the Development Plan, particularly in relation to infrastructure provision as detailed in Chapter 7 Transport and Infrastructure of this Development Plan.

The Economic Development Strategy of this Development Plan is informed by national policy, and the framework set out by the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Region (RSES) and Monaghan County Council's Local Economic and Community Plan 2023 – 2029 (LECP). Consideration has also been taken of recent data sets, particularly information relating to the population and employment within the 2022 Census.

The overall aim of the Economic Development Strategy, and the policy objectives and strategies contained within Chapter 4, is to promote County Monaghan as a local and regional centre of trade, business and tourism, and to build on its strong spirit of enterprise to create a dynamic local economy with job creation at its heart. Increased jobs creation will support the sustainable growth of our towns and county overall, allowing more people who live in County Monaghan, to work in County Monaghan.

The key area of focus of the Economic Development Strategy is the spatial element of economic activity, and specifically the provision of suitable lands for economic development in appropriate locations, which have been assessed as being appropriately serviced or have potential to be serviced during the lifetime of the Development Plan. Given the dominant employment sectors within the County, with a strong engineering, manufacturing and agri-food industry base, it is important that lands are included in locations which are close to transport links and accessible by means of active travel. It is also important to include lands in proximity to existing enterprises, to establish clusters of enterprises. The Development Plan will also seek to manage the growth of rural enterprises, in a sustainable manner, in recognition of the contribution which indigenous rural enterprises makes in providing employment opportunities to the County's population. This will be facilitated through specific objectives and policies.

The Settlement Hierarchy sets out a vision for how the County, and settlement tiers are expected to grow during the lifetime of the Development Plan. The quantum of land zoned for Industry, Enterprise and Employment use allocated to each settlement will take account of the settlements position in the settlement hierarchy and its role and function. Monaghan Town, being the Key Town should be promoted for significant future development. Carrickmacross and Castleblayney play important

functions as secondary tier settlements. The policies and objectives contained within Chapter 4 Economic Development, seek to ensure that future economic development occurs in the appropriate places, commensurate with the Settlement Hierarchy.

In accordance with NPO 9 of the NPF, Monaghan Town is designated as a Key Town within the RSES and therefore is identified for significant rates of population growth of 30% or more above Census 2016 population levels which was 7,678. This means that Monaghan Town should achieve a population of at least 10,000 by 2040. To ensure this target is met, Monaghan Town must achieve a population of 9,200 by the end of this development plan period. However, it is considered that to achieve a suitable critical mass for this Key Town, a population target of 9,700 persons by 2031 should be strived for. It is acknowledged that the 2022 population figure for Monaghan town was 7,894, an increase of 216 persons in 6 years. To increase this growth rate a revised focus will be placed on driving compact growth, inward investment, town regeneration schemes such as Dublin Street North, Dublin Street South Regeneration Plans and Roosky Lands Master Plan along with the application of the Derelict Sites Act. An additional objective MTSO 2 has been included in Chapter 10 Monaghan Town Settlement Plan 2025-2031 to support this focus. Monaghan is the primary economic growth town to be promoted for regional enterprise where critical mass is a core objective to justify strategic infrastructure provision. Thus, Monaghan Town is designated as a Tier 1 settlement.

Carrickmacross, which is identified in the RSES as a town with strategic potential on a regional scale, and Castleblayney, both have experienced strong population growth in the County over the last number of census periods. Both towns are identified as secondary economic centres whereby capacity exists to provide new employment opportunities in these strategic locations which are very accessible both to the rest of the County, and the wider surrounding region, including the M1 motorway, Dundalk, the Greater Dublin Area and the Eastern Economic (Dublin – Belfast) Corridor. Furthermore, these towns have the potential to provide employment opportunities that build on the existing assets of the towns, which will assist in reducing long distance commuting patterns and developing more sustainable communities. Thus, Carrickmacross and Castleblayney are designated as Tier 2 settlements and have projected population growth of 15.2% and 12.7% respectively over the plan period.

The towns of Clones and Ballybay will be encouraged to create new local employment opportunities as well as providing services to the population within their hinterlands. Thus, Clones and Ballybay are designated as Tier 3 settlements. As Clones experienced moderate population growth over the last census period and National Policy Objective 3a within the NPF aims to “Deliver at least 40% of all new homes nationally within the built-up footprints existing settlements”, these towns have projected population growth of 13.2% and 12.5% respectively over the plan period.

The larger villages will also be encouraged to create new local employment opportunities as well as providing services to the population within their hinterlands. In previous Monaghan County Development Plans ten large villages comprising of Ballinode, Emyvale, Glaslough, Inniskeen, Newbliss, Rockcorry, Scotshouse, Scotsown, Smithborough, and Threemilehouse were designated as Tier 4 settlements. However, in recognition of the growth of Annyalla, Clontibret North, Doohamlet and Oram in recent times, these four villages are also now designated as Tier 4 settlements. As National Policy Objective 3a within the NPF aims to “Deliver at least 40% of all new homes nationally within the built-up footprints existing settlements” these villages have projected population growth of 6.8% over the plan period.

The wider rural area will continue to provide for employment generating uses that are locational based including, but not limited to, agri-business, rural based tourism and renewable energy projects.

As detailed in Table 2.1, the population of County Monaghan is projected to grow to 71,516 persons by 2031. In order to promote regeneration, consolidation and growth in the settlements, a sufficient proportion of the County's population growth has been allocated to them, based on their role and function. The allocations of population growth are presented in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Population Targets 2031

Tier	2016 Population	2022 Population	Targeted Share (%) of Population by 2031	Projected % Growth from 2022 to 2031	Projected Population by 2031
Tier 1 Principal / Key Town Monaghan	7,678	7,894	13.6	22.9	9,700
Tier 2 Strategic Towns Carrickmacross Castleblayney	5032 3607	5,745 3,926	9.9 6.5	22.8 19.0	7,053 4,673
Tier 3 Service Towns Clones Ballybay	1680 1241	1,885 1,329	3.2 2.2	19.8 18.7	2,259 1,578
Tier 4 Villages Large Village Network	3,672	4,833*	7.5	10.3	5,331
Tier 5 & 6 Rural Settlements Rural Community Settlements / Dispersed Rural Communities and Remaining Rural Area	38,476	39,676	57.2	3.1	40,922
TOTAL County Monaghan	61,386	65,288	100%	9.5	71,516

*Includes the villages of Annyalla, Clontibret North, Doohamlet & Oram which have been redesignated from Tier 5 to Tier 4 settlements

These allocations to the County's settlements are based on the following criteria:

- Designation and role in the Settlement Strategy
- Outcome of the Infrastructure Assessment (IA) of existing zoned lands in the 2019-2015 County Development Plan.
- Outcome of the Settlement Capacity Audit (SCA) of settlements proposed to be zoned.

Under National Policy Objective 72a of the NPF a tiered approach to zoning is required based on the level of service that lands have. An Infrastructure Assessment (IA) was undertaken of the existing undeveloped zoned lands in towns which differentiated between currently zoned land that is serviceable (Tier 1) and currently zoned land that has the potential to be serviced within the lifetime of the Plan (Tier 2). The assessment considered the availability of service infrastructure (watermains, foul sewers, surface drainage systems) and transport infrastructure (roads, footpaths, public lighting and cycle lanes) that would allow the development of lands immediately. From a total of 165 sites subject of the IA, 147 sites were classified as Tier 1 (fully serviced lands) and 18 sites as Tier 2 (lands that have the potential to be serviced during the Plan period). Details of this can be found in Appendix 16.

The Tier 1 sites were subject to further examination as part of the Settlement Capacity Audit (SCA). The SCA requires an infrastructural assessment of lands within and adjacent to settlements must include the following infrastructure categories:

- Road access (including public lighting provision)
- Footpath access (including public lighting provision)
- Cycle access (including public lighting provision)
- Foul sewerage drainage (including capacity and access to the network)
- Water supply (including capacity and access to the network)
- Surface water drainage (including capacity and access to the network)

The SCA identified those lands zoned residential (and mixed-use zoned) lands with residential development, and included lands within the existing built-up area, serviced greenfield 'Tier 1' tranches of land and serviceable greenfield 'Tier 2' lands. The audit included data about each site such as site area, services status, assumed residential density, estimated residential unit yield, planning history, proximity to town centre, and contribution to compact growth.

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been undertaken alongside the preparation of the Plan to inform the zoning process of those areas that have an elevated risk of flooding. The findings of the SFRA and the Office of Public Works (OPW) Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPS) have been integrated into the Plan, and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to help ensure the implementation of the Flood Risk Guidelines at lower tiers of decision making, particularly in regard to zoning of land.

The development of settlements within County Monaghan is impacted upon by the drumlin landscape/topography of the County, in terms of flood risk in low lying areas and the feasibility of developing steeply sloping and elevated lands, and thus this can affect the density of development that can be reasonably achieved. Details of this can be found in Appendix 21.

The Core Strategy has identified the appropriate level of residential growth for each settlement based on the principles of the NPF and RSES and having regard to identified specific roles and functions of the settlements in the Settlement Hierarchy.

2.6 Settlement Hierarchy

Local, regional and national policy promotes development to locate in the population centres of existing towns and villages where the basic social and infrastructural services are available and where such services may be provided or expanded on if required. Monaghan County Council is committed to furthering the development of the County in a hierarchical manner.

The aim of the settlement hierarchy is to recognise existing urban centres and their functions, to encourage enhanced commercial and employment opportunities, to provide an increased range of social and recreational facilities, and to protect the agricultural industry and the rural areas.

The key aims of the Settlement Hierarchy are to:

- Support the strengthening of the town and village network throughout the County, with priority being accorded to Monaghan Town to fulfil its designation as a Key Town in the RSES and its role as the Principal Town within the County, whilst targeting growth to supporting urban settlements and enabling the expansion of linkages within the region and nationally.
- To maintain and support the functional roles of the towns by the promotion of appropriate development in these areas.

- To create vibrant and thriving communities in the rural settlements by using the extensive village network to support rural communities through the provision of community services, convenience retail services, social functions and transport links.
- To create attractive town and village environments with unique identities and an appropriate mix of uses to attract and retain population within the County.

The settlement hierarchy for the County is set out in Table 2.3. The position of the settlement within the hierarchy provides an indication of the potential scale of population growth permissible over the Development Plan period. The settlements play a key role in the appropriate delivery of the population targets in order to achieve balanced development at a local level through strengthening the designated urban structures while ensuring that resources of rural areas are developed in a sustainable manner to meet the needs of its people.

Table 2.3 Settlement Hierarchy for County Monaghan

Hierarchy	Function	Settlement
Tier 1	Principal / Key Town	Monaghan Town
Tier 2	Strategic Towns	Carrickmacross Castleblayney
Tier 3	Service Towns	Clones Ballybay
Tier 4	Villages	Ballinode Emyvale Glaslough Inniskeen Newbliss Rockcorry Scotshouse Scotsown Smithborough Threemilehouse Annyalla Clontibret North Doohamlet Oram
Tier 5	Rural Community Settlements	Carrickroe Corcaghan Corduff Drum Knockatallon Knockconan Latton Lisdoonan Tydavnet
Tier 6	Dispersed Rural Communities	

2.6.1 Tier 1 – Principal / Key Town

Principal/Key Town Objective	
SHO 1	To facilitate the development of Monaghan Town in order to maintain its position as the Principal/Key Town in the County at the top of the settlement hierarchy and to ensure that its population and development growth takes place in an orderly and sustainable manner.

Monaghan Town is a Key Town that occupies a strategic border location along the Dublin to Letterkenny/Derry City corridor, and adjacent to the Dublin/Belfast eastern economic corridor. The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA) recognises its importance as an economic driver in the Central Border Region and has designated it a Key Town. It is crucial that it continues to expand seamless cross border links, aided by, for example the upgrade of the N2/A5. In the absence of substantial investment in critical infrastructure, Monaghan Town will not achieve its potential in terms of economic development and population growth.

The designation of Monaghan Town as the Principal/Key Town in the Settlement Hierarchy is reflective of the vision to further the development of the County in a hierarchical manner. As the largest town, Monaghan provides a broad range of services across the sectors including employment, education, health, cultural services, community services and entertainment. The strengthening of Monaghan Town as a major centre of population in the regional and cross border context is important to ensure it provides benefits across the County and the region, in terms of attracting private sector investment in jobs and the economy, as well as securing investment in infrastructure that is critical to the County. The findings of the Monaghan Land Use and Transportation Study (MLUTS) will assist in underpinning the land use plan for the County town.

2.6.2 Tier 2 – Strategic Towns

The Strategic Towns are identified due to their existing population base and their infrastructural capacity to accommodate new residential and commercial development. Both towns are well serviced by educational and community facilities as well as public transport linkages in comparison to other areas of the County. The priority for these towns is to accommodate population growth and for them to play a critical role in driving growth and economic development in the County.

Strategic Towns Objective	
SHO 2	To promote the Strategic Towns as population centres and as prosperous and thriving local development and service towns, where the principles of environmental, economic and social sustainability, including protection of the town's heritage and natural and built environment are enshrined.

Carrickmacross is a town that continues to thrive with strong population growth and has significant potential for further growth. It is a strategic growth centre given its proximity to the M1 motorway, Dundalk, the Greater Dublin Area and the Eastern Economic (Dublin – Belfast) Corridor, and thus has been designated in the RSES as a town with strategic potential on a regional scale. It also acts as a driver for the local economy to the south of the County with well-established economic, administrative and social functions. The town performs important retail, residential, service and amenity functions for local rural hinterlands and supports the Principal Town of Monaghan. Strong emphasis will be placed on the growth of the local economy in Carrickmacross and developing and enhancing its links with the adjacent Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly area, in particular Dundalk.

Castleblayney serves a wide hinterland and provides important local level residential, retailing, social and leisure functions for the town and surrounding rural community. The town is a Strategic Town for the County that has significant potential for expansion and growth given its location. The N53 route between Castleblayney and Dundalk provides an essential link to a larger economic centre and gives direct access to the M1 motorway, the Eastern Economic (Dublin-Belfast) Corridor, and the Greater Dublin Area. Emphasis will be placed on maintaining and supporting urban development by way of consolidation of the town centre and expansion of services to meet the needs of the locality commensurate with its position in the hierarchy. It is important that this growth occurs in a manner that protects and enhances the towns natural heritage assets including the development of Lough Muckno for appropriate and sustainable recreational and tourism development.

2.6.3 Tier 3 – Service Towns

These Service Towns are designated as the third tier in the settlement hierarchy due to their function as service settlements for their urban population, but also for their rural hinterland populations. They have an important role in the provision of local retailing, service, social and leisure functions to the local population. Both towns suffered during the economic downturn by way of high vacancy and dereliction and although progress has been made in addressing this in Clones, significant work remains to be done in this regard. A specific focus for these settlements within this Plan is to promote the regeneration and renewal of the town centres to enable them to fulfil their full potential.

Service Towns Objective	
SHO 3	To promote and develop the Service Towns to create self-sufficient sustainable and vibrant communities and centres of population, which will act as local development and service centres for their respective hinterlands.

Clones has a historic town centre and is an established service centre for an isolated rural area as well as a significant hinterland located within County Fermanagh. The town has previously experienced population decline over the last ten years, however the 2022 census has indicated a moderate increase in population, therefore priority will be placed on continuing to support its regeneration in a manner that respects its traditional character and built fabric. Within Clones town a number of local businesses, including the largest employer Allied Beef Products Ltd, provide essential local employment. The town has sufficient infrastructural capacity available to act as a local growth settlement for the needs of its hinterland, as well as serving and supporting the surrounding rural economy where numerous agri-food industries are located.

Ballybay town is located in the centre of the County and is equidistant from the larger urban centres of County Monaghan. It is a market town with strong links to the agricultural sector and a large mart is the focus of activity within the town centre on a weekly basis. The Kepak plant is located within the town boundary and the employment centre of Lough Egish is only 11kms from Ballybay, both of which provide important economic spin off benefits and employment to the town and hinterland of Ballybay. The town has in the past experienced significant population decline and it is the priority of this Plan to assist and direct development in the town as well as assisting in the delivery of its tourism potential.

2.6.4 Tier 4 – Villages

Including the village network as part of the Settlement Hierarchy is an acknowledgement of their importance to the rural areas of County Monaghan in sustaining the vitality of rural communities. Each village has the necessary infrastructural capacity available to ensure they can continue their function as local growth settlements and serve the needs of their hinterlands. These villages provide services to rural communities, including housing, neighbourhood level retail and social facilities which are critical to the on-going viability of these rural communities.

Villages Objectives	
SHO 4	To promote and facilitate development that is commensurate with the nature and extent of the existing villages and to support their role as local service centres and locations for housing.
SHO 5	To prepare Tier 4 village plans during the lifetime of this plan, with a focus on housing, amenity, infrastructure, transport and the sustainable reuse and regeneration of existing derelict, vacant, or underutilised sites. At least one village plan will be prepared for a village in each of the three Municipal Districts per annum.

2.6.5 Tier 5 – Rural Community Settlements

Within the rural area there are several smaller cluster settlements that have existing congregation areas and services such as schools, shops, post offices, public houses and residential houses. The function of these settlements is recognised as a critical component of the social, community and cultural identity of the County. It is recognised that the strengthening of rural community settlements is essential to ensure the survival of their unique character. Residential development in these areas is only suitable at a small scale, reflective of the character of the existing settlement and will be promoted to alleviate the pressures for one-off housing in the open countryside.

Rural Community Settlements Objective	
SHO 6	To support and encourage the development of Tier 5 settlements as locations for housing and to ensure that local services are sustained in the rural community settlements.

2.6.6 Tier 6 – Dispersed Rural Communities

Within the rural area there are dispersed rural communities which have small scale clustering around one or more focal point, which may include a crossroads, a shop, a community facility or a church. It is considered that there is scope for some additional dwellings at these locations which may consolidate existing focal points and utilise existing services in the area subject to normal planning considerations. It is anticipated that most of the development taking place at these locations will be individual dwellings. Where a multi-unit residential development (more than 2 houses) is proposed in Tier 6 settlements the onus will be on the developer to justify the demand for housing proposed. Any development shall be centred on the focal point of the settlement and shall be subject to the satisfactory provision of infrastructure and services.

Dispersed Rural Communities Objective	
SHO7	To support the viability of dispersed rural communities as locations for sustainable housing and to seek to encourage the growth of Tier 6 settlements generally in the form of single dwellings.

2.7 Regeneration of Existing Lands

It is considered appropriate to include for the reuse, regeneration and renewal of land through active land management over this Plan period, having regard to legislative requirements, and to national and regional policy. The NPF target of delivering 30% of new housing within the existing built-up footprint of settlements, on infill and brownfield lands and the principles contained within the Town Centre First Policy are key considerations in this regard. The regeneration of land (as defined by the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015) and buildings in need of development and renewal throughout the County, is an objective of this Development Plan and Monaghan County Council will seek to develop and improve areas in need of development and renewal, particularly within designated settlements.

Monaghan County Council has been proactive in regeneration initiatives in recent years, particularly in respect of delivering residential development within town centres such as the award winning Clones Renewal Scheme. There has been significant advancement of the Dublin Street South Regeneration Plan in Monaghan Town with consent having been recently obtained for the development of infrastructure on these lands. This scheme along with the Dublin Street North Regeneration Plan and the Roosky Lands Master Plan have potential to deliver housing within the urban core and thus contribute to compact growth and significant funding from the Urban Regeneration Development Fund has been secured in relation to progressing these schemes. The recent acquisition of the Saint Louis Convent lands within the town by Monaghan County Council also provides opportunity for regeneration and town centre development. In Carrickmacross, the Backlands Plans either side of the Main Street and the initiatives for Distillery Lane / Convent Lands will contain residential development, thus contributing to the delivery of compact growth in this town. In Castleblayney, the Town Centre Regeneration Plan and the Masterplan and Development Framework for Lough Muckno and Environs will also greatly assist in delivering compact growth.

The Core Strategy Table provides for a significant proportion of future urban development to occur on lands within the built-up area of existing settlements. However, it should be noted that the delivery of the entirety of these schemes will likely fall outside the period of this development plan given the period of time involved in agreeing proposals, obtaining consents, assembling lands, providing enabling infrastructure before development is delivered. Notwithstanding this, these schemes are advancing and will contribute greatly to town centre regeneration and compact growth.

In order to encourage brownfield/regeneration development within the urban centres, a relaxation of some development management standards will be considered where appropriate.

2.8 Population Projections

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires that the population projections over the plan period are provided in respect of individual towns of a population of 1,500 or more and aggregate population projections for the remainder. In keeping with the Settlement Hierarchy and for purposes of monitoring and clarity, Table 2.4 also includes population projections in respect of the Tier 4 village network as well as the five towns.

Table 2.4 County Monaghan Population Projections 2022 to 2031

Hierarchy	Location	2022 Population	Projected Additional Population	Projected Population 2031
Tier 1 Principal / Key Town	Monaghan	7,894	1,806	9,700
Tier 2 Strategic Town	Carrickmacross Castleblayney	5,745 3,926	1,308 747	7,053 4,673
Tier 3 Service Town	Clones Ballybay	1,885 1,329	374 249	2,259 1,578
Tier 4 Villages	Ballinode Emyvale Glaslough Inniskeen Newbliss Rockcorry Scotshouse Scotstown Smithborough Threemilehouse Annyalla Clontibret North Doohamlet Oram	433 638 443 405 352 302 317 436 495 148 205 191 287 181	45 67 46 42 37 31 33 45 51 16 22 15 30 18	478 705 489 447 389 333 350 481 546 164 227 206 317 199
Tier 5 & 6 Remaining Rural Area	Rural Community Settlements / Dispersed Rural Communities and Remaining Rural Area	39,676	1,246	40,922
	County Monaghan	65,288	6,228	71,516

2.9 Housing Need and Demand

The Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 zoned approximately 108 hectares (ha) for residential development. The areas zoned for residential development have not been substantially developed, and the majority of residential units which have been developed throughout the County have been one off dwellings.

Given that most land zoned for housing has remained undeveloped, it is proposed to apply the following approach to promote growth in the designated settlements of County Monaghan:

- Encourage the development of infill sites and/or brownfield/regeneration lands within designated urban centres through a range of measures including, where appropriate, reduced development management standards.
- Adopt a proactive approach towards the refurbishment of derelict properties.
- Encourage sequential development of lands from the settlement centre outwards.
- Retain a large proportion of the zoning as allocated in the 2019-2025 CDP subject to its continued suitability for residential development.
- Provide for lower density housing on zoned lands to expand the options for residential development and offer a wider choice of housing within the designated settlements as an alternative to rural one-off housing.

The economy has recovered in recent years, and notwithstanding the increases in the cost of building materials and the cost of living, there are indications that house building activity will increase at a modest rate over the plan period.

The average household size in County Monaghan was 3.13 persons in 1996. However, the average household size decreased to 2.83 in 2016. The household size has since fallen from 2.83 to 2.81 between 2016 and 2022. This represents a decrease of 0.32 persons over a 26-year period or a decline of 0.012 persons per annum over this timeframe. Having regard to historical trends in the County and available household composition from the 2022 Census, it is assumed that the trend of falling household size will continue over the plan period to 2.74 persons by 2031 which was the State average in 2022.

2.10 Sustainable Residential Densities

The policy document Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (DEHLG, May 2009) set out guidance in relation to calculating suitable densities for smaller towns in previous county development plans. These Guidelines have been replaced by the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DHLGH, January 2024). The new Guidelines expand on higher-level policies of the National Planning Framework, setting policy and guidance in relation to the growth priorities for settlements, residential density, urban design and placemaking and introduce development standards for housing.

The Guidelines state that in the preparation of a Core Strategy under Section 10 of the Act, the Planning Authority will need to account for net and gross areas when calculating land requirements. This requires an informed estimate of net developable area and the determination of an appropriate density range for each area. The general rule of thumb is that the net site area would be between approximately 65 to 80 percent of the gross area but this will depend on the area of land involved and local circumstances such as topography which may require area for cuttings, embankments and graduated roads.

Appendix B of the Guidelines, Measuring Residential Density, sets out more detail in relation to net and gross site areas. It states that while the principle of calculating density is straightforward (a site area multiplied by a density assumption to produce an estimate of site capacity), the practical application is more complicated and is dependent in particular on the appropriate definitions of the site and development areas, as well as to a lesser extent, on employing the correct density measure.

Selecting the appropriate definition of the site and the development area is important. In forecasting the capacity of lands for housing delivery where non-residential uses, such as main roads, retail, employment and major open spaces are being planned in conjunction with housing, an allowance must be made in the density assumption for the land that will be occupied by such uses, which may be upwards of 25% when forecasting the capacity of a land area at the neighbourhood or district scale. At the site-specific level, if density controls are to produce the expected results, a density standard must be carefully related to the area accommodating the development.

In estimating housing yield, it is necessary to determine the appropriate density range for the area or site. This should generally be within the ranges set out in Section 3.3 of the Guidelines but can be refined further in accordance with the guidance set out in Section 3.4. It may be necessary and appropriate in some exceptional circumstances to permit densities that are above or below these ranges, based on considerations relating to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Section 3.3 of the Guidelines state that for Key Towns (i.e. Monaghan) and Large Towns (i.e. Carrickmacross) residential densities in the range 40 to 100 dwellings per hectare (net) should generally be applied in the centres and urban neighbourhoods (edge of town centre), while residential densities in the range 30 to 50 dwellings per hectare (net) should generally be applied at suburban

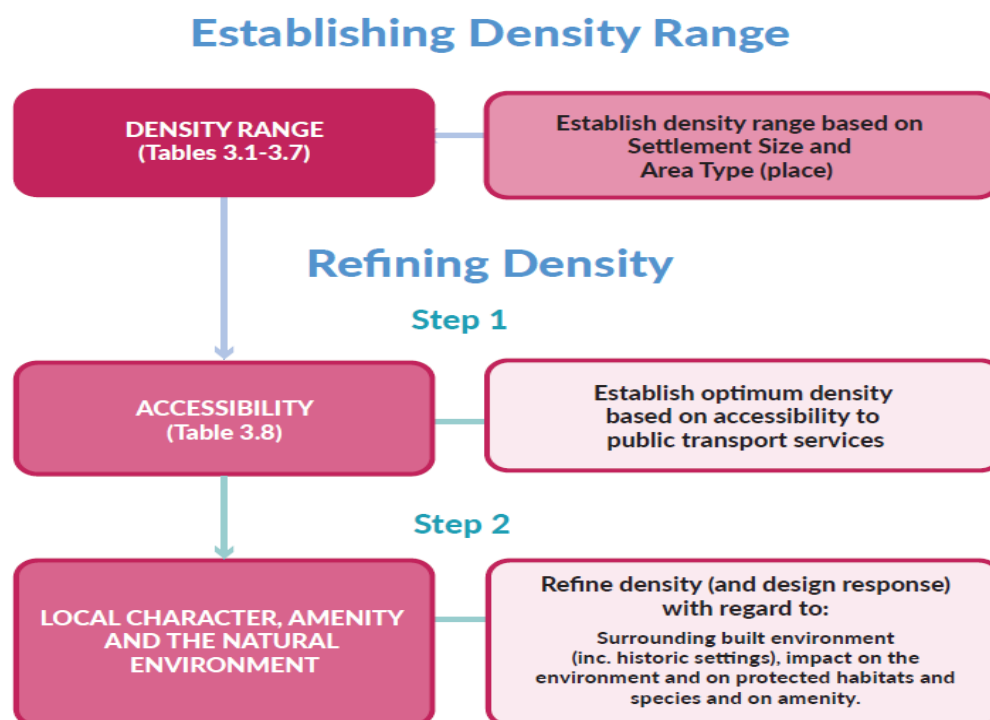
and urban extension (edge of town) locations. In relation to Medium Towns (i.e. Castleblayney) and Small Towns (i.e. Clones), the Guidelines do not set a specific range but the scale of new development in the central areas of small to medium sized towns should respond positively to the scale, form and character of existing development, and to the capacity of services and infrastructure (including public transport and water services infrastructure). Densities in the range 25 to 40 dwellings per hectare (net) should generally be applied at the edge of small to medium sized towns. In respect of Rural Towns (i.e. Ballybay) or Villages the Guidelines state that the density of development at such locations should respond in a positive way to the established context.

Density assumptions are an essential component in estimating land requirements arising from population projections. However, as accepted by the Guidelines, the practical application of multiplying a site area by a density assumption to produce an estimate of site capacity is more complicated in reality, particularly in drumlin counties like Monaghan. Issues of topography play a significant role in determining the acceptability of a proposal for residential development. Consequently, a lower density may be appropriate, whereas in certain instances (such as courtyard development/infill sites in centres) a higher density is more suitable. Therefore, a pragmatic approach is recommended whereby the Planning Authority may determine the appropriate density in any location by considering the following:

- Local pattern of development and densities of adjoining residential developments.
- Existing landscape and other features on the site.
- Design quality, whereby higher densities can be accepted where it exhibits high quality design.
- Levels of privacy and amenity.
- Proximity to main transport routes.
- The capacity of the infrastructure to serve the demands of the proposed development.
- The availability of serviced sites in urban areas.

Figure 2.4: Determining Density

Illustration of the process for establishing, optimising and refining appropriate density for a plan or development.



Source: Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DHLGH, January 2024), Page 49.

Under the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 an average housing density of 18 units per hectare was applied in calculating the housing land requirement. This average density encompassed Proposed Residential B lands, the purpose of which was to offer land for low density housing and serviced sites. It is considered that a portion of zoned lands should still be made available for low density housing and serviced sites in order to provide an alternative to one-off rural houses, particularly in the Rural Areas Under Strong Urban Influence around the towns, and to cater for a cohort of the population who wish to complete a self-build home, as is common in rural counties such as Monaghan.

To ensure that urban settlements which are peripheral to the larger cities thrive, their development must strike a balance in meeting the needs of modern life in a way that is sensitive and responsive to the landscape in which it is located. In Monaghan Town for example, which had a population of 7,894 in 2022, it is considered difficult to require high densities at site specific level as the density standard should be relative to the area accommodating the development. Furthermore, topographical issues further restrict the density of development that can be achieved. Details of this can be found in Appendix 21.

For the purposes of ascertaining a suitable housing land requirement for County Monaghan and having regard to the range of densities set out in the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024), it is considered appropriate to apply a density of 30 units per hectare within the larger settlements (Key and Large towns), 25 units per hectare in the medium settlements (Medium and Small towns), and 20 units per hectare in the smaller settlements (Rural town and Villages). It is considered that this is both practical and realistic for the

urban settlements of County Monaghan where most of the sites suitable for new residential development have, in the main, extensive topographical challenges.

The Core Strategy provides for the development of lower density houses within the urban settlements. This will be permitted through schemes that provide suitable housing to meet the needs of people who might otherwise seek to build a one-off dwelling in the rural area. Such schemes will only be permitted on suitable lands located within the designated settlement boundaries where it is demonstrated that there is a demand for the development within the settlement and where it contributes to the sequential development of land from the centre of the settlement outwards or represents a consolidation of the settlement footprint.

As Figure 3.1 of the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024) indicates that detached /semi-detached housing will be in the density range of 15-30 dwellings per hectare, a lower density assumption of 15 units per hectare (unless where site specific circumstances can justify otherwise), is being proposed for the option of developing low density developments and/or serviced sites in suitable locations within the designated settlements. As the target densities in the revised Core Strategy Table 2.5 are based on average density across Proposed Residential A and Proposed Residential B zonings this does not affect the quantum of lands to be zoned.

Table 2.5 Core Strategy Table

Settlement		Population and Housing					Land Zoning Required					
Settlement Type	Settlement Name	Census 2022 Population	Census 2022 (%)	Population Target 2025-2031	Housing Target (units)	Housing Target %	Existing Zoning (ha)	Zoned Land Required (with additional surplus) (ha)	Target Residential Density (UPH)	Minimum 30% Infill Lands (ha)	Remaining 70% lands (non-infill) (ha)	Shortfall/ Excess of Zoned Land
County		65288	100.0	4152	2558	100.0	107.80	82.71	-	66.11	14.97	25.09
Key Town (Tier 1)	Monaghan	7894	12.1	1204	742	29.0	44.10	30.91	30	28.59	1.85	13.19
Self Sustaining Growth Towns (Tier 2)	Carrickmacross	5745	8.8	872	537	21.0	25.90	22.38	30	12.05	9.92	3.52
	Castleblayney	3926	6.0	498	307	12.0	16.00	15.35	25	14.54	0.47	0.65
Self Sustaining Towns (Tier 3)	Clones	1885	2.9	249	153	6.0	11.40	7.67	25	6.33	1.01	3.73
	Ballybay	1329	2.0	166	102	4.0	10.40	6.40	20	4.60	1.72	4.01
Villages (Tier 4) *		4833	7.4	332	205	8.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rural Areas (including Tier 5 & Tier 6 Villages)		39676	60.8	830	512	20.0	-	-	-	-	-	-

*Includes the villages of Annyalla, Clontibret North, Doohamlet & Oram which have been redesignated from Tier 5 to Tier 4 settlements.

**It should be noted that there are infrastructure constraints at Clontibret North.

Core Strategy Objectives	
CSO 1	To maintain Monaghan Town's position as the Principal/Key Town of County Monaghan and to endeavour to ensure that it reaches its population target and fulfils its role as the designated County town.
CSO 2	To promote urban growth and the further development of the strategic towns to ensure their functions are supported by appropriate development that will direct development within the locality.

Core Strategy Objectives	
CSO 3	To facilitate the growth of the service towns as settlements that can provide associated community facilities, services and employment opportunities for the urban area and the surrounding hinterland.
CSO 4	To consolidate the settlements, retain their visual identity distinct from the surrounding countryside, and to reserve land for future planned expansion of settlements. This includes the provision of major infrastructure, as well as protecting the heritage, water quality and recreational amenity of the settlements and their surrounding rural hinterlands
CSO 5	To ensure that the quantum of lands zoned for residential uses in the County is consistent with the requirements of the Core Strategy as set out in Table 2.5 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031, and to designate any land considered appropriate for zoning in excess of these requirements as Strategic Residential Reserve for potential development beyond this plan period.
CSO 6	To promote sustainable compact development forms, including infill sites, redevelopment of brownfield sites and comprehensive backland development where appropriate, ensuring the efficient use of available public infrastructure and services.

Core Strategy Policies	
CSP 1	To preserve the character of Tier 5 and Tier 6 rural settlements by restricting the scale of development permitted within them, having regard to infrastructure availability and capacity, and to ensure integration with the rural character of the area and the satisfactory provision of infrastructure services.
CSP 2	Proposals for residential development in the designated settlements will be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Core Strategy with regard to population growth, the ability of the proposal to enhance the character of the settlement, the demand for the proposed quantum and type of residential development within the settlement and compliance with relevant development management standards as set out in Chapter 15 of this Development Plan.
CSP 3	To facilitate the development of low-density residential developments on designated zoned lands within existing settlements to assist in providing choice of house type within a structured but low-density environment, as an alternative to the development of one-off housing in the open countryside.

2.11 Housing in Rural Settlements

This Plan aims to maintain and support the rural population of County Monaghan. Urban areas refer to towns and villages which have a settlement boundary (Tier 1-4 settlements), whereas lands located outside of the designated Tier 1-4 settlements set out in the Core Strategy are termed as 'rural' for the purposes of the Plan.

The Core Strategy of this Plan identifies a number of established settlements within Tier 5 and 6 of the settlement hierarchy for County Monaghan. These include Rural Community Settlements and dispersed cluster settlements that have existing congregation areas and services such as schools, shops, post offices, public houses and residential houses. It is recognised that these settlements have a role to assist in satisfying rural housing need within a structured low-density environment and provide a more sustainable pattern of development to the scattered one-off housing. There are limited local facilities and infrastructure within these settlements. Many of these settlements are not capable of being economically serviced with sewerage and public mains but they can provide for small scale residential development serviced by individual wastewater treatment systems. In addition, they

have the potential to offer individuals the opportunity to design and build their own home in a rural area subject to normal planning criteria and the development of one-off type housing within these smaller settlements should be encouraged.

Although Tier 5 and 6 settlements do not have settlement boundaries, it should be borne in mind that these settlements can offer an alternative to one off housing in the rural area in a sustainable manner which can help support and maintain existing local facilities, and thus the development of residential dwellings within these small settlements should not be considered as adding to rural one off dwellings and should be encouraged.

The low-density residential development policy is set out in Chapter 15 Development Management Standards, and this is also open to consideration in those Tier 5 and 6 settlements which have public foul drainage and disposal systems. Otherwise, permitted development within these settlements will be on the basis of individual wastewater treatment systems. This is considered necessary to protect the environment and preserve a degree of consistency in design and scale.

Housing in Rural Settlements Objective	
RSO 1	To support a balanced approach to the development of rural areas to retain vibrancy, to accommodate within the rural area people who are functionally or socially part of the rural community, and to direct urban generated housing demand into established rural settlements.

Applications for residential development within the Tier 5 and 6 settlements will be considered where the following has been demonstrated:

- The developer has provided evidence to the satisfaction of the planning authority that there is a demand for the proposed residential development taking account of the extent, nature and status of extant permissions for residential development, unfinished housing developments and vacant residential properties in the settlement.
- The proposal contributes to the sequential development of the settlement from the centre outwards and/or represents an infilling* of the existing settlement footprint.

* Infilling constitutes the development of a small gap within a substantially built-up frontage or where the development of a gap within existing development would represent the sustainable development of the settlement.

Rural Settlement Policies	
RSP 1	To permit small scale residential development reflective of the character of the existing settlement in accordance with the relevant criteria set out Section 2.11 in Chapter 2 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.
RSP 2	To require applications for development within the rural settlements to submit an assessment of the development site relative to the location, visual impact and other normal planning considerations including the ability to consolidate the settlement, enhance the existing character and strengthen a sense of identity and distinctiveness for the settlement.
RSP 3	To only permit residential development and local level services such as small convenience shops, schools, post offices which are appropriate in scale and nature to these settlements.
RSP 4	To consider applications for serviced sites in accordance with Policy RDP 5 as outlined in Development Management Chapter in those Tier 5 and 6 settlements which have capacity within existing public foul drainage systems. In all other instances, the

Rural Settlement Policies	
	application site must be 0.2ha and be served by an individual wastewater treatment system which can be installed in accordance with EPA Code of Practice.
RSP 5	Identified rural settlements within the rural areas under strong urban influence shall not be required to demonstrate a rural generated housing need.

2.12 Rural Settlement Strategy

An analysis of planning permission data from 2012 to 2022 was carried out as part of the Housing Need and Demand Assessment for County Monaghan to determine the need for single rural housing in the County. The data sets out the typical quantum per annum of one-off houses being permitted in the County and the proportion of overall residential permissions they comprise.

One-off houses have historically made up the greatest part of granted planning permission in the County, constituting 67.3% of all units between 2012 and 2022. This rate reflects the County's rural character but makes up a higher proportion of overall planning permissions than is apparent for the Border region (63.3%), and a considerably higher proportion than is apparent at the State level (27.7%).

Though the average annual number of units granted permission increased between 2018 and 2022, the proportion of one-off houses has decreased, with the 5-year average decreasing from 83.4% to 60.2%. It should be noted however that these figures include both urban and rural one-off housing and can be assumed to represent the upper limit of rural one-off housing figures per annum, even in a predominantly rural county such as County Monaghan.

National Policy Objective 20 of the NPF requires Local Authorities to 'Project the need for single housing in the countryside through the local authority's overall Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA) tool and county development plan core strategy processes.' It should be noted however that in its current implementation, the HNDA Toolkit does not permit this function to be carried out. This is anticipated as a future feature of the Toolkit.

The Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines were issued in April 2005, under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), (and subsequent Circular PL 2/2017) and prescribe criteria for consideration of planning applications for houses in rural areas. These guidelines essentially provide that:

- People who are part of the rural community should be facilitated by the planning system in all rural areas, including those under strong urban pressures.
- Those wishing to build a dwelling in the rural area suffering persistent and substantial population decline will be accommodated.
- The development of rural environs of the major urban areas needs to be carefully managed in order to sustain and protect their orderly development and success in functioning into the future.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) is supportive of the overall pattern of rural and small town development in Ireland. National Policy Objective (NPO) 15 of the NPF seeks to protect areas that are under strong urban influence from unsustainable over-development, while encouraging population to be sustained in more structurally weak areas, that have experienced low growth or decline in recent decades, to sustain vibrant rural communities. In providing for the development of rural housing, NPO 19 requires that a distinction is made between areas under urban influence, i.e. within the commuter catchment of cities and large towns and centres of employment, and elsewhere.

In Rural Areas Under Urban Influence, NPO 19 facilitates the provision of single housing in the countryside based on the core consideration of demonstrable economic or social need to live in a rural area, and siting and design criteria for rural housing in statutory guidelines and plans, having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements.

In rural areas elsewhere, NPO 19 facilitates the provision of single housing in the countryside based on siting and design criteria for rural housing in statutory guidelines and plans, having regard to the viability of smaller towns and rural settlements.

Furthermore, NPO 20 seeks to “project the need for single housing in the countryside through the local authority’s overall Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA) tool and county development plan core strategy processes.”

The RSES reflects the NPF in relation to rural housing and Regional Policy Objective RPO 3.3 seeks to “deliver at least 20% of all new housing in rural areas on brownfield sites.” It considered that all opportunities to achieve this target should be considered, particularly the encouragement of the renovation of vacant or derelict dwellings, the provision of on-site replacement dwellings, the redevelopment of previously developed residential sites and former homesteads, and the redevelopment of sites containing industrial or agricultural buildings. Proposals under the Croí Cónaithe vacant property refurbishment grant will also assist in meeting this target.

Rural Housing Objective	
RSO 2	To seek to deliver at least 20% of all new housing in rural areas on brownfield sites through the encouragement of the renovation of vacant or derelict dwellings, the provision of on-site replacement dwellings, the redevelopment of previously developed residential sites and former homesteads, and the redevelopment of sites containing industrial or agricultural buildings.

An analysis of the 2022 Census shows varying geographical trends throughout County Monaghan. The population of the north of the County and the south-west of the County continues to grow at a faster rate than the mid-Monaghan area except in those townlands along the N2 national route. Areas close to Carrickmacross and Castleblayney have experienced a significant population increase whereas the rural areas surrounding Monaghan Town experienced limited population increase.

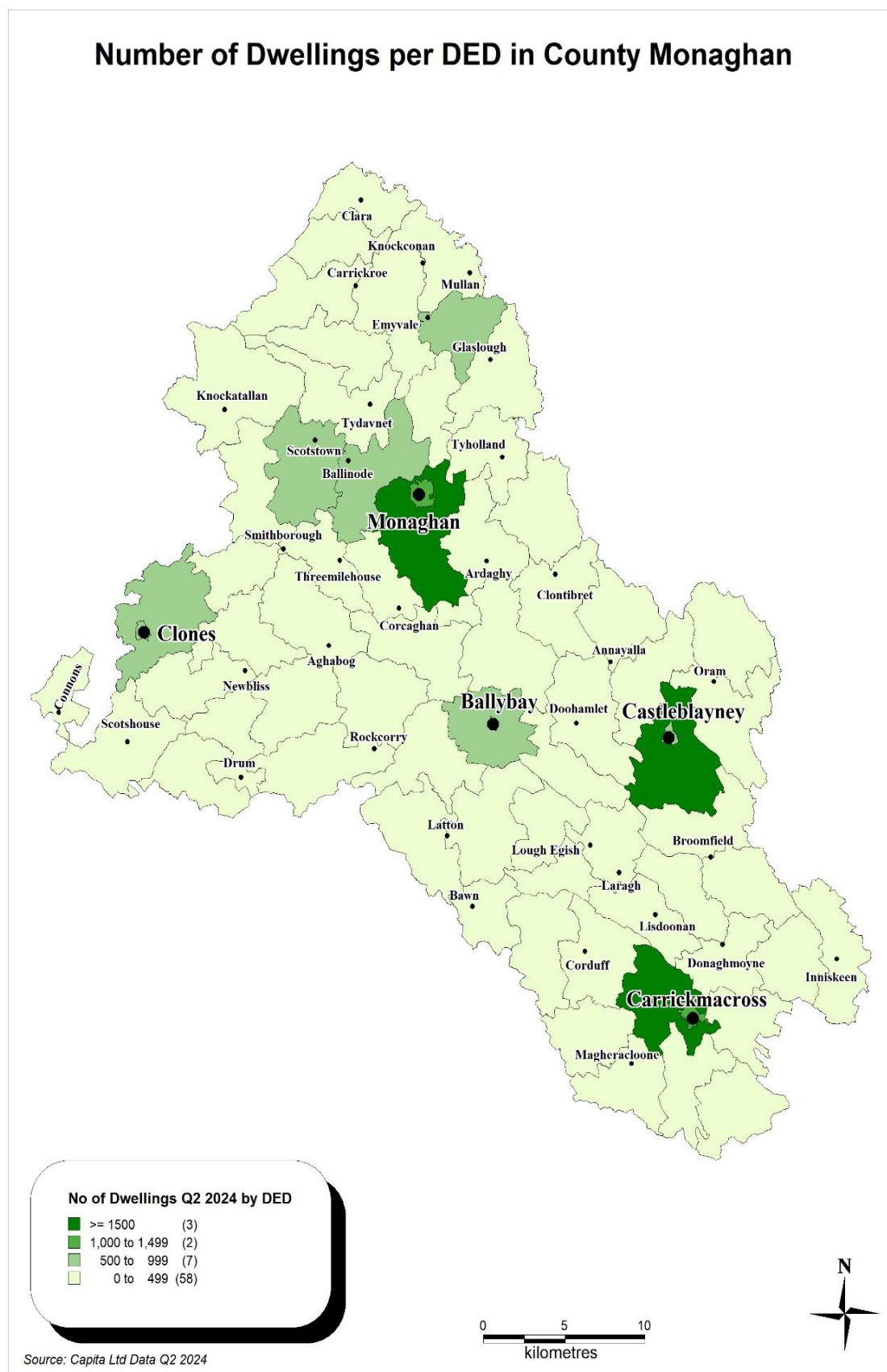
Figure 2.5 provides a spatial mapping of the number of houses within each District Electoral Division (DED) in County Monaghan. Predictably, the urban areas of the five large towns contain the highest number of units but it is also apparent that a number of DEDs within the wider rural area, particularly those along the N2 national route have a significant number of dwellings within them. However, it is apparent from the population analysis that there is no distinct growth pattern within County Monaghan and that large parts of the rural area have experienced modest growth over the last ten years, particularly those areas in close proximity to the towns. It is evident that the demand for one-off housing in County Monaghan stems from two backgrounds:

- 1. Rural Generated Housing Need** - Those people who are part of the rural community, have lived in the rural area for a long period and/or work in the rural area.
- 2. Urban Generated Housing Need** - Those people who have lived in urban areas, working in urban areas and who have no established direct link to the rural area.

It is considered appropriate to set out what the Rural Settlement Strategy aims to achieve for County Monaghan:

1. To sustain and renew established rural communities in rural settlements as well as the wider countryside.
2. To strengthen the established structure of the rural settlements, particularly the smaller villages, to support local economies and to accommodate additional population in a way that supports the viability of local infrastructure and services.
3. To ensure that key assets in rural areas such as water quality and the natural landscape are protected.

Figure 2.5 Number of dwellings per DED in County Monaghan (2024)



2.13 Rural Area Types

Figure 2.6 displays a visual and spatial indication of the number of planning applications for dwellings received in each townland of the County between 2013 and 2024. The map shows that the townlands within and around Monaghan, Carrickmacross and Castleblayney are the areas that are under the most pressure with respect to planning permission being sought for dwellings. It is therefore considered appropriate to continue to protect the rural environs of these urban areas from excessive urban generated development. It is apparent that the environs of Clones have had less pressure, but notwithstanding this it remains an area which should be protected to consolidate the recent growth of the population in the urban area and promote a more sustainable pattern of development surrounding the town.

The Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines (2005) outline that it is necessary to identify distinct categories in rural areas. In supporting sustainable housing development patterns in rural areas, the Guidelines state that policies and practices of planning authorities should seek to:

- Ensure that the needs of rural communities are identified in the development plan process and that policies are put in place to ensure that the type and scale of residential and other development in rural areas, at appropriate locations necessary to sustain rural communities, is accommodated.
- Manage pressure for overspill development from urban areas in the rural areas closest to the main cities and towns such as the gateways, hubs and other large towns.

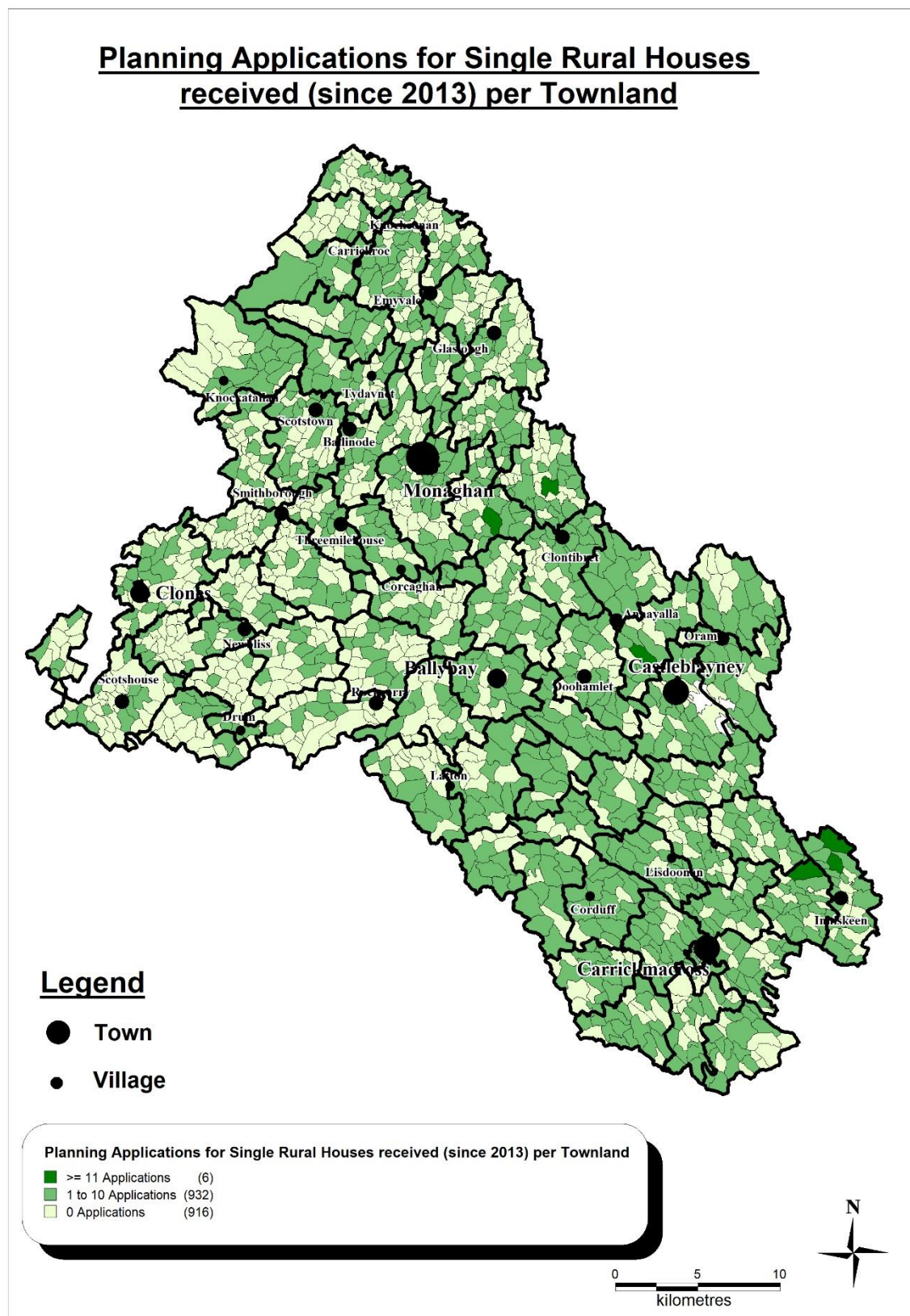
The 2005 Guidelines state that it is expected that all planning authority areas which are predominantly rural will contain at least three of these rural area types. However, within County Monaghan the demographic and spatial analysis indicates that two distinct categories are appropriate to protect the rural areas on the edge of the large urban centres, whilst encouraging new development needed to sustain and renew the established rural community in the wider rural area. Subsequently, based on analysis of population density, population change, and an examination of planning applications received over the last plan period, it is recommended that two rural area types are designated. This is in line with NPO 19 of the NPF which refers to 'rural areas under urban influence' and 'rural areas elsewhere'.

2.13.1 Category 1 - Rural Areas Under Strong Urban Influence

The assessment of rural housing is an important function of the Development Plan to deliver sustainable communities whilst protecting the unique rural landscapes of County Monaghan. In this regard, the suitability of a site or an area in terms of its sensitivity, its ability to accommodate development in a sustainable manner and compliance with the relevant technical criteria requires careful assessment. To ensure development in the countryside takes place in a sustainable manner that does not compromise the vitality of designated settlements, specific areas of the County have been classified 'Rural Areas Under Strong Urban Influence' in an attempt to preserve a clear distinction between the built-up areas of settlements and the surrounding countryside.

These areas exist around Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney and Clones towns. They have been designated to support the sustainable growth of the urban areas, to provide for the immediate local rural community who have a genuine housing requirement and to direct urban generated housing into the designated settlements. Planning applications for single dwellings in these areas must comply with one of the criteria outlined in Policy RSP 7 and should be accompanied by a completed Rural Housing Application Form (Refer to Appendix 14). An occupancy condition as set out in the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines shall be attached to any grant of planning permission in these areas. These are designated areas surrounding Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney and Clones are indicated on Maps 2.2 - 2.5.

Figure 2.6 Planning applications for Single Rural Houses received per townland (2013-2024)



Rural Settlement Policies	
RSP 6	To facilitate housing in Rural Areas Under Strong Urban Influence for those who have a demonstrable economic or social rural generated housing need in accordance with National Policy Objective 19 of the National Planning Framework and to apply a presumption against urban generated rural housing development.
RSP 7	<p>Single dwellings in Rural Areas Under Strong Urban Influence will only be permitted where the development complies with one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The applicant is a landowner¹, or the dwelling is for a member of his / her immediate family². b) The dwelling is for an individual who has lived in the local³ rural area⁴ for a minimum period of 5 years prior to the date of submission of a planning application. c) The dwelling is required to meet the needs of a person working in an established rural based agricultural, commercial, industrial or other enterprise in the local area, where the person derives his/her main income from that activity, or by a member of his / her immediate family. Such circumstances may also include other persons whose work is intrinsically linked to the local rural area (such as teachers in rural schools). d) The dwelling is to facilitate a retiring farmer, where the applicant last worked principally as a farmer in the local area, or by a widow or widower of someone who last worked principally as a farmer in the local area. e) The dwelling is required to facilitate site- specific and compelling special domestic or personal circumstances, where genuine hardship would result if planning permission were refused. In these circumstances the onus will be placed on the applicant to justify why other alternative solutions, such as a house extension, granny flat or mobile home, cannot be considered. f) The dwelling is to replace an existing dwelling, where the dwelling to be replaced; was in use or last used as a dwelling; has not been changed to a dwelling from another use without planning permission; exhibits all the essential characteristics of a dwelling house and is reasonably intact. g) The sympathetic change of use of a protected structure or a non-protected vernacular building (where the building is an important element in the landscape or of local architectural or historic merit) into residential use, where this secures its upkeep and survival, and the character and architectural or historic interest of the building would be preserved or enhanced. Proposals for a change of use should incorporate details of all intended alterations to the building and its curtilage to demonstrate their effect on its appearance, character and setting. Improvements to protected structures will comply with policies as set out in Chapter 15, Development Management Standards of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031. h) The dwelling is for an emigrant who is returning to the local rural area, where he/she had previously lived for a minimum period of five continuous years.

¹ For the purpose of this section a landowner is defined as an individual with a minimum landholding in the local rural area of two hectares (5 acres), which he or she has owned for a minimum period of five years prior to the date of submission of a planning application.

² Immediate family is considered to be a sibling, son or daughter, or adopted child of the landowner. Where the landowner's child(ren) have resided outside the state or Northern Ireland for a minimum continuous period of ten years or where the landowner has no children, a niece/nephew may be considered a landowner's family member.

³ For the purposes of this section, local area is defined as being within a radius of four kilometres.

⁴ For the purposes of this section, rural area is defined as outside the defined development limits of a settlement.

2.13.2 Category 2 - Remaining Rural Areas

This area comprises all other rural areas outside of the settlements and the rural areas under strong urban influence. Within the remaining rural area, it is recognised that sustaining communities is important and as such it is considered appropriate to facilitate rural housing in accordance with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development. In these areas the challenge is to retain population and support the rural economy while seeking to consolidate the existing village network. This stability is supported by a traditionally strong agricultural economic base.

Rural Settlement Objective	
RSO 3	To maintain population levels in the remaining rural areas by accommodating appropriate rural development and to consolidate the existing town and village structure.

Rural Settlement Policy	
RSP 8	To facilitate rural housing in the remaining rural areas subject to the relevant planning policies as set out in Chapter 15, Development Management Standards of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

Chapter 3

Housing Strategy

3.0 Introduction

The primary purpose of the Strategy is to ensure that the overall supply of housing is sufficient to meet the needs of the existing and projected population of the County. The Strategy includes measures that address the housing needs of the existing and future population of the area covered. The Strategy also provides for more sustainable patterns of development by ensuring that as far as possible housing developments are designed and located to make full use of public transport and give access to education, employment, health and other services.

The Strategy is informed by a robust, evidence base derived from the Housing Need Demand Assessment (HNDA) 2023 - 2031. The requirement for a HNDA is set out in the National Planning Framework (NPF), specifically NPO 37 and has been prepared in line with Circular 14/2021 HNDA and the Guidance on the Preparation of a Housing Need and Demand Assessment (DHLGH, 2021) and the HNDA Tool Instructions (DHLGH, 2021).

The Strategy is informed by the Core Strategy which is contained in Chapter 2 of this Development Plan and sets out projected housing supply and population growth targets for the County. The Settlement Strategy provided in Chapter 2 indicates where housing will be provided in line with the Settlement Hierarchy of the County.

Housing Strategic Objective	
HSSO 1	To plan for future housing in the County within defined settlements, making efficient use of infrastructure and services in towns and villages, and enabling their plan led growth, whilst facilitating sustainable rural housing where it supports rural communities.

3.1 Legislative Context

Section 94 of Part V of the Act places an obligation on all planning authorities to prepare a Housing Strategy for the purpose of ensuring that the area of the Development Plan provides housing for the existing and future population of the plan area.

The Act requires that a Housing Strategy takes account of the following:

- the existing need and the likely future need for both social and affordable housing,
- the need to ensure that housing is available for persons who have different levels of income,
- the need to ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is developed to reasonably match the requirements of the different categories of households, as may be determined by the planning authority, and including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities,
- the need to counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds, and
- the existing need and the likely future need for housing, in particular houses and duplexes, for purchase by intending owner-occupiers.

Section 94(4) states that a Housing Strategy shall include an estimate of the amount of:

- Housing for the purposes of the provision of social housing support within the meaning of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009,
- Affordable housing that will be required within the county during the period of the plan, and
- Cost Rental Housing.

Section 94 (5) (a) states that when making these estimates, the Planning Authority shall have regard to the following:

- The supply of and demand for houses generally, or houses of a particular class or classes, in the whole or part of the area of the Development Plan,

- The price of houses generally, or houses of a particular class or classes, in the whole or part of the area of the Development Plan,
- The income of persons generally or of a particular class or classes of person who require houses in the area of the Development Plan,
- The rates of interest on mortgages for house purchase,
- The relationship between the price of housing, incomes and rates of interest for the purpose of establishing the affordability of houses in the area of the Development Plan, and
- Such other matters as the Planning Authority considers appropriate.

Where affordable housing is determined as not appropriate (or no affordable housing need is assessed), the full 20% requirement must be applied towards social housing. The Local Authority and developer shall make an agreement in accordance with the options specified in section 96(3) of the Act, which can be transfer of houses on the site in question, transfer of houses on other sites, or the granting of a lease of houses on the site or on other sites, or the default set out in legislation of a transfer of 20% of the site, or to agree a combination of the options.

This Housing Strategy informed by the HNDA is required to make an assessment of need for these affordable housing tenures (in addition to social housing), and to determine the breakdown of Part V housing requirements between social and affordable over the period of the Development Plan.

3.2 Policy Context

The Act requires that the Housing Strategy is consistent with National and Regional policy. As such the following plans and guidelines have been considered in the drafting of the Strategy:

- National Planning Framework – Project Ireland 2040 (NPF)
- National Development Plan 2021-2030 (NDP)
- Implementation Roadmap for the National Planning Framework (DHPLG, 2018)
- Northern and Western Regional Assembly Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (NWRA RSES)
- Housing for All (DHLGH, 2021)
- Guidance on the Preparation of a Housing Need and Demand Assessment (DHLGH, 2021)
- Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning (DHLGH, 2020)
- Housing Options for Our Aging Population (DHPLG and DoH, 2020)
- Town Centre First Policy (DRCD, 2024)
- Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (DHLGH, 2022)
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities: Best Practice Guidelines (DEHLG, 2007)
- Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DHLGH, 2024)
- The National Housing Strategy for Persons with a Disability 2022-2027 (DHLGH, 2023)
- Youth Homelessness Strategy 2023-2025 (DHLGH, 2022)
- Vacant Homes Action Plan 2023-2026 (DHLGH, 2024)

3.3 Housing Market Drivers

In line with the Guidance on the Preparation of a Housing Need and Demand Assessment (DHLGH, 2021) this section identifies key demographics and economic trends expected over the period of the HNDA that will impact on the local housing market, including the following:

- Demographic analysis;
- Housing affordability, including incomes, house prices, rent levels; and
- Key drivers of the local and national economy.

Future housing demand will be influenced by changes in population numbers, household formation rates and household size. The balanced spatial distribution of housing across the County will continue to be an important consideration.

3.3.1 Population Trends

Census 2022 shows that Ireland's population grew to 5.15 million, exceeding the five million threshold for the first time in 171 years. On Census Day 2022, there were 5,149,139 people recorded in the State, an increase of 8% upon the April 2016 figure.

County Monaghan experienced an increase in population between 2016 and 2022, growing by 6.4% (3,902 people), bringing the total population of the County to 65,288. 52.6% of this increase (2,055 people) was the result of natural increase, while 47.3% of (1,847 people) was the result of migration into the County. This constituted an annual rate of population increase of 10 people per 1,000, the sixth lowest in the State.

In addition to the above and having regard to Census 2022, the following trends are applicable to County Monaghan:

- The number of people aged 65 and over continues to grow. This age group increased by 21% to 10,397.
- Between April 2016 and April 2022, housing stock in the County grew by 4% from 25,311 to 26,339. The number of vacant dwellings decreased by 3% to 2,793.
- The average household size in the County is 2.81 persons, a slight decrease on 2016, with a little over half of households having only 1 or 2 persons.
- In April 2022, 16,144 of homes were owner-occupied in the County, compared with 15,769 in April 2016.
- The number of homes owned with a mortgage or loan fell by 6% from 6,828 to 6,385 since Census 2016 while the number of homes owned outright (without a loan or mortgage) increased by 9%, from 8,941 to 9,759.
- Homes rented from private landlords showed a 12% increase from 3,062 to 3,420.
- The number of homes rented in the 65 and over age group was 167 (which was an 80% increase). In the 60 to 64 age group, it was up 136% compared with 69% nationally.
- By the age of 35, more than half of householders in the County owned their own home (with or without a mortgage or loan). Nationally, this age was 36.
- Between the 2016 and 2022 Censuses, the average weekly rent paid to a private landlord in County Monaghan in April 2022 was €155, which was a 31% increase on 2016.
- There were more than 1,063 dwellings classed as vacant both in the 2016 and 2022 Censuses in the County, which could be an indication of a longer-term vacancy status.
- In addition to other non-nationals, there are at present, 891 Ukrainians living in the County (Feb 2024)

3.4 Population and Housing Projections – National Level

3.4.1 Population

Appendix 2 of the National Planning Framework Implementation Roadmap includes transitional regional and county population projections up to 2031. Figures for County Monaghan are illustrated in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Transitional Regional and County Population Projections to 2031

County	Census 2016	Census 2022	Projection 2026	Projection 2031
Monaghan	61,386	65,288	67,000-68,000	69,000-71,000

Source: Implementation Roadmap for the National Planning Framework, 2018.

With a 2022 population of 65,288 persons, the population growth in the County is roughly in line with progression towards the NPF targets, albeit at the lower end of the estimated range.

3.4.2 Housing

The database sheet accompanying the Housing Supply Target Methodology Guidelines, provides projected annual figures for new household demand in each local authority area up to the year 2031. For County Monaghan, the housing demand for the Development Plan period is 2,558. Table 31 of the database sheet accompanying the Housing Supply Target Methodology Guidelines set out in Table 3.2, indicates the number of new houses required for the Development Plan period, to enable the County to meet the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) NPF new household demand up to 2031.

Table 3.2: Housing Supply Target County Monaghan

	Monaghan County Council	Annual Households	Average	Total Households
A	ESRI NPF scenario projected new household demand 2017 to Q2 2031	268		4,026
B	Actual new housing supply 2017 to Q3 2024	228		1,769
C	Homeless households, and estimated unmet demand as a Census 2022	N/A		301
D	Housing Demand 2025-2031= Total (A-B+C)/6	426		2,558

Source: Housing Supply Target Methodology for Development Planning- Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2020 & Central Statistics Office

3.5 Housing Affordability

In recent years, Ireland has experienced a sustained period of price inflation in the housing market due to high demand, low supply and higher construction costs. Having regard to the quarterly reports published by Daft.ie, house prices in the State rose by 1.8% on average in the first quarter of 2024, following a fall in the last quarter of 2023. Overall house prices in the first quarter of 2024, are on average 5.8% higher than the previous year. The average house price in the State is detailed at €326,469 whilst in County Monaghan it is €238,292, a 10.1% increase from quarter one in 2023.

3.6 Household Structure

According to Census 2022, there are 22,958 private households in County Monaghan, an increase of 5.9% when compared to the 2016 figure. The average household size in the County is 2.81 persons per household, a slight decrease from the 2016 average household size of 2.83 but above the national average of 2.74 people as illustrated in Table 3.3. These figures indicate that the average household size in County Monaghan has been declining since 2011.

Table 3.3: Average Household Size

Average Household Size (persons per household)			
	2011	2016	2022
County Monaghan	2.84	2.83	2.81
State	2.73	2.75	2.74

Source: Central Statistics Office, Ireland.

There were 16,435 families in the County in April 2022, up from 15,972 in 2016 (+3%). The average number of children per family in the County was recorded as 1.49, which is above the State average of 1.34. The 2022 Census highlights that the number of people living alone in the County has increased

by 9% from 5,148 to 5,618 since Census 2016. Census 2022 also reveals that County Monaghan has a significant number of 1 and 2 person households. There were 9,894 people aged 65 and over living in the County in April 2022, of these 2,692 were living alone. This represents a 21% increase in those aged 65 and over living alone since Census 2016.

Table 3.4: Private Households by Size Census 2022

Private Households by Size		
Household Size	Private Households (Number)	Persons in private households(number)
1 person household	5,618	5,618
2 person household	6,220	12,440
3 person household	3,723	11,169
4 person household	3,647	14,588
5 person household	2,422	12,110
6 person household	969	5,814
7 person household	253	1,771
8 person household	106	919
Total households	22,958	64,429

Source: Central Statistics Office, Ireland.

3.7 Current Housing Market

The most significant factors affecting the housing market in Ireland today is the continued undersupply of new housing to the market coupled with growing demand. The recent interest rate increases, and rising cost of living will impact house prices in the short to medium term. Lack of supply in the rental market is also a contributing factor to the strong demand, along with a lack of supply of social and affordable housing.

The cost of construction materials is also a particular concern in relation to the supply of new homes. The challenges facing the development sector include increased inflation, shortages in labour and the nature of Ireland's public procurement process.

3.8 Existing Housing Stock, Type and Tenure

The Guidance on the Preparation of a HDNA (DHLGH, 2021) requires a profile of all existing housing stock (owner occupied, private rented, social rented, vacant, etc.) to be set out. This housing stock profile should also include housing stock pressures and management issues, for example overcrowding, obsolescence, vacancy, dwellings requiring upgrade or renovation, etc.

Housing stock in County Monaghan increased by 4% from 25,311 to 26,339 between 2016 and 2022, whilst housing stock in the State grew by 5% from 2,003,645 to 2,112,121. The vast majority of householders in the County reside in houses or bungalows (95.4%) with only 4.5% of the housing stock comprising apartments and flats.

In April 2022, 16,144 of homes were owner-occupied in the County, compared with 15,769 in April 2016. The number of homes owned with a mortgage or loan fell by 6% from 6,828 to 6,385 since Census 2016 while the number of homes owned outright (without a loan or mortgage) increased by 9%, from 8,941 to 9,759. Homes rented from private landlords showed a 12% increase from 3,062 to 3,420. Nationally, 66% of homes were owner occupied. Some 531,207 homes were owned with a mortgage or loan, while almost 680,000 homes were owned without a mortgage or loan, which was up 11% from 2016. More than 330,000 homes were rented from a private landlord, an increase of 7% since 2016.

There was a significant increase of 83% (up to almost 17,000 households) in the number of over 65s renting from a private landlord in the State. In County Monaghan, the number of homes rented in the 65 and over age group was 167 representing an 80% increase. In the 60 to 64 age group, it was up 136% compared with 69% nationally.

Census 2022 shows that by the age of 35, more than half of householders in the County owned their own home (with or without a mortgage or loan). Nationally this age was 36. This age, which marks the changeover between home ownership and renting, has been increasing over time, up from 26 years in 1991, 27 years in 2002, 28 years in 2006, 32 years in 2011, and 35 years in 2016.

3.9 Vacancy

Between April 2016 and April 2022, the number of vacant dwellings in the County decreased by 3% from 2,884 to 2,793. Census 2022 notes that many properties classed as vacant in the Census may only be vacant for a short period of time and for a wide variety of reasons including, for example homes for sale, rent, new build or renovation etc. However, there were more than 1,063 dwellings classed as vacant both in the 2016 and 2022 censuses in County Monaghan and additionally, 549 units had been vacant since 2011, which is an indication of a longer-term vacancy status. County Monaghan ranked 9th in the State for the proportion of dwellings that have been vacant for 7 years and ranked 7th for the proportion of dwellings that have been vacant for 11 years.

According to the 2022 figures, variation in vacancy rates was apparent at the local level with most settlements seeing a slight decrease in vacancy rates. Clones Town saw the largest drop-in vacancy rate from 18.1% to 13.7% whilst Monaghan Town saw a slight increase from 11.5% to 12.3%.

The 2022 Census recorded a vacancy reason for each vacant dwelling. It should be noted that, while a dwelling may have had more than one reason for being vacant (e.g., a property for sale with a recently deceased owner), only a single reason was recorded. In County Monaghan, the leading reasons recorded for vacancy were that the dwelling was a rental property (21.7%) and that the owner was deceased (20.3%). This reflects the national trend where these are also the leading reasons, but the proportion of vacant properties falling into these categories in County Monaghan is higher in both cases. Considering the relatively high proportion of dwellings that have been vacant for 7 or more years, this may indicate that a large number of dwellings are unable to be released to the market due to probate-related situations following the deaths of owners.

The third most frequently given reason for vacancy in the County is that the dwelling is an abandoned farmhouse (13.8%). Abandoned farmhouses account for nearly double the proportion of vacant properties in County Monaghan than at State level. Particular focus should be directed towards this type of vacancy. This vacant stock could accommodate some of the additional housing units estimated to be required over the period of the plan and initiatives such as Croí Cónaithe have had a degree of success in this regard.

3.10 Housing Supply

Between 2012 and 2022, 1,776 dwellings were completed in County Monaghan. Of these, 62.8% were single houses, 32.2% in multi-unit schemes and 5% were apartments. The County is ranked 8th for the highest proportion of single houses in the State and the figure is well in excess of the State average of 29.1%.

Completions have increased since 2019, even taking into account the slow down experienced due to the Covid Pandemic between 2020-2021. The proportion of completed apartments has also increased and accounted for 6.2% of completions between 2019 and 2022, although this is still significantly less than the State average of 20.1%.

The highest number of house completions was experienced within the Carrickmacross-Castleblayney Municipal District which recorded 809 completed units between 2012 and 2021. Monaghan Municipal District saw 554 units completed whilst 420 units were completed within the Ballybay-Clones Municipal District.

Data published by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) indicates that that Commencement Notices for 3,699 new homes were received by Building Control Authorities in February 2024, an increase of 85% on the number of new homes commenced in the same month last year (1,997 units) and the highest number of units commenced in February since records began in 2015. In the first two months of 2024, 7,056 new homes were commenced, a figure 72% higher than when compared to the first two months of 2023, with rolling 12-month commencements totalling above 35,750. These figures indicate that supply, which is key to addressing housing needs continues to increase and that a robust stock of new housing is in the pipeline. House commencements in County Monaghan have averaged at between 200-299 units since 2018. This is above the annual average for the Border Region but considerably below the State average which is buoyed by the presence of large urban areas.

Completion of new social housing in 2022 was predominantly provided by Monaghan County Council with 82.5% of all new build social housing units and 'turnkey' acquisitions coming through Monaghan County Council, well above the State level proportion where approved housing bodies provided 41.3% of all social housing completions.

3.11 Residential Rental Market

Renters continue to face large increases in the amount of rent they pay. Between the 2016 and 2022 Censuses, the average weekly rent paid to a private landlord in County Monaghan was €155, which was a 31% increase on 2016. The average weekly rent paid to a private landlord (at national level) rose to €273, up €73 (37%). This was more than double the rate of increase (17%) between 2011 and 2016.

The average standardised monthly rental price of a residential property in County Monaghan in 2023 was €873. The most expensive single location was in Carrickmacross (€947), in comparison to Ballybay which was the cheapest at €787. Monaghan Town and Castleblayney exhibited the lowest and highest increases in rents in the last five years at 24.8% and 43.1% respectively.

According to The Daft.ie Rental Price Report for Quarter 1 of 2024, market rents in County Monaghan were on average 7.7% higher in the first three months of 2024 than for the same period in 2023. The average listed rent in County Monaghan is €1,190, up 52% from the level prevailing before the Covid pandemic.

The average annual rental price increase for the County between 2017 and 2022 was 6.5%. Monaghan Town exhibited the lowest average annual increase of towns apparent in the data at 5.3% and Castleblayney exhibited the highest at 8.5%. The change over time in average monthly rent shows a slight slow down in annual rental price increases between 2017 and 2021 followed by a sharp increase in 2022.

The overall volume of Residential Tenancy Board (RTB) registered tenancies in the County decreased from circa 800 in June 2022 to 541 in June 2023. The lack of rental properties is particularly apparent outside of Monaghan Town, with a related effect on unit size and choice.

There are several types of housing support in operation including the provision of social housing and the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP). HAP is a form of support available to people who have a long-term housing need and specifically for those persons or families who are eligible for social housing but

are unable to be assigned an appropriate social housing dwelling. Under HAP, the Local Authority can make a monthly payment to a landlord, subject to terms and conditions including rent limits, on a tenant's behalf.

Under the current HAP legislation, limits for HAP payments are based on the number of people in a household and the rental market in the area. Local authorities have a limited additional flexibility to exceed the maximum rent limits on a case-by-case basis. As of June 2022, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage proposed further flexibility for local authorities, permitting them to exceed rent limits by up to 35%.

Table 3.5: Maximum HAP Monthly Payments in County Monaghan Band 3, 2023

HAP Overview	Monthly Payments
Single	€330
Couple- No dependents	€390
Couple/lone parent with 1 child	€500
Couple/lone parent with 2 children	€515
Couple/lone parent with 3 or more children	€530
Single in shared accommodation	€200
Couple in shared accommodation	€220

Source: Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

As of April 2024, there were 466 HAP properties listed in the County with the majority being located between the Monaghan Urban and Monaghan Rural Electoral Divisions.

3.12 Social Housing

Social housing is provided by the Local Authority to meet the needs of low-income families, who otherwise would not be assured of sustainable and secure housing tenure. Approved Housing Bodies (AHB) also provide social housing for people who are unable to provide housing from their own resources. Central Government plans to rapidly increase the number of houses owned by Local Authorities and AHBs so that the most vulnerable in society will have access to a home.

Housing for All - a New Housing Plan for Ireland is the Government's housing plan to 2030. It is a multi-annual, multi-billion-euro plan which will improve Ireland's housing system and deliver more homes of all types for people with different housing needs. The Government's overall objective is that every citizen in the State should have access to good quality homes which:

- Can be purchased or rented at an affordable price,
- Will be built to a high standard and in the right place, and
- Will offer a high quality of life.

The policy has four pathways to achieving housing for all:

- supporting home ownership and increasing affordability,
- eradicating homelessness, increasing social housing delivery and supporting social inclusion,
- increasing new housing supply, and
- addressing vacancy and efficient use of existing stock.

For County Monaghan the approach to meeting the social housing demands of the population should be more specific to the needs of the County. Whilst there is still a requirement for new build units, there is also a key need to refocus an element of supply by bringing privately owned vacant and derelict units back into productive use. This will be a key element in County Monaghan as part of a broader policy context of regenerating towns and villages throughout the County.

3.12.1 Social Housing List Analysis

As of April 2024, there are currently 1045 households on the social housing waiting list along with a further 125 on the transfer list. In 2023, Monaghan County Council accommodated approximately 20% of the social housing waiting list in social housing units.

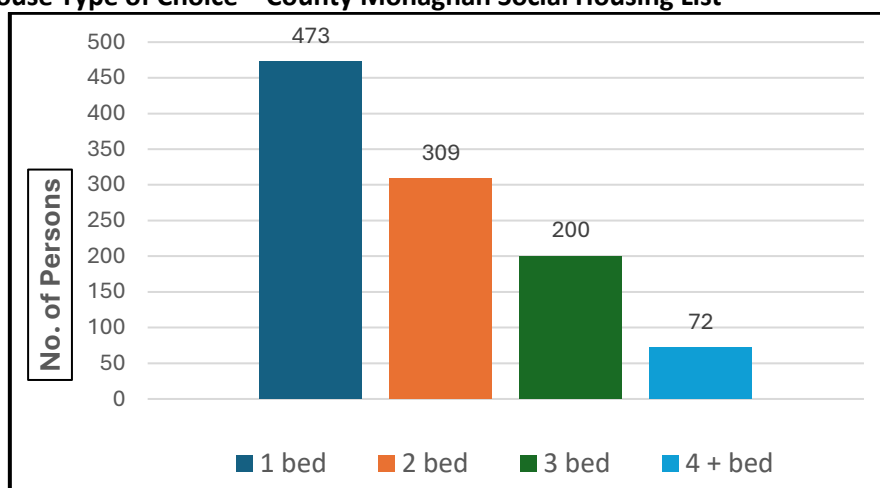
Table 3.6: Social Housing Waiting List, April 2024

Social Housing Waiting List – April 2024			
	Households	HAP	RAS
Monaghan MD	532	263	35
Carrickmacross/Castleblayney MD	367	133	10
Clones/Ballybay	146	70	7
Total	1045	466	52

Source: Housing Section, Monaghan County Council.

The type of accommodation required to meet the demand has changed in more recent years. Previously, the demand was predominantly for 3 bed family accommodation. However, the current profile of demand on the housing list indicates that 1 and 2 bed accommodation would meet the overall need.

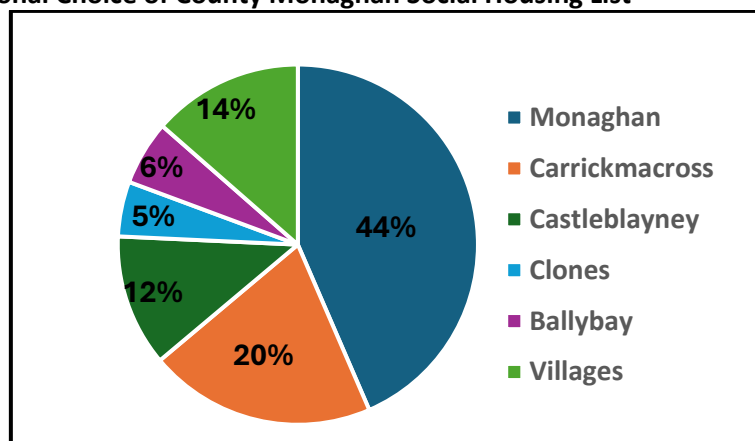
Figure 3.1 House Type of Choice – County Monaghan Social Housing List



Source: Housing Section, Monaghan County Council 2024.

The greatest demand for social housing within the County at present is in Monaghan Town as illustrated in figure 3.2 below:

Figure 3.2: Locational Choice of County Monaghan Social Housing List



Source: Housing Section, Monaghan County Council 2024.

In recent years housing demand has been met via the private rental sector with the assistance of initiatives such as RAS and HAP. It is anticipated that this approach will continue over the plan period. The Council will continue to construct new units and acquire land and derelict structures for the provision of social housing, where deemed appropriate, having regard to demand in particular towns and villages.

Taking into account recent market trends and the level of private multi-unit house building within the main towns of County Monaghan, it is not anticipated that Part V of the Act will be significant in meeting the social housing need of the County. Notwithstanding this, Part V will continue to be implemented in terms of the 20% reservation for social housing.

3.12.2 Social Housing Stock

As of June 2023, County Monaghan's social housing stock consisted of 2,927 units. The units are either owned by Monaghan County Council, directly leased by Monaghan County Council, provided by an AHB, or leased through Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) or HAP.

Table 3.7: Social Housing Stock by Type 2023

Stock Type	No. of Units
Directly Owned by Local Authority	1,761
RAS	65
HAP	513
AHB (Independent Units)	483
AHB (Group home beds)	100
Directly leased by Local Authority	5
Total	2,927

Source: Housing Section, Monaghan County Council.

Monaghan County Council has no long term vacant social houses and has been proactive over recent years in reducing or minimising the re-letting time of void properties. In 2022, Monaghan County Council was ranked third in the County with 16.22 weeks Average re-letting time.

The age of housing stock can be used as a rough indicator of housing condition. 781 social housing dwellings in the County (26.7% of the social housing stock) were constructed pre-2001 and are over 23 years old compared to the County's wider housing stock, where 64.8% of dwellings were constructed pre-2001.

3.12.3 Social Housing Output

Data on new social housing delivered by Local Authorities since 2015 is available through the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH). Between 2015 and 2022, 1,534 units were delivered in County Monaghan via new build, acquisition, leasing, RAS and HAP.

Housing units made available through the HAP scheme constitute the largest proportion of social housing provision provided in the County since 2015, accounting for 59.8% or 918 units. New build housing constitutes the next largest proportion of all units, at 20.9%, or 321 units.

Social housing delivery increased significantly across all modes of delivery from 2016 onwards, with an average delivery of 300 units per annum between 2017 and 2022. Delivery has decreased slightly since 2020, most likely due to slowdowns in construction and a tightening of the rental market associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, though the number of units delivered as new builds increased sharply in 2022, making up 52.4% of all deliveries and surpassing the number of deliveries via HAP for the first time.

These stock levels can be compared to the number of households which qualified for social housing support. In 2023, 395 households were subject to assessment and deemed qualified for social housing support by Monaghan County Council.

3.12.4 Social and Affordable Housing Need

The HNDA noted that a consistent cohort of households requiring social housing is projected to arise each year. An affordability constraint cohort (i.e., of households unable to afford rent but outside social housing thresholds) is projected to arise in 2023 and grow sharply. It will exceed 5% of all annual newly formed households in 2027 (at 6.5%), and ultimately constitute 201 households over the assessment period. These households will require affordable housing solutions.

3.13 Urban Housing

The Core Strategy sets out the total housing requirement for the County in order to satisfy the population growth of 6,228 persons that is provided for during the lifetime of this plan.

The Core Strategy allocates the future supply of urban housing units in respect of Tier 1, 2, 3 and 4 settlements. These locations have suitable capacity in physical and social infrastructure to accommodate anticipated urban population growth circa 83 hectares of land is zoned for residential purposes within the designated settlements, which will be plan led and delivered through the provision of settlement plans for each of the towns and the villages collectively.

Urban housing in smaller settlements has the potential to be a significant contributor to the renewal and regeneration of those settlements, which is a targeted priority of this plan. However, it is imperative that any housing proposal is of a suitable scale having regard to the Core Strategy and the character of the settlement. In particular, the development of low-density housing in the towns represents an opportunity to provide an attractive alternative to a one-off rural dwelling. In addition, there are proactive approaches to regenerate and revitalise town centres through policy initiatives such as Town Centre First. Initiatives such as this will reduce vacancy and dereliction, and potentially transform some of these units into habitable homes.

The promotion of quality design will result in more attractive places to live, provide for greater connectivity and integration of new housing with the existing urban fabric, provide positive spaces and assist in developing community spirit.

3.14 Residential Density

National policy seeks to encourage more sustainable development through the avoidance of excessive suburbanisation and the promotion of higher densities. The Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DHLGH, 2024) references this. For the purposes of ascertaining a suitable housing land requirement for County Monaghan and having regard to the above, Chapter 2 Core Strategy in this Development Plan has considered it appropriate to apply a gross density of 30 units per hectare within the larger settlements (Key and Large towns), 25 units per hectare (gross) in the medium settlements (Medium and Small towns), and 20 units per hectare (gross) in the smaller settlements (Rural town and Villages). It is considered that this is both practical and realistic for the urban settlements of County Monaghan where most of the sites suitable for new residential development have, in the main, extensive topographical challenges.

In County Monaghan topography can be a significant issue in the suitable yield of sites. The development of settlements can be impacted upon by the drumlin landscape/topography of the County, in terms of flood risk in low lying areas and the feasibility of developing steeply sloping and elevated lands, and thus this can affect the density of development that can be reasonably achieved.

The Core Strategy provides for the development of lower density houses within the urban settlements in the form of serviced sites. This will be permitted through schemes that provide suitable housing to meet the needs of people who might otherwise seek to build a one-off dwelling in the rural area. Such schemes will be permitted on suitable lands located within the designated settlement boundaries where it is demonstrated that there is a demand for the development within the settlement and where it contributes to the sequential development of land from the centre of the settlement outwards or represents a consolidation of the settlement footprint.

3.15 Rural Housing

The NPF requires Local Authorities to project the need for single housing in the countryside through the Local Authority's overall HNDA toolkit and County Development Plan Core Strategy process. Although in its current form, the HNDA Toolkit does not permit this function to be carried out, it is anticipated that this will be a future feature of it.

Rural housing plays an important role in sustaining rural communities and the Core Strategy acknowledges the rural nature of County Monaghan as well as the long tradition of people living in rural areas. It is important therefore that the rural housing policy focuses on ensuring that every appropriate and sustainable options are available to the rural population to continue to live in their own area and to contribute to community life. However, delivering this whilst also promoting sustainable living within designated urban centres and protecting the countryside from being dominated by rural housing remains a challenge.

The analysis of planning permission data from 2012 to 2022 has been carried out to determine the need for single rural housing in County Monaghan. The data helps to understand typical quantum per annum of one-off houses being permitted in the County and the proportion of overall residential permissions they comprise.

One-off houses have historically made up the greatest cohort of granted planning permissions in County Monaghan, constituting 67.3% of all units granted between 2012 and 2022, a slightly higher proportion of overall planning permissions for the Border region (63.3%) but a considerably higher proportion than the State average of around 40% and is reflective of the County's rural character. Though the average annual total number of units granted planning permission in the County increased between 2018 and 2022, the proportion of one-off houses has declined, with the 5-year average decreasing from 83.4% to 60.2%. It should be noted however that these figures include both urban

and rural one-off housing and can be assumed to represent the upper limit of rural one-off housing figures per annum, even in a predominantly rural county such as Monaghan.

Table 3.8: Planning Permissions Granted 2012-2022 County Monaghan

Year	One-off houses	Total units granted permission	One-off houses as %
2012	94	112	83.9
2013	87	93	93.5
2014	109	118	92.4
2015	114	223	51.1
2016	115	120	95.8
2017	148	168	88.1
2018	207	351	59.0
2019	165	371	44.5
2020	148	206	71.8
2021	219	311	70.4
2022	150	237	63.3

Source: Central Statistics Office, Ireland.

3.16 Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA)

3.16.1 Introduction

National Policy Objective 37 of the NPF sets out the requirement for a Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA). The purpose of the HNDA is to:

- Assist local authorities to develop long-term strategic views of housing need across all tenures,
- Provide a robust evidence base to support decisions about new housing supply, wider investment and housing related services that inform an overall national housing profile,
- Inform policies about the proportion of social and affordable housing required, and
- Provide evidence to inform policies related to the provision of specialist housing and housing related guidance.

The HNDA supports the preparation of the Housing Strategy which in turn, will influence the amount of land to be zoned for housing purposes within the Development Plan and the relevant objectives and policies.

The HNDA was prepared in line with the HNDA Guidance issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) and also the HNDA Tool. A copy of the HNDA for the County is contained within Appendix 18.

3.16.2 Assessed Scenarios

Four scenarios were assessed using the HNDA Toolkit as part of the assessment. They are as follows:

- The first scenario 'Core Tool Default' includes the default variables prepared as part of the Toolkit for County Monaghan and is best understood as a comparator for the other scenarios.
- The second scenario 'Monaghan' incorporated updated existing need figures provided by Monaghan County Council as well as forecasts for growth in purchase price and rents derived from the Property Price Register (PPR) and Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) data between 2016 and 2021.
- The third scenario 'Monaghan modest real income growth' was a variation on the second scenario that used different forecasts for income growth in the County.
- The fourth scenario 'Monaghan below real income growth' was also a variation on the second scenario that used different forecasts for income growth in the County.

3.16.3 Selected Scenario

The second scenario 'Monaghan' was chosen as the preferred scenario as it takes account of local conditions (existing need, forecast sales and rental prices based on the average of historic change rates) and projects income growth in line with Central Bank of Ireland forecasts. For this scenario, it was assumed that:

- Incomes would grow by circa 2% per annum, in line with forecasts by the Central Bank of Ireland.
- House purchase prices would grow by 8.9% between 2022-2023, reflecting the six year average of historic sales price change in the county, with this rate of grow gradually tapering down over time.
- Rental prices would grow by 6.5% between 2022-2023, reflecting the six year average of historic rental price change in the county, with this rate of growth gradually tapering down over time.

3.16.4 Housing Need and Tenure

In conclusion, the following has been derived from applying the selected second scenario;

- Over the assessment period of 2023-2031, 2,754 new households will require housing.
- Accounting for existing need (overcrowding and homelessness) a further 39 households require housing.
- A total of 2,793 new households in the County are therefore required between 2023 and 2031.
- The tenure forecasts for the period 2023-2031 are as follows:
 - 928 newly arising households are projected to be buyers,
 - 745 newly arising households are projected to be unable to purchase a home but able to rent in the private rental sector,
 - 916 newly arising households are projected to require social housing, and
 - 201 newly arising households are projected to form an affordability constraint cohort, being unable to afford market rents while simultaneously being unable to access social housing. As such this cohort is anticipated to require affordable housing solutions.

Table 3.9: Housing Need Expressed in Number of New Households in Each Tenure Cohort Per Year (2023-2031)

Tenure	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	Total
Social rent	98	102	107	101	96	109	106	103	94	916
Affordability Constraint	2	1	1	10	18	27	37	50	55	201
Private Residential Sector	83	81	80	74	73	89	90	89	86	745
Buyers	130	120	113	100	92	101	95	93	84	928
Total	313	304	301	285	279	326	328	335	319	2,790 ¹

¹ Due to the HNDA Toolkit handles rounding, there is a slight variation in total figures

Source: Monaghan County Council HNDA, 2023.

3.16.5 Housing Land Supply

The HNDA determined that that circa 2,790 new dwellings are required in the County by 2031. The Core Strategy Table 2.5 in Chapter 2 Core Strategy indicates that this Development Plan allocates approximately 83 hectares for residential use, which represents sufficient provision to accommodate the calculated housing demand while allowing for a degree of locational choice. Where land is zoned for development, it is on the basis of a detailed Infrastructural Assessment (IA) and Settlement Capacity Audit (SCA) in Appendix 16 to support its suitability for development during the Plan lifetime in terms of servicing and potential housing yield.

3.17 Specialist Housing Provision

The need to accommodate the housing requirements of those with specialist housing needs is recognised by Monaghan County Council. The type and location of accommodation for persons with specialist housing needs will be assessed in line with current best practice and guidance.

Specialist provisions refer to three broad categories, which in turn cover six types of housing related provision aimed at supporting independent living and allowing people to live well and with dignity. The number of households with a housing requirement should be identified for the following categories of specialist need:

- Older People
- Persons with Disabilities
- Travellers
- Homeless
- International Protection Applicants and Persons Benefitting from Temporary Protection
- Third level Students
- Lifetime housing

3.17.1 Housing for Older People

The Council recognise that housing is a function that must adapt in order to meet the needs of a growing number of older people. The Council will continue to work with relevant agencies and the private sector to facilitate suitable proposals for the accommodation of older people.

As of 2022, there were 10,397 people over the age of 65 living in County Monaghan, constituting 15.9% of the population and increasing by 21% since Census 2016. This proportion is higher than the state average of 15.1%. In the context of accommodation, 9849 (95.2%) of this cohort reside in private householding whilst 1,043 live in non-private households/communal establishments including nursing homes. In the County, 2,692 people over the age of 65 live alone of which 1,403 are over the age of 75. The Private and Voluntary Nursing Home Survey Results for 2020-2021 carried out by Binder Dijker Otte (BDO) and Nursing Homes Ireland (NHI) notes that there were 306 private beds available in nursing homes across the County, a decrease of 42 beds or 12.1% from 2020.

The demand for nursing homes and comparable services is anticipated to grow and it is considered that such services should generally be located within the Tier 1, 2 and 3 settlements where public utilities are available and where opportunities for greater social inclusion and integration into the community are available. Proposals for nursing homes, retirement homes and care facilities in or adjacent to Tier 4, 5 and 6 settlements, may be considered where there is a clearly identified need for the accommodation and a strong justification for the proposed location and site having regard to available services. There will be a presumption against such services being permitted in the open countryside.

3.17.2 Accommodation for Persons with Disabilities

The National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022-2027 sets out the Government's vision for delivering housing and related supports for disabled people and places a particular emphasis on disabled people having choice and control over their living arrangements. The Strategy uses the term 'disability' in reference to four categories of disability namely, sensory, mental health, physical and intellectual.

In 2022, 12,282 people were recorded in the census as having a disability, representing 18.8% of the overall population. Though lower than the national figure of 21.5%, this is an increase on the figure of 12% reported in 2016. In the County, 7.0% of the population (4,576 people) self-reported as having a "disability to a great extent", while 11.8% (7,706 people) self-reported as having "a disability to some extent".

The Housing Agency's Summary of Social Housing Assessment 2023 identified 24 households on the housing list which have specific accommodation requirements (physical, sensory, mental or intellectual impairment). These needs can be met through direct provision of accommodation by the Council or in conjunction with the Health Service Executive (HSE), or the voluntary sector. In accordance with national policy the Council administers grant schemes that provide financial assistance in carrying out works to render dwellings more suitable for occupants with special needs. The Council will continue to administer these schemes subject to the provision of funding.

3.17.3 Accommodation for Travellers

The Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998 requires all Local Authorities to prepare, in consultation with Travellers and the general public, a five year Traveller accommodation programme to meet the existing and projected needs of Travellers in their area.

Monaghan County Council's Traveller Accommodation Programme 2019-2024 sets out the Council's targets for meeting the housing needs of the Traveller Community in the County through the provision of accommodation. Monaghan County Council carried out an assessment of need for the current programme and identified that there are 47 families in need of long-term housing whilst a further 13 families are projected to require accommodation in the long term which will be met through Housing Assistance Payments (HAP). Overall, the total current need and projected housing needs for the Traveller Community is 60 households.

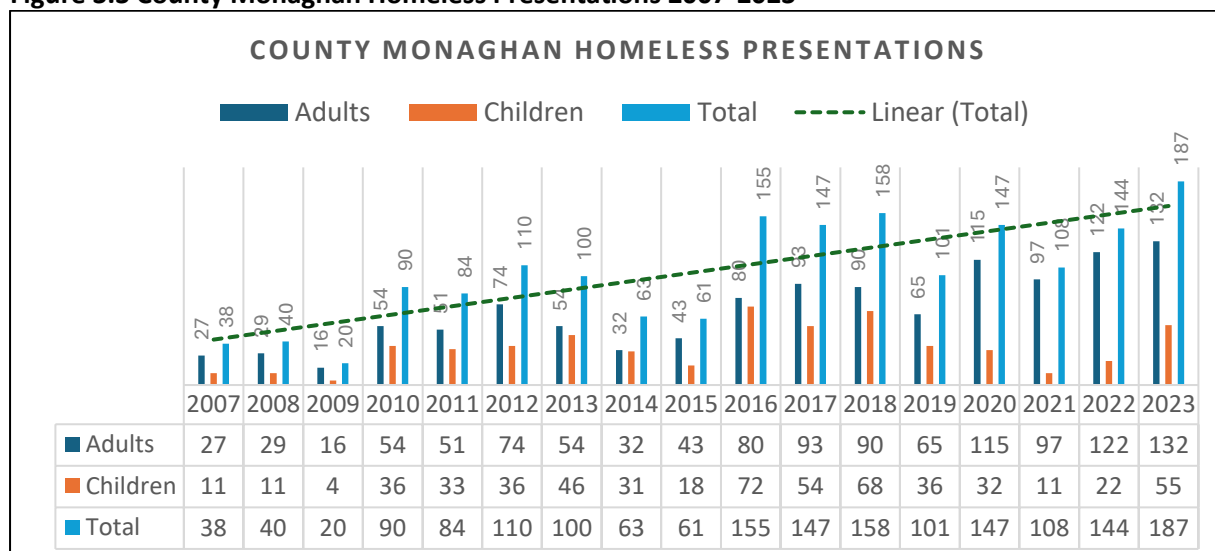
The 2019-2024 Programme seeks to meet these housing needs through direct provision of Local Authority housing, RAS leasing private rented accommodation, HAP, and voluntary housing. In addition, Travellers who seek Traveller specific accommodation will be accommodated, subject to availability, at the existing Halting Site at Gortakeegan.

Monaghan County Council is currently preparing the 2025-2029 Traveller Accommodation Programme.

3.17.4 Accommodation for the Homeless

Figure 3.3 sets out the trends in homeless presentations within the County from 2007 to 2023, with 2023 seeing the highest number of presentations on record.

Figure 3.3 County Monaghan Homeless Presentations 2007-2023



Source: Housing Section, Monaghan County Council.

The North East Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2023 was prepared for the housing authorities of Monaghan, Cavan and Louth in conjunction with the HSE.

The key actions of the plan are based on 4 main areas of priority:

- Prevention of homelessness,
- Protection of service users through emergency accommodation and support services,
- Progression to longer term/permanent accommodation, and
- Oversight and Governance.

The Council will continue to support the implementation of the North East Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2023 and any subsequent version and work with various agencies responsible for the provision of accommodation suitable to their needs.

3.17.5 Accommodation for International Protection Applicants and Persons Benefitting from Temporary Protection

Persons who have been granted refugee status, international protection and temporary protection have the right to apply for local authority housing. Consideration should be given in this regard to household size, structure and the need for access to social supports in terms of language, education and employment.

3.17.6 Accommodation for Students

According to the 2022 Census, 5,274 residents in County Monaghan reported their principle economic status as being students (10.3% of all those aged 15 and over), representing a slight increase on figures in 2016 (10.3%).

3.17.7 Lifetime Housing

It is considered that there is a demand for accessible private housing for older people and/or people with disabilities and a measure is required to encourage the provision of accessible housing within the private market.

Housing should be designed to be flexible to accommodate the changing needs of the groups, families and individuals who occupy them over the lifetime of a house. The needs of occupants will vary as

individual circumstances change and lifetime housing should be fully accessible and easily adaptable at minimum cost and minimum disruption. The principles of universal, inclusive, barrier free design should be demonstratively applied where possible. Monaghan County Council will support the development of flexible housing design.

3.18 Delivering the Housing Strategy

The Housing Strategy and HNDA has reviewed existing and future housing needs in the County and has set out the evidence base which underpins the future estimated needs for the County.

The core principles behind the Strategy include the goals of delivering sustainable development and compact growth, providing high-quality new homes in appropriate places to meet the diverse needs of the people of County Monaghan and promoting strong, vibrant and inclusive communities.

The following objectives and policies have been drafted in accordance with these principles to guide and support sustainable housing delivery through effective spatial planning:

Housing Strategy Objectives	
HSO 1	To encourage a balanced supply of housing in the County in a manner that is consistent with the Housing Strategy, the Core Strategy and the Settlement Hierarchy, and which will support the creation of sustainable communities through the provision of an appropriate range of housing types and high-quality residential environments.
HSO 2	To guide urban residential development in a sequential manner outward from the centre of the settlements to maximise the use of existing and future infrastructure provision, to promote sustainability, to make more efficient use of underutilised lands, and to avoid the extension of services and utilities to more remote areas.
HSO 3	To encourage and promote the re-use of vacant units for residential use subject to compatibility with existing and proposed surrounding uses, whilst also having due regard to the need to not adversely affect: surrounding residential amenity, protected bat species, European sites, and areas of biodiversity value; and the need to appropriately conserve built heritage.
HSO 4	To promote social inclusion by ensuring an appropriate balance between social, specialist and private (both rented, and owner occupied) housing is provided within communities.
HSO 5	To provide accommodation for all sectors of society, including the needs of the Travelling Community in accordance with the current, and any future, Traveller Accommodation Plan, and ethnic minorities, as far as is reasonable and practicable utilising the full range of housing options available.
HSO 6	To support the Council in the acquisition of land for the delivery of independent living for older people and those with specialist needs through the provision of purpose-built accommodation.
HSO 7	To facilitate the provision of suitable accommodation, where a need is identified, for those with special needs, for the homeless and for those in need of emergency accommodation.
HSO 8	To provide social housing in partnership with voluntary and co-operative housing bodies as well as through agreements with private developers and the local authority's own house building programme.
HSO 9	To encourage and support proposals for new residential developments that offer a range of types, sizes, design and tenures of housing units, such as retirement housing or assisted housing schemes.
HSO 10	To support a range of mixed tenure housing types and forms which provide affordable and accessible housing for people of various ages, abilities, and family sizes, while

Housing Strategy Objectives	
	meeting all planning and environmental considerations, particularly in respect of housing in the rural areas.
HSO 11	To encourage the acquisition of land and the activation of council owned land for sustainable housing and to promote and facilitate the provision of serviced sites within towns and villages.
HSO 12	To support the development of nursing homes, residential care facilities, and sheltered housing whilst ensuring these facilities are integrated within the communities they serve.
HSO 13	To encourage and support the provision of service sites within smaller towns and villages.

3.19 Monitoring and Implementation

The Act provides for the monitoring of the implementation of the County Housing Strategy within two years of the making of the Plan as required under Section 15(2).

The Housing Strategy may be amended, and the Development Plan varied accordingly if new or revised housing needs within the functional area of the Local Authority is identified.

Chapter 4

Economic Development

Chapter 4

Economic Development

4.0 Introduction

Monaghan County Council's role in the areas of land-use planning, infrastructure provision and local community development, make it a key stakeholder in the facilitation and generation of economic activity in the County. The central challenge for the Council is to help create more jobs to ensure that more people who live in County Monaghan can work in County Monaghan, and that the County is not only seen as a place to visit and live in, but a place to invest and work in.

Accordingly, the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 is a key medium through which future economic development can be encouraged. It is critical therefore, that the objectives and policies outlined in this chapter strike a balance between ambition and realism in order to facilitate healthy levels of economic activity and employment growth that will retain and sustain the County's population.

Economic Development Strategic Objective	
EDSO 1	To promote County Monaghan as a local and regional centre of trade, business and tourism and to build on its strong spirit of enterprise to create a dynamic local economy with job creation at its heart.

Supporting economic growth correlates with other chapters of this Development Plan, including Chapter 7 Transport and Infrastructure, which references digital infrastructure and connectivity, important elements in creating conditions to support business growth, innovation and remote working opportunities, whilst the growth of the circular economy and bio-economy is referenced and supported through the relevant policies and objectives contained within Chapter 8 Environment, Energy and Climate Change.

4.1 Business and Employment in County Monaghan

Renowned for its strong work ethic and entrepreneurial drive, County Monaghan is dotted with a mix of established indigenous and international companies. The agri-food industry plays a significant role in the County's economy and accounts for over 60% of County Monaghan's employment, whilst 90% of the food produced within the County is exported. Given the geographical makeup of the County, and its significant rural proportion, it is unsurprising that so many of the County's population are engaged in agricultural activities. In 2020, 4,478 farm holdings were recorded in the County, with specialist beef production listed as the dominant farming activity. The County is also home to some major food and agri-food companies, such as Monaghan Mushrooms, Greenfield Foods Ltd, Silverhill Foods, ABP Food Group, Abbot Ireland and Bio-Marine Ingredients.

Recent years have seen an expansion of the County's economic base, from a reliance on the agricultural sector to now having a strong presence in the industrial, enterprise and services sectors. This is in some way a result of County Monaghan benefiting from its strategic border location along the Dublin to Letterkenny/Derry City corridor, and adjacent to the Dublin/Belfast eastern economic corridor. Additionally, the ports of Belfast, Larne, Warrenpoint and Dublin are all located within an hour and forty-five minutes' drive of the County.

County Monaghan is home to Ireland's largest temperature control and logistics firm Castlecool and Combilift a recognised global leader in the long load handling market. There is a strong entrepreneurial spirit which has seen the successful development of a significant number of Small and Medium

Enterprises (SMEs) in key sectors including engineering, information and communications technology (ICT), tourism, culture and business support services.

The importance of SMEs within the County is evident when considering that more than three-quarters (75.9%) of employees residing in the County work for enterprises that employ under 10 people (35.2%) or between 50 and 249 people (40.5%). This is higher than both the Regional and National averages. The importance of sustaining and supporting SMEs is reflected in the objectives and policies contained within this Development Plan.

In 2020, the top three economic activities in the County by number of employees were:

- manufacturing,
- wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, and
- human health/social work.

The top three sectors by number of enterprises in the County were:

- construction,
- wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, and
- manufacturing.

County Monaghan's manufacturing sector is strong with over one in ten enterprises in the State operating in the County. Therefore, within the towns and villages, it is necessary that the County offers a variety of locations to work and live.

Nationally, the 2022 Census depicts that there is an increase in the number of people in work, rising by 16% to 2.3 million in April 2022 with every county experiencing employment growth. There was also a steady decrease in the unemployment rate in 2022, from 13% in 2016 to 8%. The largest growth nationally has been in the category of other human health activities, which includes professions such as physiotherapy and occupational therapy. The unemployment rate of the County is 8.2%, whilst the long-term unemployment rate is 4.0%.

4.2 Rural Economy

The types of industry in the County and how these industries operate has evolved in recent years because of technological advances, particularly within the County's rural area. The National Planning Framework (NPF) identifies "strengthened rural economies and communities" as a National Strategic Outcome, and recognises that improved connectivity, broadband and rural economic development opportunities will ensure the countryside remains and strengthens as a living and working community. Local service sectors, including tourism and small-scale manufacturing, are a significant part of the rural economy and are also important local employers. Supporting the diversification of the rural economy is essential. Improved digital connectivity offers new opportunities for rural businesses to reach new markets. The natural resource of the County offers potential, through the development of agriculture, food, forestry, tourism and renewable energy sectors, to grow new businesses or to expand existing ones. In addition, digital improvements create opportunities for remote working, and employment is likely to grow in areas such as agri-tech, ICT, tourism, bio-economy and circular economy.

In supporting the economic growth of the County, a high priority must be given to the creation of higher skilled jobs to stem the flow of young, educated people out of the County. Together with County Cavan, County Monaghan has seen the biggest increase in third level education attainment in the Northern and Western Region from 2011. The role of education providers/institutes in supporting innovation and economic growth is reflected across the Regional Spatial Economic Strategy (RSES) 2020-2032, which also acknowledges that one element which informs business location choices is the

“co-location or dynamic clustering enabling connectivity and linkages within and between suppliers and purchasers, between enterprises and Higher Education Institutes (HEIs)”. It is therefore considered that increased co-operation with relevant Education and Training Boards (ETB) could ensure that apprenticeships are available to students of the County.

4.3 Context

The economic future of the County is influenced by a number of external factors, including the future implications of Brexit given that the County shares a significant land border with Northern Ireland. In recent years the County has experienced growth within the business export sectors, and this is a sector which is expected to see further growth. There may, therefore, be opportunities for County Monaghan to attract inward investment from businesses wishing to have/continue to have an EU presence, particularly businesses that are currently based north of the Border. Its border proximity, the similarities vis-à-vis doing business, the existing and potential enterprise spaces available in the County and the salary costs in comparison to places like Dublin, make County Monaghan an opportune location for firms wishing to relocate.

Although Brexit presents issues that are obviously beyond the remit of this Development Plan, there are issues relating to land-use planning and infrastructure provision which can be addressed through it. This chapter provides a positive vision and spatial land use planning framework to support the significant sectors such as industry, retail and tourism and provides an appropriate readiness to respond to challenges and opportunities that may be presented during the lifetime of this Plan.

4.4 Regional Direction – Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (RSES)

The RSES 2020–2032 for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA) area is a high-development framework that helps to support the National Planning Framework (NPF). It contains six high level goals and is supported by national policy objectives.

In considering how best to support the future economic growth of the County, consideration should be given to the following relevant high-level ambitions and their associated regional policy objectives:

- Growth Ambition 1: Economy and Employment – Vibrant Region
- Growth Ambition 3: Connectivity – Connected Region
- Growth Ambition 5: Infrastructure – Enabling our Region

4.5 Monaghan Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2029 (LECP)

The purpose of the LECP is to set out, over a six-year period, the objectives and actions needed to promote and support the economic development and the local and community development of the County. The vision set out in the LECP is that ‘Monaghan will continue to be an attractive and welcoming County with vibrant communities and a diverse economy, built around wellbeing, innovation, prosperity and sustainability’.

The LECP includes six high level goals, each of which are accompanied by specific objectives. The goals and objectives which are particularly relevant to the economic development of the County are detailed below:

Goal 3: Increase access to training and educational resources to promote opportunities for personal and professional development.	• Objective 3.1 Encourage life-long learning and upskilling including in the area of digital skills.
	• Objective 3.2 Increase access to in-county traineeships and apprenticeships to support skills development and training.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 3.3 Support marginalised and vulnerable groups to access education and training.
Goal 4: Prioritise the targeted regeneration of the County's town and villages to address economic and community decline in rural areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 4.1 Enhance key infrastructure across the County including in relation to roads and public transport.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 4.2 Implement the town centre first policy to reduce dereliction and vacancy.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 4.3 Support the evening and night-time economy.
Goal 5: Grow and diversify the economy and attract and create high value sustainable employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 5.1 Attract foreign direct investment to support job creation.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 5.2 Support existing enterprises and encourage innovative entrepreneurship.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 5.3 Strengthen and build upon the world-class agri-business sector.
Goal 6: Foster, develop and invest in arts, culture, and the creative sector and unlock Monaghan's tourism potential to support economic growth and sustainable development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 6.1 Improve the visibility of Monaghan as a tourism destination.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 6.2 Seek to enhance the County's tourism offering.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 6.3 Support and develop the Creative and Cultural sector of the County.

The influence of the LECP on the Development Plan is not exclusive to this chapter, and the goals and objectives of the LECP are also reflected across other chapters of the Development Plan. The Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 seeks to support the desired outcomes of the LECP related to economic development, which includes increased levels of employment recorded, increased number of agri-businesses and increased number of Local Enterprise Office (LEO), Enterprise Ireland (EI) and Industrial Development Agency (IDA) supported companies in the County.

4.6 Retailing

The County Monaghan Retail Strategy 2016-2022, prepared in accordance with the provisions set out in the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012, was adopted in March 2016. The overriding aim of the strategy is to create the appropriate conditions necessary to foster a healthy and vibrant retailing environment. It does so through policy recommendations which are framed in the context of national and regional plans, strategies and guidelines.

The nature of retailing has changed with the growth of online retail changing the way people shop as well as their reasons for visiting town centres. The Town Centre First Policy acknowledges that retailing is shifting away from being solely reliant on the purchasing of goods towards more 'experience-led' retailing that includes a blend of retail services (including food and drink), leisure, entertainment and cultural uses. Whilst the Development Plan has an important role in supporting the regeneration and revitalisation of our town centres, it should also protect its function as being the primary location for retail development.

It is acknowledged that the County Monaghan Retail Strategy 2016-2022 should therefore be reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure that it provides an up-to-date overview of the town centres, the retail hierarchy and appropriately supports the vitality and viability of the County's towns. The revised Retail Strategy will be prepared taking account of the Town Centre First Policy and any town centre first plans which have been produced. However, until an updated Retail Strategy is published, the

County Monaghan Retail Strategy 2016-2022 will be used to determine the approach to retailing within the Development Plan.

4.6.1 Retail Hierarchy

Monaghan County Council supports a balanced development model, promoting the treatment of urban and rural settlements, together with the surrounding countryside, as functional areas. The Retail Hierarchy has, as such, been dictated by the County Settlement Hierarchy. The Tier 4 and Tier 5 settlements have been included along with the dispersed rural communities, and the provision of suitable retail development, such as local shops, within these areas will be considered appropriate, subject to normal planning considerations. The Retail Hierarchy is set out as follows:

Tier 1 - County Retail Centre: Monaghan Town

With the highest population of all settlements, Monaghan Town is the key employment, retail and service centre with the highest proportion of convenience and comparison floorspace.

Tier 2 - Sub-County Retail Centres: Carrickmacross and Castleblayney

These towns provide an extensive range of local comparison and convenience retail floorspace as well as being significant employment centres.

Tier 3 - Local Retail Centres: Clones and Ballybay

Towns with a limited local comparison and convenience retail offering, serving a localised catchment.

Tier 4 - Rural Villages/Shops: Annyalla, Ballinode, Clontibret, Doohamlet, Emyvale, Glaslough, Inniskeen, Newbliss, Oram, Rockcorry, Scotshouse, Scotstown, Smithborough, Threemilehouse

Villages providing local convenience retail, usually consisting of a post office, one or two pubs and limited comparison retailing.

Tier 5 - Small Rural Villages/Shops: Carrickroe, Corcaghan, Corduff, Drum, Knockatallon, Knockconan, Latton, Lisdoonan, and Tydavnet

Small villages and dispersed rural communities providing daily convenience goods and possibly a pub and/or community centre.

4.6.2 Core Retail Areas and Future Needs

A key objective of the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012 is the promotion of greater vitality in town centres through the implementation of a sequential approach to ensure the retention of activity within the main retail centres or core areas at the expense of more peripheral edge of centre or out of centre locations. Core areas are the most suitable locations for high order and comparison goods as they are generally the most accessible for the catchment population and can also provide a compact and sustainable critical mass of commercial activity and public amenities, thereby reducing the need to travel.

In accordance with the Retail Hierarchy, it is expected that the majority of new future retail developments in the County will be in the Tier 1 and Tier 2 towns of Monaghan, Carrickmacross and Castleblayney. The town centres are deemed to be the focus and preferred location for retail development.

Monaghan Town has been designated as the County's Key Town due to its strategic location and increasing population projections, it is therefore anticipated to attract substantially more future retail applications than other settlements in the County. Carrickmacross, given its proximity to major population centres, growing population, larger hinterland, established market and lower vacancy levels, may also draw further new retail floorspace.

Appropriately located large-scale retail developments will be directed towards Tier 1 and Tier 2 town centres where a need has been identified having regard to the sequential test. Retail developments in the Tier 3 towns will be limited and any retail developments should enhance the existing retail environment to serve and benefit local communities. Expected types of retail developments would include general grocery shops, post offices, pharmacies, salons and cafes.

Going forward, regard must be had to the legacy of vacant retail floorspace and consideration must be given to addressing this issue in the towns.

Retail Objectives	
RTO 1	To commence the preparation of a new Retail Strategy for the County within the first two years following the adoption of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025- 2031.
RTO 2	To ensure the orderly development of future retail development in County Monaghan is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement.
RTO 3	To direct retail development to serviced areas to reinforce the role and function of the core retail areas
RTO 4	To support the vitality and viability of existing town and village centres and facilitate a competitive and healthy retail environment by ensuring that future growth in retail floorspace responds to the identified retail hierarchy.
RTO 5	To promote and encourage the enhancement of retail floorspaces and town centre functions, in order to reduce retail expenditure leakage out of the County and to sustain competitiveness of retail centres in the County.
RTO 6	To encourage the reuse of derelict sites and vacant town centre commercial premises for appropriate and acceptable alternative uses, and adapt a flexible approach to reoccupation, particularly where this can complement the existing service base, whilst also having due regard to the need to not adversely affect: surrounding residential amenity, protected bat species, European sites, and areas of biodiversity value: and the need to appropriately conserve-built heritage.
RTO 7	To reduce retail expenditure leakage out of the County to competing town centres by working collaboratively with local groups to develop the retail offering in the County within key retail sectors where this leakage occurs.
RTO 8	To encourage and facilitate innovation and diversification of the County's retail offer, including tourism, agri-tourism and craft related ventures and markets where appropriate.
RTO 9	To improve the public realm areas within town centres through the encouragement of high-quality design.
RTO 10	To improve the accessibility of town centres by encouraging a pedestrian and cyclist friendly environment.
RTO 11	To promote complementary non-retail uses in town centres, particularly where this can encourage cross-visitation.
RTO 12	To promote activities that will bring enhanced footfall, such as festivals, events and farmers' markets in town centres.
RTO 13	To promote the night-time economy in accordance with the recommendations of the Report of the Night-time Economy Taskforce (Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media, 2021).

Retail Policy	
RTP 1	Proposals for retail development shall comply with the County Monaghan Retail Strategy 2016-2022, the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012 (and the accompanying Retail Design Manual) and any new or updated/subsequent versions.

4.7 Economic Development

The policy aims of the Development Plan are reflective of the Councils overall growth ambitions, as set out in the Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2029. A priority of this Development Plan is therefore to promote the County as a location for economic development that is attractive and competitive in terms of inward investment as well as supporting indigenous businesses. The overarching challenge for the Council is to assist in creating more jobs so that more people who live in County Monaghan can work in County Monaghan. With respect of the role the development plan has to assist this, there are a number of key aims:

- To ensure that sufficient and suitable land is reserved for new enterprise development at appropriate locations throughout the County, whilst also facilitating the reuse of disused industrial buildings for appropriate, alternative uses.
- To promote new industrial development in suitably serviced areas (or at locations where such required infrastructure can be reasonably provided) so as to encourage the generation of employment and increased economic activity in a sustainable and spatially balanced manner.
- To co-operate with relevant national and local bodies to foster a partnership approach to the location of industry and enterprise: ensuring that the provision of necessary infrastructure and service supports are developed in awareness of the conservation of the natural, recreational and cultural amenities of the County.
- To promote the County's thriving agri-food sector with a view to using indigenous resources to create new enterprise and employment opportunities and to explore opportunities to further develop competitive advantage in such areas.
- To support the development of appropriate small scale rural businesses, or suitable expansion of existing businesses to help support the rural economy.
- To ensure a high-quality environment and standard of design is provided and maintained in relation to new and existing industrial development.
- To support the training, development and retention of a highly skilled and educated workforce in order to consolidate and enhance the economic environment within the County.
- To promote (i) the renewable energy sector in the County and (ii) clean technology usage in existing and proposed industrial developments, including the use of alternative and renewable energy sources.
- To build on and promote the development of Lough Egish as a centre for industrial develop and create new enterprises in this area and explore the potential for cluster developments of agri-food businesses and other emerging enterprises.
- To support and liaise with the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) in order to optimise the County's economic development potential and provide a strong framework for sustainable job creation and economic growth.
- To continue to support and facilitate cross-border cooperation and trade between County Monaghan and Northern Ireland, notwithstanding the issues presented by Brexit.
- To provide serviced industrial sites/lands for the purposes of Industry, Enterprise and Employment within County Monaghan, taking account of the sequential approach to zoning.
- To improve digital infrastructure, digital skills and connectivity to support business growth, innovation and remote working opportunities.
- To promote Carrickmacross's role as a 'Place of Regional Potential' with regards to Enterprise and Employment infrastructure as outlined in the RSES.

Economic Development Objectives	
EDO 1	To prepare an Economic Development Strategy based upon an economic development model that will support the future economic growth of the County and the towns within it, during the lifetime of this plan, subject to available resources.
EDO 2	To zone a sufficient amount of land in appropriate serviced locations for the facilitation of industrial and commercial activities that will stimulate the economic viability and vibrancy of the County.
EDO 3	To encourage industrial and economic development, including small scale/startup businesses of appropriate scales, at locations in line with the Settlement Strategy and Economic Strategy as set out in Chapter 2 Core Strategy of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025 – 2031.
EDO 4	To enhance the competitiveness of rural areas by supporting innovation in rural economic development and enterprise, through the diversification of the rural economy into new sectors and services, including ICT-based industries and those addressing climate change and sustainability.
EDO 5	To acquire and develop suitable serviced sites for the development of industrial/business parks and actively encourage industry and economic development, particularly new business start-ups or expanding enterprises, to locate at such selected sites.
EDO 6	To assist in the establishment or expansion of industrial, commercial or other such endeavours that will provide increased employment opportunities in the County, subject to normal development management, environmental and technical requirements.
EDO 7	To promote the use of appropriate lands at Lough Egish for the development of employment generating, industrial and other such uses, including self-build units and the provision of serviced sites, to enhance and contribute to its growth as a centre for industrial development.
EDO 8	To develop a policy framework for Lough Egish industrial development area within two years of the adoption of the development plan to include specific objectives for Development Management Standards and sustainable transport having regard to National Policy Objectives NPO 10b and NPO 23 in the National Planning Framework, and Regional Policy Objective RPO 4.24 in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly Area.
EDO 9	To consult with industry stakeholders to support the concept of the establishment of an engineering hub in County Monaghan.
EDO 10	To encourage and assist in the education, training and upskilling of the County's workforce to attract and retain employment opportunities.
EDO 11	To encourage the development of clusters in the areas of agri-business, engineering and high potential sectors such as the green economy and artificial intelligence including the provision of Data Value Hubs, at appropriate locations within the County.

Economic Development Policies	
EDP 1	Industrial and economic development shall be at appropriate locations in line with the Settlement Strategy as set out in Chapter 2 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031, and of a scale commensurate with its location.
EDP 2	Where a proposed industrial or economic development is considered to be a significant employer and/or intensive in nature, such developments shall preferably be located within the settlement envelopes of the five towns and should be in locations accessible by public and active travel methods.
EDP 3	Proposals for industrial and commercial development shall be designed to a high standard in accordance with the specific provisions set out in Chapter 15, Development Management Standards of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031, to

	provide quality environments with adequate allowance where necessary for landscaping, machinery, access, parking and circulation, and the appropriate disposal of foul and surface water.
EDP 4	The Best Available Technology (BAT) principle will be required to ensure the protection of the environment with regard to pollution mitigation in respect of proposed developments.

4.8 Agriculture and Forestry

County Monaghan has always had a very strong agricultural base, and agriculture still has an important role to play in the County's economy. The Council recognises the increasing importance of small indigenous businesses in providing employment in local rural areas, and in turn helping to stimulate economic activity and support rural communities. The Council's aims and objectives in supporting the rural economy are reflected across a number of Council documents, including the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2025-2031.

The Council's position with regard to agricultural and forestry development is to:

- Facilitate the modernisation of the agricultural industry in the County in accordance with statutory responsibilities and national guidance.
- Encourage best practice in the design and construction of agricultural installations to protect visual amenity prevent pollution, particularly in sensitive areas.
- Encourage and promote appropriate initiatives that will support existing rural communities.
- To realise the positive potential of forestry on rural economies through the promotion of appropriate policies in relation to industry and tourism.

Where an area of land is outside a settlement envelope and is not otherwise zoned as part of this Plan, the use of such land shall be deemed to be primarily agricultural. The establishment of suitable small-scale indigenous business in rural areas on family-owned land and development which would promote rural diversification, subject to compliance with Chapter 15 Development Management Standards, of this Development Plan, will be encouraged.

The importance of forestry development is recognised and whilst forestry can have both a positive and negative environmental effect, it can greatly impact on the landscape, wildlife and bio-diversity. The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) published Ireland's Forestry Strategy 2023-2030, which has the overriding objective to expand the national forest estate on both public and private land in a manner that will deliver lasting benefits for climate change, biodiversity, water quality, wood production, economic development, employment and quality of life. It is recognised that the various larger woods within the County for example, Rossmore and Lough Muckno, provide significant amenity value, offer great opportunities to develop tourism facilities, provide wonderful visitor attractions, and create sustainable local employment opportunities. Measures to support these assets in terms of sustainable tourism is further considered in Section 4.12 in this Chapter.

In 2008 the Department of Agriculture issued its 'Indicative Forestry Statement' (IFS) to provide a high-level national guidance in relation to the suitability of land for afforestation. The IFS identifies areas most suitable for planting primarily based on environmental considerations and soil-productivity. Aside from Bragan and Lough Muckno, the majority of rural County Monaghan is indicated as being suitable for commercial forestry. The IFS is currently being updated by the Department for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM).

Agriculture and Forestry Objectives	
AGFO 1	To promote the agricultural sector, appropriate rural development and rural diversification.

AGFO 2	To control, through the development management process and the relevant environmental legislation, effluent spreading on land in order to protect ground and surface water sources in the County. Developers are required to comply with relevant Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine Guidelines and the Nitrates Regulations in this regard.
AGFO 3	To protect natural waters, wildlife habitats, conservation areas, heritage areas, prominent landscape features, archaeological sites, nature designations and scenic routes within forest sites from pollution or injury.
AGFO 4	To protect access to forestry and other amenity facilities in co-operation with Coillte and private owners / operators for walking routes, nature trails for the benefit of local communities and tourists.

Agriculture and Forestry Policy	
AGFP 1	Agricultural developments shall be designed to a high standard in accordance with the specific provisions set out in Chapter 15, Development Management Standards of the County Development Plan 2025-2031, to provide quality environments with adequate allowance where necessary for landscaping, machinery, access, parking and circulation and the appropriate disposal of foul and surface water.

4.9 Extractive Industry

Mineral reserves including stone, sand and gravel are processed at many locations across County Monaghan. Gypsum is also mined at a site in the County. There is also potential for the extraction of precious and base minerals in the County. The critical role minerals have in assisting economic recovery and job creation and the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy, supporting rural development and reducing emissions, is highlighted within The Policy Statement on Mineral Exploration and Mining – Critical Raw Materials for the Circular Economy Transition, published by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) in December 2022.

Mineral extraction, such as working with stone, sand and gravel, can generate environmental issues for the surrounding area. An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) will be required as part of a planning application where certain thresholds are exceeded and in other cases where extraction is likely to have an adverse impact on the environment as determined by the Planning Authority. The cumulative effects of mineral extraction and any ancillary processes in a given area will also be considered when assessing development proposals.

Extractive Industry Objectives	
MEO 1	To promote development involving the extraction of mineral reserves and their associated processes, where the Planning Authority is satisfied that any such development will be carried out in a sustainable manner that does not adversely impact on the environment or on other land uses. Consideration in this regard shall be given to the impact of the development on the local economy.
MEO 2	To safeguard all identified locations of major mineral deposits in the County for future extraction.
MEO 3	To identify and map the location of quarries and minerals resources across County Monaghan within the first four years of the Development Plan.

4.10 Small Scale Businesses in Rural Areas

The importance of rural economies and the need to support rural communities is reflected across a number of national and regional plans and strategies. County Monaghan is in no small part defined by its rural environment and traditional settlement pattern. Given the significant and important contribution of rural areas to the County and the County's population, it is critical that the economic

development of rural areas is promoted. This includes promoting the regeneration of rural areas and the retention and promotion of rural services and enterprises. Development proposals for small scale businesses in the rural area will be assessed against relevant policies set out in Chapter 15 Development Management Standards of the Development Plan.

4.11 Home Based Business

Home based business refers to small scale commercial activities carried out at a person's home, but which are incidental to the residential use of the dwelling. With changing work practices and the advancement of technology, opportunities have developed for those who can and wish to work from home. There has also been a growing trend of remote working, which has accelerated in recent years following change in practices brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic. According to the 2022 Census, 21% of the workforce (aged 15 and over) worked from home at least one day a week. Broadband provision within the County is crucial to providing and maintaining this opportunity for the working population. The development of e-working and home-based business is important as it may contribute to improving the quality of lives and help people achieve an improved work life balance. In addition, it also benefits the environment in terms of energy conservation, reduced commuting emissions, and reduced traffic congestion.

As such, in certain circumstances, it may be appropriate to facilitate small-scale, home-based economic activity in rural areas. Such businesses would only be acceptable where it is confined, and expansion proposals would be unlikely to receive favourable consideration. Development proposals for home-based businesses will be assessed against relevant policies set out in Chapter 15 Development Management Standards of the Development Plan.

4.12 Tourism

The County's tourism sector has enormous potential for future growth. The Development Plan supports the vision of the Tourism Strategy for County Monaghan 2023-2028 which is, "to create a sustainable, engaging destination, which reflect the rich cultural heritage of this border county and its rolling landscapes of recreational opportunity, creativity and surprising natural beauty. Monaghan will be a destination of choice for those who wish to 'gentle their footprint' in the unexplored, providing authentic, place-based visitor experiences to enrich and inspire, while delivering economic benefits across the county".

Tourism is an emerging sector in County Monaghan providing both economic and social advantages to the area. A successful tourism sector can bring about other significant benefits for other sectors such as agriculture, food and drinks, accommodation providers, transport and retail. Whilst the tourism sector of the County has made considerable progress over the last decade in relation to signature tourism projects such as the Ulster Canal and Clones Marina project, the Patrick Kavanagh Centre, Rossmore Forest Park, which is the most visited park in the Country, Carrickmacross Workhouse and the estate of Castle Leslie, progress can still be made in relation to fulfilling the County's tourism potential. According to Fáilte Ireland, 336,000 domestic trips were made to Counties Monaghan and Louth in 2022, along with 750,000 bed nights. International visitor performance statistics detail that 9,700 overseas visitors came to County Monaghan in 2019, with an associated expenditure of €5.2million.

Tourism is thus an important sector of economic activity in the County and one which has the added benefit of acting as an economic driver whilst also significantly improving the quality of life of the residents of the County. County Monaghan's relative proximity to Dublin and other large settlements and its strategic Border location offers significant opportunities to expand the existing tourism offer and brand for the County. Furthermore, the County can act as an accommodation base for those visiting the east and north subject to a broadening of the available tourism accommodation profile.

Paramount to this is the creation of a tourism package that appeals to likely consumers. Accordingly, Monaghan County Council acknowledges the importance of anchor hotels and bedspaces within the County, and the retention of these assets will be encouraged during the lifetime of this Development Plan.

County Monaghan has a wide range of historical, cultural and landscape interests that, if sensitively managed, have the potential to raise the County's profile as a significant tourist destination that will strengthen the County's offering under the Ireland's Ancient East destination brand. The County enjoys a rich tapestry of natural beauty, with landscapes that enclose drumlins, lakes, rivers, wetlands, forests, and uplands, encompassing environments and habitats that are rich in biodiversity.

Based on these natural assets, County Monaghan offers an enviable array of accessible outdoor activities, including walking in Rossmore, Dartrey or Derrygorry Forests respectively, lakeshore walking and nature viewing at Lough Muckno, kayaking on the Dromore River, world class angling in any of the many lakes and rivers, or walking/cycling along sections of the Ulster Canal. Due to its distinctive borderlands setting, the County enjoys opportunities for cross-border recreational collaborations such as the restoration of the Ulster Canal as a greenway/blueway through Clones and Monaghan, the development of hiking trails across Sliabh Beagh and the development of a network of greenways through Mid-Ulster.

Allied to its natural assets, County Monaghan offers an array of cultural and creative experiences, such as the Patrick Kavanagh Centre in Inniskeen, a homage to Ireland's foremost rural poet, the music festival that celebrates the legacy of Big Tom at Castleblayney, and the living craft traditions of lacemaking to be seen in Carrickmacross and Clones. The Ulster Canal Stores in Clones and the Carrickmacross Workhouse provide glimpses into the industrial and famine past of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The award-winning estate village, Glaslough, is a destination of unique character in the north of the County. There is potential for Monaghan Town to reimagine itself as a distinctive destination town, with significant enhancements to the public realm, the redevelopment of the County Museum within the new Peace Campus, and scope for outdoor performance spaces. The town has a wonderful blend of forest activities at Rossmore Forest Park and walks along the Ulster Canal Greenway, with future potential for onward recreational linkages to other parts of the County.

By the development and enhancement of many of the cultural assets, tourism will allow towns such as Clones to grow in relation to the Ulster Canal restoration, Knockatallon, home to the County's only community-owned hotel, could become an outdoor recreational hub for Sliabh Beagh, while the ongoing expansion of cultural activities, music and small festivals will attract a sustainable number of visitors to the County on an all-year round basis.

The Council is committed to working with other relevant statutory bodies, businesses, community groups and individuals to develop a clear and sustainable approach necessary to successfully showcase the County on the widest stage possible through the promotion and facilitation of sustainable tourism development. Sustainable tourism is identified as the interaction between visitors, the industry that provides services to them, the community and culture that hosts them, and their collective impact upon the environment where it all takes place. The Development Plan has a key role in helping to support the tourism economy within the County, assisting in enhancing and maximising the contribution of tourism, particularly to the rural economy, through the development and protection of the County's natural, cultural and heritage resource potential. Strategic objectives and planning policies align with relevant Council plans and strategies such as the Tourism Strategy for County Monaghan 2023-2028, the Monaghan Destination Experience Development Plan (2022), Monaghan Destination Town Plan (2020), Ireland's Ancient East Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027 and the Monaghan Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2023 - 2029.

4.12.1 Product and Appeal

To develop an effective audience strategy, it is firstly essential to understand who the visitor to County Monaghan currently is and align these visitors to the different motivations. During consultations carried out in conjunction with the production of the Tourism Strategy for County Monaghan 2023-2028, the core audience motivations identified as a priority for the County were Social Energy, Celebration, Bonding and Reconnection.

County Monaghan's strategic vision is to create a sustainable and engaging destination which reflects the heritage of the Borderlands, the rolling landscapes, rich creativity, recreational opportunity, and natural beauty while encouraging visitors to explore by 'gentling their footprint' and letting the destination reveal its many surprising facets at an unhurried pace. This vision for the County presents a very tangible and directive lens through which all tourism development and marketing should be considered. It supports the concept of a slower, 'place-based' form of tourism that is more sustainable, requiring less resources and less travel, allowing the visitor to really immerse themselves in the rich countryside and to savour the experiences on offer.

Regional tourism strategies have been developed for each of Fáilte Ireland's regional experience brands, including Ireland's Ancient East Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027 of which County Monaghan forms a part. The purpose of the regional tourism strategy is to identify sustainable development priorities that will unlock the commercial potential of the region and generate socio-economic benefits for all.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) recognises tourism as having important potential to contribute to cross border co-operation. It advocates capturing greater international interest by the promotion of strategic attractions of scale and signature visitor attractions. Opportunities exist to maximise exposure through co-operation and themed branding bundles such as Ireland's Ancient East. Development of blueways and greenways, such as the Ulster Canal, also offers potential for an enhanced tourism offering throughout the Border area.

As outlined above, County Monaghan has a wide range of activities to offer visitors, golfing, angling, cycling, walking, rally-driving, quad-biking, equestrian activities, water skiing, canoeing, kayaking, mountain biking, wildlife trails, hill walking, etc. In addition, there are many unique attractions such as the birthplace of Patrick Kavanagh and the Brehon Brewhouse in Inniskeen, the internationally renowned Carrickmacross Lace Gallery, Clones Lace, The Tin Chapel, Laragh, St Dymphna's Well, Tydavnet, the restored Lady Ann Dawson Temple in Dartrey Forest, Lough Muckno Leisure Park in Castleblayney, and the historic houses at Castle Leslie and Hilton Park.

There is also a wide range of festivals and events which take place throughout the County, several of which have achieved national or indeed international recognition and attract significant visitor numbers, such as Monaghan Town's Country Music Festival and Carrickmacross Festival.

Furthermore, opportunities exist for sustainable tourism development through various projects to extend and design new walking and cycling routes, particularly in Inniskeen and Sliabh Beagh. The Sliabh Beagh Partnership Committee, with representation from Monaghan County Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, and Mid-Ulster District Council, was established to progress a strategic vision for this important rural area.

Proposals to facilitate the development of attractions should therefore cater for the relevant markets and acknowledge any changing trends over the period of the Development Plan. The Council, through the Tourism Unit and the Tourist Office, must continue to aggressively promote the County's attractions to the target markets, particularly via social media. The Monaghan County Development

Plan 2025-2031 will support, in so far as it can, the delivery of the Monaghan Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP) 2023-2029, the Monaghan County Council Tourism Strategy 2023-2028 and the Monaghan Destination and Experience Development Plan, and any new or updated subsequent versions. Cross-border collaboration is also hugely important for the County, as is on-going co-operation and collaboration with Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland in promoting the County both domestically and internationally.

Tourism Objectives	
TMO 1	To promote and strengthen the development of tourist and cultural offerings in Monaghan Town, as set out in the Monaghan Destination Town Plan, to help support its growth as a destination town within Ireland's Ancient East destination brand.
TMO 2	To promote the development of destination hubs in towns and villages across County Monaghan.
TMO 3	To support potential tourist and amenity attractions of appropriate scale in partnership with Fáilte Ireland and other relevant authorities, whilst having regard to the existing character, sense of place, distinctive features and environmental constraints and sensitivities of the Plan Area.
TMO 4	To promote and facilitate the sustainable use of the County's existing historical, cultural and landscape assets for tourism purposes, in an environmentally sensitive manner.
TMO 5	To support the development of angling tourism initiatives throughout the County and particularly at Lough Muckno, building on the amenity and recreational potential of the angling sector. In this regard the Council shall facilitate the development and upgrading of angler access, stands, car parks and their associated facilities, in accordance and in consultation with relevant management strategies, key stakeholders and bodies including Inland Fisheries Ireland.
TMO 6	To support the reopening of the Ulster Canal given its tourism and economic potential for County Monaghan and the wider region.
TMO 7	To support ongoing tourism product development within the County, including the continued development of the Ulster Canal project and the expansion of the Greenway along the route of the Canal through County Monaghan.
TMO 8	To facilitate, where appropriate, the provision of high-quality sustainable tourism products and services within the County where it is of a scale and nature appropriate to its setting, in order to increase the level of activity and the sustainability of the tourism market. In particular the provision of quality hotels and other forms of tourism accommodation, and the development of tourism projects, facilities, activities, and attractions shall be a priority.
TMO 9	To support and encourage the development of appropriately scaled alternative forms of tourism accommodation on suitable sites subject to Chapter 15 Development Management Standards of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.
TMO 10	To promote events, festivals and the development of linked tourist trails that showcase the wealth of natural, historical and cultural heritage of the County and contribute towards its unique identity and quality of life.
TMO 11	To promote appropriate innovation and entrepreneurship in the tourism sector, subject to compliance with other policies of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031, including those relating to settlements, amenities, environment, heritage, landscapes and technical design standards. In particular, the Council shall support the development and enhancement of the 'Borderlands' concept.
TMO 12	To promote the local food, drinks and crafts industries by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) encouraging the development of premises, (ii) promoting festivals/events, and (iii) managing an attractive public realm.

TMO 13	To promote growth in the events and festivals sector to facilitate the development of County Monaghan as an events destination.
TMO 14	To support appropriate tourism and agri-tourism initiatives in the form of on-farm visitor accommodation and associated and spin-off activities such as health farms, heritage and nature trails, pony trekking and water-based activities.
TMO 15	To encourage and support increased coordination, cohesion and linkages between the Council's own departments and relevant outside agencies such as Fáilte Ireland, Coillte and Waterways Ireland, in the promotion and assessment of tourism related developments.
TMO 16	To support and promote tourism and recreational activity including angling and country sports, to facilitate and encourage public access to water bodies, to promote County Monaghan as a catch and release on all public waters and to facilitate the provision of supporting infrastructure such as Blueway's where appropriate and sustainable.
TMO 17	To work in conjunction with adjoining local authorities to extend and design new walking and cycling routes that will promote sustainable tourism development and enhance access and links to the great outdoors of County Monaghan.
TMO 18	To seek to manage any increase in visitor numbers in order to avoid significant effects including loss of habitat and disturbance, including ensuring that any new projects, such as greenways, are a suitable distance from ecological sensitivities, such as riparian corridors.
TMO 19	To promote and support Sliabh Beagh as a sustainable destination, in a manner which is consistent with the implementation of the objectives set out in the Sliabh Beagh Masterplan.
TMO 20	To support the implementation of Ireland's Ancient East Regional Tourism Strategy 2023-2027 and to integrate its objectives into the promotion and development of tourism throughout the County.
TMO 21	To promote the inclusion of County Monaghan within Ireland's Ancient East destination brand, particularly having regard to the reopening of the Ulster Canal, which will extend the waterways network of this region into the County.
TMO 22	To promote and support the Monaghan Way and features along it such as Mullyash and Cairn as a tourism features.
TMO 23	To promote and support the County's twinning partnerships such as that with Prince Edward Island and the twinning of towns in County Monaghan with other towns and regions.
TMO 24	To promote and support the implementation of the Monaghan Destination and Experience Development Plan.
TMO 25	To promote and implement the policies and objectives of the Monaghan County Council Tourism Strategy 2023-2028 and to ensure the preparation of a new Plan upon its expiry.

Chapter 5

Community

Chapter 5 Community

5.0 Introduction

The creation of strong inclusive communities is essential to the promotion of County Monaghan as an attractive place to live and work. The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as Amended) requires that development plans shall include objectives for, ‘the integration of the planning and sustainable development of the area with the social, community and cultural requirements of the area and its population’.

Monaghan County Council has a long history of involvement in community initiatives and service provision at local level. These include libraries, leisure, recreation, arts and amenity facilities and services as well as estate management, urban and village renewal and the operation of community employment schemes. The County Development Plan aims to improve existing facilities and make provision for new facilities to enhance access to education, recreation, healthcare and cultural infrastructure. This infrastructure is essential to social cohesion and provides for a sense of community.

Community Facilities Strategic Objective	
CFSO 1	To protect and enhance existing community and recreation facilities throughout the County and to secure the provision of additional facilities subject to demand and availability of resources in cooperation with the relevant stakeholders, the Local Community Development Committee and their associated Local Economic and Community Plan.

5.1 Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)

The Local Government Reform Act 2014, sought to strengthen and expand the role of the Local Authority in local and community development, with a focus on the wellbeing and quality of life of communities. LCDC's have been established in every Local Authority area to develop, co-ordinate and implement a coherent and integrated approach to local and community development. The main function of the LCDC is to prepare, implement and monitor a six-year plan, the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP). The LCDC also acts as a conduit through which several key funding programmes are channelled locally, such as the LEADER Programme 2023-2027 for County Monaghan.

5.2 The Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP)

Monaghan County Council's LECP 2023-2029 has been developed in the context of the revised Local Economic and Community Plans Guidelines, issued by the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH), 2021.

This new Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) for County Monaghan is aligned with key policies at local, regional, and national level. These include the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025, Monaghan Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019-2024, A Digital Strategy for County Monaghan 2021-2025 as well as the Northern and Western Regional Assembly Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (NWRA RSES), the National Planning Framework (NPF) (2018), and the National Climate Action Plan 2023. In contrast to the 2015-2021 LECP, the new LECP covers both community and economic elements in an integrated and combined way that reflects the cross-cutting nature of elements across the goals, objectives, outcomes, and actions.

The community elements of the LECP have been prepared and approved by the LCDCC and include goals, objectives, outcomes, and actions related to health and wellbeing, education and training, sustainability and the County's heritage and creative sector.

The economic elements of the LECP have been prepared and approved by the Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) for Economic Development and Enterprise Support and include goals, objectives, outcomes, and actions related to driving job creation and increasing employment, supporting key sectors in the County including agriculture, improving transport infrastructure and services, promoting entrepreneurship, and attracting investment.

Furthermore, a wide range of stakeholders, including the community and various agencies and groups, have provided input to the development of the new LECP to ensure that it reflects the needs and ambitions of the entire County.

The aim of the Monaghan LECP 2023-2029 is, 'to develop and promote social and economic opportunities for all people living in and visiting County Monaghan'.

Following the detailed analysis of the socio-economic profile of the County, a consultation process and review of existing policy, six high level goals have been adopted for the Monaghan LECP:

1. Support and promote diversity, equity and respect, to enhance inclusion and wellbeing in communities across the County.
2. Transition to a more sustainable County based around climate action, biodiversity, decarbonisation, clean energy and environmental responsibility.
3. Increase access to training and educational resources to promote opportunities for personal and professional development.
4. Prioritise the targeted regeneration of the County's towns and villages to address economic and community decline in rural areas.
5. Grow and diversify the economy and attract and create high value sustainable employment.
6. Foster, develop and invest in arts, culture, and the creative sector and unlock County Monaghan's tourism potential to support economic growth and sustainable development.

5.3 Community Facilities

The importance of community participation in the improvement and maintenance of community facilities is recognised by Monaghan County Council. The community voluntary sector in association with relevant statutory bodies sustains vital facilities for the population, playing a vital role in the future development of the County. Community buildings and facilities are vital to fostering a sense of community identity and wellbeing. Continued growth in population has implications for community services as the needs of the population base change. It is essential that through the planning process adequate measures are taken to secure community services to improve the quality of life experienced by the population of County Monaghan. A flexible and supportive approach will be adopted towards proposals for community facilities on suitable sites within other land use zoning categories, where such a proposal is suitably located within the settlement boundary and is easily accessible for all sections of the community. Monaghan County Council shall continue to provide support for local and community initiatives to prevent and mitigate Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence in accordance with the 3rd National Strategy on Domestic Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Implementation Plan to ensure there is zero tolerance in our society for domestic, sexual and gender-based violence.

Community Facilities Objective	
CFO 1	To assist and promote community groups in determining local projects that will engage and support local community development, and to support them in any funding application opportunities which may arise.

5.4 Educational Facilities

The provision of national and post primary schools in County Monaghan are the responsibility of the Department of Education (DoE). Third Level Education, Youth Reach services, Adult Education and literacy promotion are all operated by the Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board (CMETB). The Council will continue to ensure that school sites are made available as required, as well as providing for the expansion of existing school sites by land use zoning provision and by any other means as may be necessary.

The provision of high quality third level education facilities in County Monaghan is critical to retaining the youth population, who might otherwise leave the County to attend third level institutions elsewhere. It also benefits local employers and industry by providing skilled graduates for the job market. The enhancement of third level facilities provides scope for effective engagement between institutions and employers through access to research, development and innovation.

Educational Facilities Objectives	
CFO 2	To facilitate, promote and encourage the development of all levels of educational facilities in County Monaghan with a particular focus on third level and further education facilities.
CFO 3	To ensure that suitable and sufficient lands are available in appropriate and accessible areas in the larger settlements of County Monaghan for the provision, expansion and/or improvement of educational facilities, with a particular focus on third level and further education.
CFO 4	To co-operate with relevant educational authorities in developing additional facilities in the towns to improve the availability of further education.

Educational Facilities Policies	
CFP 1	To restrict development adjoining existing public educational facilities which would hinder the planned future expansion of such facilities and any associated ancillary infrastructure.
CFP 2	To facilitate the implementation of the Department of Education programme of capital investment in schools in line with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and in compliance with the following, or any subsequent related publications, in terms of location, siting and design: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The provision of Schools and the Planning System – A Code of Practice for Planning Authorities, the Department of Education and Science and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, January 2020. b) Technical Guidance Documents (TGD) TGD20 - TGD27, Department of Education (as amended). c) Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, January 2024.

5.5 Sports Facilities

County Monaghan has a strong sporting tradition and physical recreation is an important part of everyday life and wellbeing. The high-quality natural amenities which exist throughout the County provide unique spaces for physical recreation, particularly in the larger parks. The Peace Link in Clones is an iconic state of the art sports facility with an extensive range of classes and facilities that will reach

out to all ages within the County and beyond. The strong tradition for Gaelic sports within County Monaghan continues to thrive and the County training grounds at Cloghan provide a central headquarters for all Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) activities within the County.

Monaghan Sports Partnership was established in 2006 under the direction of the Irish Sports Council (now known as Sport Ireland) and operates under a Heads of Agreement between Sport Ireland and Monaghan County Council to increase levels of participation in sport and physical activity in County Monaghan for all ages and abilities. This Development Plan supports this partnership approach to the delivery of sports and recreational activities and will support the provision of additional facilities at suitable locations throughout the County. The National Sports Policy 2018-2027 sets out the targets of government in this regard, including the development of a Local Sports Plan in every County that will include the identification and assessment of sports facilities in the County to allow long term planning in the sector. Action 22 of the National Sports Policy states that ‘as part of the Local Sport Plans (LSPs), Local Authorities will also lead on other collaborative initiatives to improve access locally e.g. Local Authorities and LSPs will combine to see how recreational areas can be utilised more fully by local communities for sport and physical activity’.

Sports Facilities Objective	
CFP 3	To promote the assessment, provision, improvement and expansion of sports facilities within the County, subject to normal planning criteria and the proper planning and sustainable development of the County.

5.6 Arts and Culture

Monaghan County Council aims to encourage and assist in the development of the Arts within the County, supporting the ongoing development of cultural infrastructure and encouraging the provision of appropriate public art in all forms throughout the County. The Arts Development Plan ‘Renewing the Case for the Arts’ provides a five-year framework for strategic actions to be implemented on behalf of Monaghan County Council. The Council will support the ongoing development of cultural infrastructure in the County with the support from relevant Government Departments.

Monaghan County Councils shared strategic actions in Arts delivery with the Arts Council are:

- **Supporting Artists** - Value and support the work of artists and extend the range of opportunities for artists to develop their practice.
- **Young people and the Arts** - Increase opportunities for children and young people to create, access and participate in great art.
- **Creating Capacity** - Investing in the professional development of venues, festivals and organisations providing high-quality arts experiences.

Cultural facilities, libraries, and arts services all play an important role in aiding local communities to become better places to live, where people feel connected and a part of the broader community. County Monaghan boasts a wealth of history and culture with a range of established heritage groups, cultural festivals and activities operating successfully throughout the County. Through the Arts Office, the Council works to nurture and create the conditions in which great art can happen, while at the same time ensuring that as many people as possible can engage with the arts and discover what art can do for them. The recently opened Monaghan Peace Campus is a shared community space encompassing a four-storey community building and parking in the centre of Monaghan Town, which includes a cultural heritage centre, temporary exhibition/event space and external event space. In addition to this, the three principal venues for arts activities within County Monaghan are, The Market House, The Garage Theatre in Monaghan Town and Iontas in Castleblayney. Smaller venues at, the Courthouse Clones, the Workhouse Carrickmacross, Patrick Kavanagh Centre Inniskeen as well as, the Libraries and the County Museum also provide alternative spaces for arts projects. Furthermore, the

Tyrone Guthrie Centre at Annaghmakerrig is a unique feature of the artistic landscape in County Monaghan while the newly renovated Clones Arts Studios at the Old Clones Post Office provide additional opportunities for residents and the wider community.

Through the Creative Ireland Programme, Creative Communities, supports the partnership between the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media (DTCAGSM), the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH), and Ireland's Local Authorities. This partnership enables citizens and communities to explore their culture and creativity at local level and, where appropriate, leverage that creativity to strengthen wellbeing, advance social cohesion and support economic development.

The program 'Creative Communities' is also innovative in deploying creativity to achieve greater integration across targeted policy priorities. This has delivered new creative engagement initiatives in relation to, for example, children and young people, older people, climate action and local economies. Individuals' and communities' perception about the role and value of culture and creativity as central to our wellbeing in its broadest sense is being enhanced.

The opportunity embraced within the Monaghan Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023– 2027 is to support people's participation, inclusion, and expression within communities, and further strengthen local creative economies. It enables local people to enjoy creativity, arts, and culture on their own doorstep, which facilitates access to creative and collaborative learning, and becomes a place where artists and creators can prosper and contribute to society, by placing culture and creativity at the heart of the community. Monaghan County Council supports the practice of creativity in whatever form or medium and recognises that a vibrant cultural sector can enhance the socio-economic achievement of our County. It also recognises that creativity and culture can play a role in furthering our aspirations in respect of climate change, health and wellbeing. To this end, these Creative Ireland Pillars will be woven into the strategic priorities developed for the pillars of Creative Communities, Creative Youth and Creative Industries.

The Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021 was enacted in December 2021 to introduce changes to the Official Languages Act 2003. The purpose of this legislation is to increase the obligations on public bodies to promote the use of Irish language for official purposes.

This new legislation is a strengthening of the Official Languages Act 2003, and it is widely recognised that it will make a significant contribution to the quality of services in Irish provided to the public by State bodies. The key objectives of the Act are as follows:

- 20% of recruits to the public sector will be competent in the Irish language by the end of 2030,
- All public services provided in and for Gaeltacht areas will be provided through Irish,
- All public offices in the Gaeltacht will operate through the medium of Irish, and
- A National Plan for Irish language Public Services will be developed.

Under the Act, it is intended to improve and increase the provision of public services through the medium of Irish, as well as create significant employment opportunities for those with a competency in the language. Through this work, it is hoped to greatly increase the Irish language customer experience, empowering Irish speakers to use the language in all aspects of their daily life - particularly in their dealings with the State. Monaghan County Council aims to promote Irish Language in accordance with the Act.

Arts and Culture Objectives	
CFO 6	To encourage and assist in the development of the arts within County Monaghan, to support the ongoing development of cultural infrastructure, and to encourage the provision of public art in all forms throughout the County.
CFO 7	To support, promote and invest in the arts, entertainment, language and culture across the County by facilitating development in appropriate locations.
CFO 8	To support the rollout and awareness of the Monaghan Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-2027 in a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach.
CFO 9	To take a lead role in identifying, supporting and the development of, cultural facilities in the County.
CFO 10	To continue to support and develop greater access to our historical and heritage resources through an online infrastructure which collates, preserves, and celebrates County Monaghan heritage and culture and to develop an Archive Strategy.
CFO 11	To promote the new Peace Campus facility which includes a library, museum, youth, and community services.

5.7 Monaghan County Museum

Monaghan County Museum opened its doors to the public in 1974 becoming the first full time staffed, Local Authority funded museum in the Republic of Ireland. Monaghan County Museum is part of a network of twelve Local Authority museums around the Country that are all part of the Local Authority Museums Network (LAMN).

For over 50 years the award-winning museum has diversified to match the needs of a changing community. The museum has a professional commitment to excellence in caring for and displaying County Monaghan's rich culture and heritage, as well as making its collection as accessible as possible, both intellectually and physically.

The Museum was originally housed in the Courthouse in the centre of town; however, following a fire which gutted the building in 1981 the collection was rescued and temporarily moved to the Christian Brothers Secondary School. It was stored there temporarily, and a limited display was continued until the move to Hill Street in August 1986. The gallery held temporary displays until the fully refurbished museum was opened in June 1990. The Hill Street building was originally two large town houses that underwent extensive reconstruction and offered a unique experience to visitors as they explored the history of the County in the permanent exhibition galleries until June 2023. Following a full year's closure, which involved the painstaking logging, categorising and relocation of over 50,000 artefacts accumulated over the Museum's 50-year history, Monaghan County Museum now has a new home at the state-of-the-art Peace Campus in Monaghan Town, which opened in June 2024.

5.8 Library Services

Monaghan County Council provides a countywide network of library services providing accessible, neutral spaces for communities to avail of a range of activities and services and plays an important role in the social, economic and cultural wellbeing of the County. The library service was first established in 1928 and was the first service in Ireland to introduce a rural mobile library in 1956. Monaghan County Library Service is administered from a state-of-the-art modern facility at the County Library Headquarters in Clones. Additional libraries are in Monaghan Town, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney and Ballybay. A focus to expand services of the County Monaghan library service continues with public ICT facilities, WiFi access as well as the new Digital Library Service, Community Outreach and Education Programming, Sensory Programming, Local History and Genealogy, Creative and Cultural Programming, My Open Library, Early Years and Schools Service and upgrading of buildings/facilities.

Library Services Objectives	
CFO 12	To support the continued improvement to the library service in County Monaghan to meet the current and future needs of all members of the community and to strengthen links with socially excluded members and groups of our society.
CFO 13	To implement the County Monaghan Library Strategy 2024-2028 and any new or updated/subsequent version(s).
CFO 14	To promote and develop existing and new library, community, and cultural spaces within the County.

5.9 Childcare Facilities

Childcare may be defined as full day care, session facilities and services for pre-school children and school going children, during out of school hours. Childcare facilities are an essential element of the economic and social wellbeing of our population in that, they enable people to return to the workforce and promote social inclusion. Furthermore, the provision of high-quality childcare contributes to the social and educational development of children as well as providing opportunities for employment and education for those who work within these services.

Monaghan County Childcare Committee (MCCC) is the local agents of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) and are the support and advice agency for Early Learning and Care (ELC), Childminders and School Age Childcare (SAC) services in County Monaghan. They support the development and delivery of accessible high-quality early childhood care and education services throughout County Monaghan for the overall benefit of children and their parents. Through the Development Plan, Monaghan County Council will support the MCCC in the delivery of additional childcare places mainly by zoning lands for community facilities in suitable locations within settlements.

Every effort should be made to locate ELC and SAC services in the vicinity of concentrations of workplaces, such as industrial estates, business parks and any other locations where there are significant numbers working. However, it is acknowledged that given the rural nature of the population of County Monaghan, where over two thirds of the population live in rural areas, consideration will be given to established rural communities and the creation of private childcare provision that meet policy (CFP 3) along with the policy standards set out in Chapter 15 Development Management Standards.

The Childcare Facility Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001) advocate a more pro-active role by the Council in the promotion of increased childcare provision. The guidelines recommend that a twenty-unit creche or childcare facility should be provided for every seventy-five (75) houses within new residential developments. Where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that there are sufficient childcare spaces available in the locality, developers will be required, in lieu, to provide other community benefits by way of direct provision or financial contribution agreed with the Council.

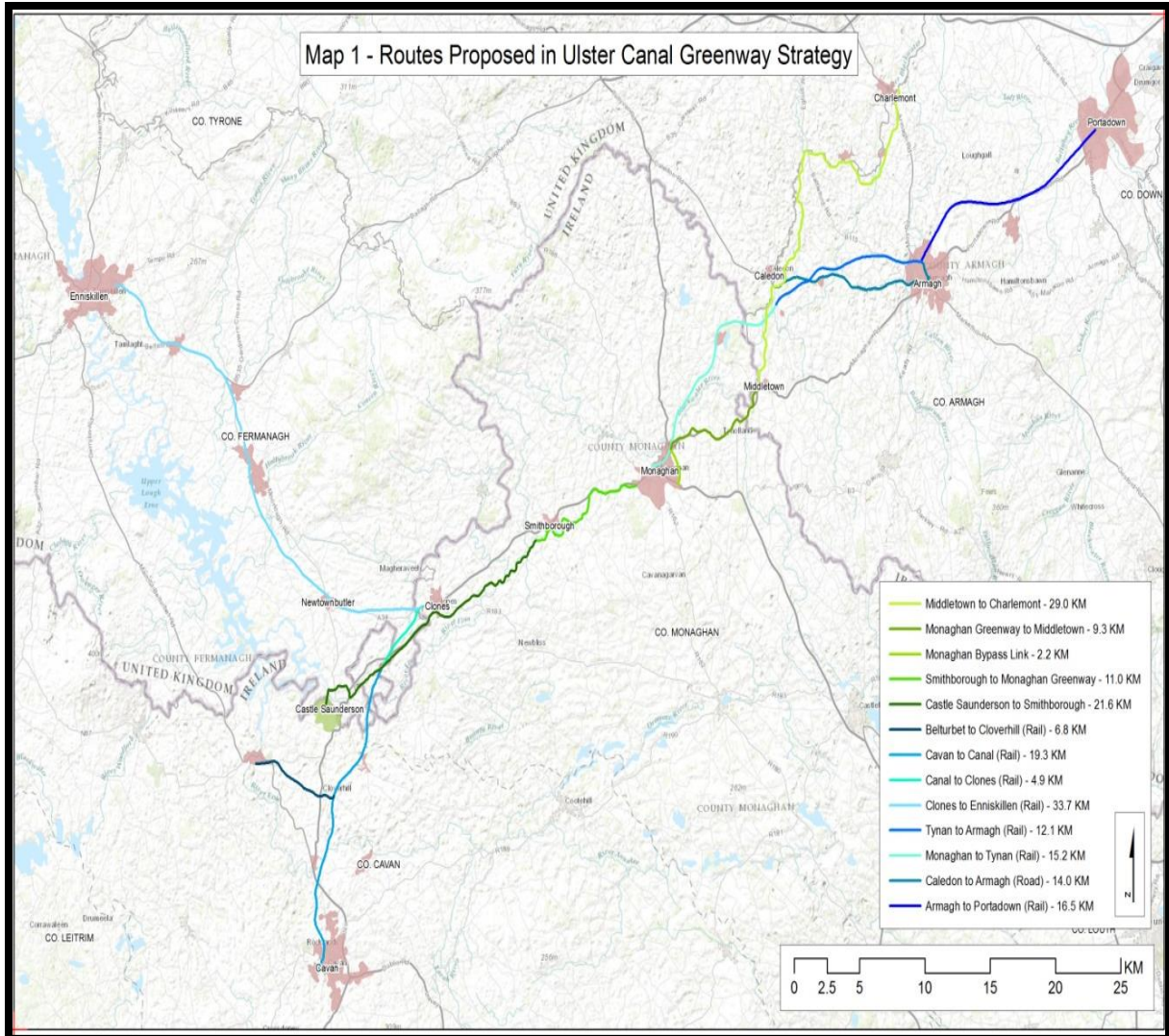
Childcare Facilities Policies	
CFP 3	To facilitate and support, where a need is identified, and in cooperation with the Monaghan County Childcare Committee, the provision of childcare facilities in appropriate locations, and where possible within towns and villages and/or adjacent to existing community facilities to facilitate localised provision, accessibility and sustainable development.

5.10 Cycling and Walking

In relation to cycling and walking, consideration must be given to the distinct ways in which these modes are used in everyday life. In keeping with the principles of sustainable development, they are the most realistic alternative modes of transport to the private car within County Monaghan, where

public transport provision is low. The Council must consider solutions which enable the population to walk or cycle instead of using the car. There has been an increase in the number of greenways and walking festivals nationally, demonstrating that these types of recreational facilities can make a significant contribution to the tourism offering in County Monaghan.

Figure 5.1 Ulster Canal Greenway Network Route Map



Source: Ulster Canal Greenway Strategy

Monaghan County Council has prepared a Walking and Cycling Strategy for the County in response to the increasing demand from the community sector for more walking and cycling infrastructure and amenities, both to facilitate leisure activity and commuting. Strategies have also been prepared in Monaghan, Carrickmacross and Castleblayney Towns. The County's first Greenway opened in 2013, when Phase 1 of the Ulster Canal Greenway, a 4.2km section through Monaghan Town opened. Since then, Monaghan County Council has developed proposals for a long-distance Ulster Canal Greenway Network in partnership with Waterways Ireland, Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council, Cavan County Council, Fermanagh & Omagh District Council and Mid Ulster District Council. The 190km Ulster Canal Greenway Network Strategy proposes to develop a greenway along the towpath of the Ulster Canal and along several disused railway lines to connect the main towns and villages throughout the region. The Ulster Canal Greenway Network is intended to be delivered on a

phased basis. Phase 2 (Monaghan to Northern Ireland Border) is scheduled for completion in 2025 and Phase 3 (Clones to Monaghan) is scheduled for completion in 2027.

Cycling and Walking Objectives	
CFO 15	To promote and facilitate the sustainable development of walkways, cycleways and recreational routes, to suit all levels of ability, in appropriate locations throughout the County, in accordance with the objectives of the County Walking and Cycling Strategy 2021-2026 and any new or updated/subsequent version(s), having due regard to relevant environmental considerations, including the need to protect and enhance biodiversity, prevent habitat fragmentation, and maintain and enhance ecological connectivity.
CFO 16	To promote and encourage the sustainable development of walks and cycle ways in accordance with the National Sustainable Mobility Policy (SMP), Department of Transport, 2022 and to protect established routes from development which would adversely impact upon them.
CFO 17	To develop, in co-operation and consultation with adjoining Local Authorities and cross border bodies, sections of the Ulster Canal Greenway Network to connect the main urban centres throughout central Ulster.
CFO 18	To work with in conjunction with adjoining local authorities including Meath, Louth and Cavan to develop the border kingdoms route across Dundalk, Inniskeen, Carrickmacross, Kingscourt, Nobber, Navan and Drogheda and the Lakelands Greenway.
CFO 19	To support the provision of safe routes between schools and surrounding residential areas to facilitate safe routes to schools, park and stride and other active travel initiatives.

5.11 Recreation, Parks and Public Open Spaces

The importance of outdoor recreation spaces and facilities are recognised by the County Council as being essential for the health and wellbeing of our population. The wealth of natural amenities such as lakes, rivers, forest and trails make the County an ideal location for outdoor sport and recreation, both active and passive. However, these amenities need to be augmented by parks, playing fields, playground and greenways for walking and cycling that should be accessible to both the rural and urban population of the County. Such facilities need to be protected from unacceptable development for current and future users. Monaghan County Council will therefore resist development on, or the removal of existing playing fields, pitches and designated areas of public open space.

Recreation, Parks and Public Open Spaces Objectives	
CFO 20	To protect established/historic railway corridors and other disused transport infrastructure routes throughout the County, primarily for strategic infrastructure provision and recreational development. Where these corridors have already been compromised by development, adjacent lands which could provide opportunities to bypass such an impediment and reconnect these routes for amenity purposes shall be protected for this purpose.
CFO 21	To protect and enhance public open spaces and established recreational green areas.
CFO 22	To support the protection of lands zoned as amenity/open space to resist the loss of existing designated areas of public open space except where a higher quality of designated open space is being provided in lieu of its loss.
CFO 23	To promote and support the development of cycling facilities, including a potential pump track, at appropriate locations in the County.

5.12 Public Rights of Way

It is a requirement of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) (the Act) to include an objective for the preservation of public rights of way by the identification on maps and by listing of such public rights of way. Public rights of way constitute an important recreational amenity for local people and visitors and their enjoyment of landscapes, natural heritage as well as providing linkages to lakes and forests. The Council recognises the importance of protecting existing public rights of way and their role in facilitating the development of walking trails in areas of high amenity value. Several walking routes exist throughout the County which provide important access networks. This is an important recreational resource, the integrity of which should be protected. The impact of any proposed development on these routes should be taken into account when considering applications for permission for developments in their vicinity.

Public Rights of Way Policy	
CFO 24	To identify and preserve existing public rights of way to recreational areas and to commence the process of mapping and listing public rights of way in the County within the first four years of this Development Plan, under the provisions of Section 14 of the Act 2000 (as amended).

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Chapter 6

**Heritage,
Conservation and
Landscape**

Chapter 6

Heritage, Conservation and Landscape

6.0 Introduction

Heritage is a broad concept, as defined in the Heritage Act, 1995, it includes monuments, archaeological and heritage objects, architectural heritage, flora, fauna, habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, heritage gardens, parks and inland waterways. Heritage incorporates both natural and built resources, and in addition to these tangible physical expressions of heritage there is an intangible cultural heritage which includes music, language and folklore.

Heritage is an asset inherited from our ancestors which we must preserve, protect and enhance for future generations to enjoy. The natural, built and cultural heritage all around us contributes to our sense of place and biodiversity and can be used as an asset for community engagement, economic development and as a resource for tourism and an improved quality of life.

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires that planning authorities make provision in their Development Plans for the protection of landscape character including the preservation of views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty and interest. In addition, Planning Authorities are also required to protect structures which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

The protection and management of the County's natural and built heritage is a shared responsibility. Monaghan County Council is committed to working with relevant agencies, communities and individuals to ensure the conservation, protection and enhancement of our natural and built heritage can be realised.

Heritage Ireland 2030 – A Framework for Heritage and Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023 – 2030 set out strategies and actions for the conservation and management of our heritage. A key feature of both plans is an enhanced role for Local Authorities in heritage management and awareness. The catalyst for this is through the preparation and implementation of County Heritage Plans and Biodiversity Action Plans.

Biodiversity is an abbreviation of the term biological diversity and refers to the variety of life that can be found on earth. Biodiversity is a key facet of sustainable development and its protection and preservation is a principle objective of international conventions, and European and National Legislation.

The over-arching aim of the Development Plan is to protect and enhance our natural and built heritage in an appropriate sustainable manner for the benefit of future generations.

Heritage, Conservation, Biodiversity and Landscape Strategic Objective	
HCLSO 1	To promote and encourage the conservation and preservation of the County's natural environment, cultural heritage and amenities in accordance with legislation, plans and policies developed to specifically address these areas and to ensure a rich cultural landscape, healthy environment and the full provision of ecosystems services in the County.

6.1 Heritage Plans and Biodiversity Plan

Heritage Plans set out objectives and actions to help understand, promote and conserve the heritage of the County for the future. The Heritage Plan comprises a five-year work plan which involves a local partnership with a range of individuals and organisations in order to be realised. The Heritage Council is a key national partner in this relationship, as it provides technical and financial support to develop and deliver the Heritage Plans.

Previous heritage plans have played an important role in facilitating research, education, awareness, and training in relation to our built and natural heritage. The collection and dissemination of data in relation to species, habitats, buildings, and places provides for evidence-based decision making and the setting out of priorities and objectives for the future. The Heritage Plans have been effective in improving our knowledge on aspects of our natural heritage such as wetlands, fen species, hedgerows, dragonflies, and butterflies, amongst others, and in promoting best conservation policy and practice. In relation to built heritage, survey work and recording has been carried out in relation to our industrial architecture of mills, railways and canals, early medieval sites with church ruins, historic graveyards, and more recent church architecture.

It is important to protect and preserve the industrial built heritage of the Ulster Canal. It is also important to interpret and present the story of this linking inland waterway to the local community and the wider population. The development of greenways along the Ulster Canal will bring a better appreciation to the canal's significance in the inland waterway network and of its heritage and will enable the stories of the canals to be told in the community.

The Monaghan Biodiversity and Heritage Strategic Plan 2020-2025 combines the areas of heritage and biodiversity into a strategic plan for County Monaghan. It contains thirteen priority themes for the County. These are aspects of heritage and biodiversity that are especially resonant or important for County Monaghan. An action plan is an integral part of the Strategic Plan that will be undertaken over the next five years to enable positive outcomes for our biodiversity and heritage.

6.2 Protection of Biodiversity including Natura 2000 Network

This Development Plan sets out to contribute towards the protection of designated ecological sites including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Salmonid Waters, Shellfish Areas, Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments, Flora Protection Order sites, Wildlife Sites (including Nature Reserves), certain entries to the Water Framework Directive Register of Protected Areas, Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs), and Wildfowl Sanctuaries (refer to Wildlife Order S.I. 192 of 1979). Furthermore, it sets out to contribute towards compliance with relevant EU Environmental Directives and applicable national legislation, policies, plans and guidelines, including the following and any new or updated/subsequent versions:

- EU Directives, including the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended)¹, the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)², the Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC)³, the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (2011/92/EU, as amended by 2014/52/EC), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC).
- National legislation, including the Wildlife Act 1976⁴, the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and associated Regulations, Environmental Impact Assessment

¹ Including Annex I habitats, Annex II species and their habitats and Annex IV species and their breeding sites and resting places (wherever they occur).

² Including Annex I species and other regularly occurring migratory species, and their habitats (wherever they occur).

³ Including protected species and natural habitats.

⁴ Including species of flora and fauna and their key habitats.

Regulations, the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000, the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 477 of 2011) and the European Communities (Environmental Liability) Regulations 2008⁵.

- National policy guidelines including the Landscape Assessment Draft Guidelines 2000, the Environmental Impact Assessment Sub-Threshold Development Guidelines 2003, Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines 2004 and the Appropriate Assessment Guidance 2010.
- Catchment and water resource management Plans, including the relevant River Basin Management Plan and Flood Risk Management Plan.
- Biodiversity Plans and guidelines, including the 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023 – 2030.
- All-Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021 - 2025.
- Freshwater Pearl Mussel Regulations (S.I. 296 of 2009) (including any associated designated areas or management plans).
- Ireland's Environment - An Integrated Assessment (EPA, 2020) and to make provision where appropriate to address the report's goals and challenges.

Heritage Conservation and Landscape Objectives	
HCLO 1	To implement in partnership with all relevant stakeholders the objectives and actions detailed within the Monaghan Biodiversity and Heritage Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025 and any new or updated/subsequent versions.
HCLO 2	To contribute as appropriate towards the protection of designated sites in compliance with relevant EU Directives and applicable National Legislation.
HCLO 3	To recognise that nature conservation is not just confined to designated sites and acknowledge the need to protect non-designated habitats and landscapes, and to conserve their biological diversity and provide ecosystem services.
HCLO 4	To support the implementation of any relevant recommendations contained in the National Biodiversity Action Plan 2020 - 2030, Heritage Ireland 2030, the All – Ireland Pollination Plan 2021 - 2025 and the National Peatlands Strategy and any new or updated/subsequent versions.

Heritage Conservation and Landscape Policy	
HCLP 1	No projects giving rise to significant cumulative, direct, indirect or secondary impacts on Natura 2000 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 or projects ⁶).

⁵ Including protected species and natural habitats.

⁶ Except as provided for in Section 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.

6.3 Landscape

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 and/or human factors”.

County Monaghan’s unique drumlin landscape is encapsulated in its Irish name Muineacháin which means “little hills or shrubbery”. The landscape is varied to include the uplands of Sliabh Beagh to the north of the County and Mullyash to the east. In the central part of the County, a series of low-lying lakes and wetlands extend from west to east. To the north and south of this belt of lakes, the landscape character consists of high drumlin farmland.

The landscape in County Monaghan is different to the more open landscapes encountered elsewhere in the Country due to the deposition of drumlins at the end of the last glaciations. The landscape vegetation has evolved over centuries due to changes in agricultural practices, settlement patterns and infrastructural development.

The Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 has an essential role in ensuring the protection and enhancement of the landscape whilst facilitating economic development.

6.4 Landscape Character Assessment

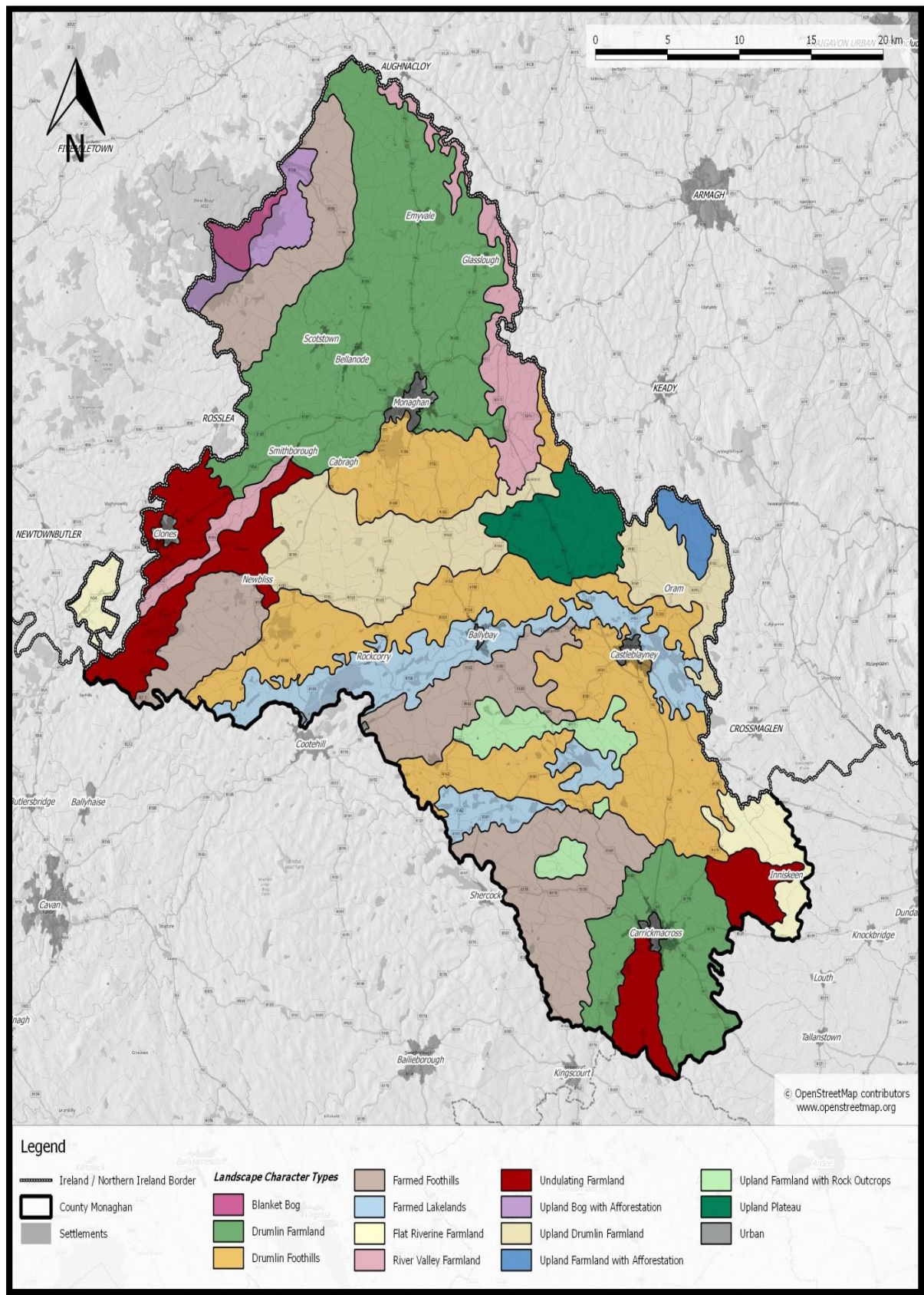
The European Landscape Convention was ratified in Ireland in 2004 and required EU member states to adopt national measures to promote landscape, planning, protection and management.

In recognition of this, Monaghan County Council commissioned the preparation of a Landscape Character Assessment of the County in 2008. This study was carried out in accordance with the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government Guidelines. The purpose of Landscape Character Assessment is to provide the foundation for policy formation and decision making for landscape management. The Landscape Character Assessment identified nine landscape character areas in County Monaghan which represent geographical areas with a particular landscape type or types.

The Landscape Character Assessment identified the main forces for landscape change in the present age as, changing agricultural practices, forestry, rural housing, infrastructural developments, power lines, telecommunications masts, wind farms, quarrying and tourism/recreation.

Landscape Character Assessment Objective	
LCO 1	To review and update the Landscape Character Assessment in tandem with the preparation of the Renewable Energy Strategy for County Monaghan.

Figure 6.1 Landscape Character Types



Source: Landscape Character Assessment (Monaghan County Council)

6.4.1 Kavanagh Country

The work of Patrick Kavanagh frequently references the distinctive landscape features of his homeland. Kavanagh County: A Literary Landscape Character Assessment and Management Plan was prepared in 2012 and includes a site inventory which represents the sites referred to in his work and ones that present the most intact physical evidence of the places that appear in the literature. The aim of the plan is to guide development and protect access to Kavanagh Country. It is considered that, where appropriate, regard to any relevant recommendations contained within the plan should be had when assessing proposals for development located within Kavanagh Country.

Heritage, Conservation and Landscape Objective	
HCLO 5	To promote the development of Kavanagh Country as a cultural destination.

6.5 National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025

The National Landscape Strategy provides a strategic policy framework for ensuring compliance with the European Landscape Convention and establishes principles for protecting, enhancing and managing the landscape in the context of change. To achieve this a range of objectives and actions are set out in the strategy. The National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025 will be implemented and co-ordinated by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DAHG) in partnership with all key stakeholders.

One of the actions identified is the preparation of a new National Landscape Character Assessment. It is envisaged that this will inform the publication of Guidelines on Local Landscape Character Assessment. It is likely following the publication of these guidelines that the existing Landscape Character Assessment for County Monaghan will require review to take account of the recommendations contained in these guidelines.

Heritage, Conservation and Landscape Objectives	
HCLO 6	To ensure the preservation of the County's landscapes, by having regard to the character, value and sensitivity of the landscape as identified in the County Monaghan Landscape Character Assessment (2008), and any new or updated/subsequent versions, when assessing development proposals.
HCLO 7	To co-operate with adjoining local authorities north and south of the Border, to ensure that the natural environment is maintained in a sustainable manner, to encourage a collaborative and consistent policy approach with adjoining areas on matters of environmental and landscape protection, and to identify threats to the integrity of such sites through a transboundary approach.
HCLO 8	To contribute towards the protection of County and local level landscape designations from incompatible developments.
HCLO 9	To support, as appropriate, any relevant recommendations contained in the National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025 and any new or updated/subsequent versions.

Heritage Conservation and Landscape Policies	
HCLP 2	To protect the landscapes and natural environments of the County by ensuring that any new developments in designated sensitive rural landscapes do not detrimentally impact on the character, integrity, distinctiveness or scenic value of the area. Any development which could unduly impact upon such landscapes shall be resisted.

Heritage Conservation and Landscape Policies	
HCLP 3	Proposals for development that have the potential to significantly adversely impact upon these designations shall be accompanied by an assessment of the potential landscape and visual impacts of the proposed development. This shall demonstrate that landscape impacts have been anticipated and avoided to a level consistent with the sensitivity of the landscape and the nature of the designation.

6.6 Habitat Designation and Protection

6.6.1 European Sites

There are a range of European and National designations which exist to protect our most important and ecologically valuable habitats. At the European level these include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). SACs are prime wildlife conservation areas which require designation and protection for habitats in accordance with the EU Habitats Directive 1992. SPAs refer to the designation and protection of endangered species of wild birds in accordance with the EU Birds Directive 1979. Legislation requires that appropriate steps are taken to avoid the deterioration of these unique habitats.

Table 6.1 European Designated Sites (SACs and SPAs)

Designation Type	Location	Qualifying Interest
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	Kilroosky Lough Cluster, Clones (Kilroosky Lough, Dummy's Lough, Burdautian Lough, Summerhill Lough, Ramages Lough)	White Clawed Crayfish
Special Protection Area (SPA)	Sliabh Beagh (Bragan Mountain)	Hen Harrier
Natural Heritage Area (NHA)	Eshbrack Bog NHA	Eshbrack is an extensive upland site of high conservation value located about 8 km north-west of Scotstown, County Monaghan. The intact blanket bog areas feature hummock/hollow complexes and flushed slopes. The wide range of associated habitats, which include upland grassland on peaty soil, heath, reed swamp, freshwater marsh, scrub and wet broadleaved woodland, add considerably to the conservation value of the site. Although large parts of the site have been affected by hand cutting and mechanical peat extraction, much of the cutover areas are now regenerating with peat forming communities. The occurrence of Cranberry (<i>Vaccinium oxycoccus</i>), an uncommon species of blanket bog and of restricted distribution in the county, is also of note. Fen communities occur infrequently, and are confined to lake edges, wet flushed basins and valley slopes.

6.6.2 National Designated Sites

At national level designated sites are called Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs) and proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs). To date there is one designated NHA in County Monaghan, Eshbrack Bog on Sliabh Beagh, which is an important area of blanket bog. This area also has SPA status as it is a breeding area for the Hen Harrier, a protected species under the EU Birds Directive. Sliabh Beagh and the associated bog habitat is an overwintering area for Greenland White Fronted Geese. There are other important species which inhabit the bog including the critically endangered Curlew, Snipe and Golden Plover. The conservation of this natural habitat for a range of flora and fauna is vitally important. Two important conservation initiatives are happening on Sliabh Beagh. It is part of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Curlew Conservation Programme, which involves locally based teams of advisors, champions and nest protection officers, working closely with landowners and other local interests, to protect Curlew nesting attempts and to improve habitat quality. In addition, Monaghan County Council was a partner in an INTERREG V project called Collaborative Action for Natura Network (CANN), which worked to conserve the blanket bog on Sliabh Beagh, the Hen Harrier, and Kilroosky Lough Cluster.

It is important to note that normal exempt development provisions do not apply in Natural Heritage Areas.

Table 6.2 National Designated Sites - Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs)

Designation Type	Location	Feature of Interest
Eshbrack Bog NHA	Sliabh Beagh/Bragan Mountain	Blanket Bog

The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) has proposed 38 additional Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) in County Monaghan. The process of designation of NHAs is ongoing, with new sites being added or existing sites being upgraded as more information becomes available. A full list of pNHAs in County Monaghan is set out in Table 6.3 below. These sites are protected under the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

Table 6.3 National Designated Sites - Proposed National Heritage Areas (pNHAs).

Site Code	Site Name	Description
000001	Dromore Lakes	A group of ten main inter-drumlin lakes plus several smaller areas of water stretching along the River Dromore between Cootehill and Ballybay. Nice areas of wet woodland and reed swamp. Important wintering wildfowl population, including Whooper Swans, Great Crested Grebe and Lapwings.
000558	Emy Lough	This mesotrophic lake lies in an inter-drumlin hollow in the Blackwater catchment area, only 1km east of Emyvale. The lough is one of the largest lakes in the area with surrounding sections of Alder and Willow species. It is an important over-wintering site for birds.
000559	Glaslough Lake	The main value of the site lies in the lake and adjacent wetland habitats. It is reportedly rich in Calcium with Stoneworts (<i>Chara</i> spp.) and White Water-lily (<i>Nymphaea alba</i>) which is likely to have been introduced. Most of the shore is fringed by a narrow zone of Common Reed (<i>Phragmites australis</i>) mainly backed by the mixed estate woodland. Botanically the most interesting section seems to be the southern end of Glaslough Lake which now forms a separate basin

Site Code	Site Name	Description
		entirely within woodland. Here wooded islands also provide a Heronry site.
000560	Lough Fea Demesne	Small fields of calcareous grassland which are extremely rich in varieties and numbers of orchids. Bordering the grassland is a large mixed woodland yielding several interesting species. A number of interesting Turloughs are also found within the demesne.
000561	Lough Naglack	This is a calcareous lough and together with adjoining limestone grassland, calcareous marsh and mixed woodland this area supports a very rich flora.
000562	Monmurray Grassland	Over wintering site for Greenland White Fronted Geese
000563	Muckno Lake	Largest lake in County Monaghan and water supply for Dundalk. Some nice areas of wet woodland and good site for waterfowl.
001268	Cordoo Lough	Calcium rich lake surrounded by reed swamp and wet grassland with some interesting species including shining pondweed.
001495	Lough Ross	Lough Ross is a large, slightly alkaline lake, 90ha in size, situated on the border between County Monaghan and County Armagh, only 13ha lies in County Monaghan. Most of the lake circumference is colonised by species-poor reedswamp vegetation. There are also areas of stony lake edge with abundant water plantain (<i>Littorella uniflora</i>). The lake also supports a very large number of Pondweed (<i>Potamogeton</i>) species. An extensive floating marsh lies to the east of the Clarebane River and around the shores are various transitions from aquatic vegetation to meadowland, providing very good examples of successional development.
001594	Ballyhoe Lough	Ballyhoe Lough is located on the Monaghan/Meath border and is a fairly acid, peaty lough. The lough is now divided into two by a narrow strip of land covered by Willow trees, Common Reed and Alders. Around the edge is a fringe of Common Reed (<i>Phragmites communis</i>) with some Clubrush (<i>Scirpus lacustris</i>) and White Water-lily (<i>Nymphaea alba</i>). The islands in the lough are covered with trees and shrubs and like the lakeshore fringed by Common Reed (<i>Phragmites australis</i>). They are believed to be crannogs.
001595	Loughbawn House Loughs	Complex of inter-drumlin lakes immediately surrounded by dense woodland. A sheltered bay at the north-eastern part of the northern lake has developed a 10-20 metre fringe of reed swamp dominated by Common Reed (<i>Phragmites australis</i>). Floating macrophytes with Yellow Water-lily (<i>Nuphar lutea</i>) are frequent around the lake edge.
001596	Black and Derrygoony Loughs	There are two large lakes within this pNHA. There is an area of open transition mire to the north of Derrygoony Lough. The floating scragh has typical transition mire communities although Lesser Tussock Sedge (<i>Carex diandra</i>) is notably absent. The transition mire grades into a dense Reed Canary-grass (<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>) reed swamp which borders the lake.
001599	Creevy Lough	The shoreline is very open and is not fringed with reed as are many of the other lakes in this area. Common Spike-rush (<i>Eleocharis palustris</i>) and the sedges <i>Carex vesicaria</i> and <i>Carex rostrata</i> grow in clumps around the perimeter. The floor of the lough is colonised by Shore-

Site Code	Site Name	Description
		weed (<i>Littorella uniflora</i>) and two rare aquatic plant species were found in shallow water - Waterwort (<i>Elatine hexandra</i>) and Hornwort (<i>Ceratophyllum demersum</i>).
001600	Drumakill Lough	Drumakill lake is a small lake, located 5 km east of Castleblayney and approximately 1 km east of Lough Muckno. The open waters of the lake form the main habitat in the site. Wet grassland is the main habitat around the periphery of the lake. Freshwater marsh vegetation merges with wet grassland vegetation in places.
001601	Drumgole Lough	One of the most striking features of the lake is the presence of large areas of reedswamp dominated by Common Reed (<i>Phragmites communis</i>). In addition to reedswamp there are small areas of wet grassland dominated by Soft Rush (<i>Juncus effusus</i>) and Creeping Buttercup (<i>Ranunculus repens</i>). Although birdlife on the lake is limited, Whooper Swans frequent the site during the winter months.
001602	Drumreask Lough	The calcareous nature of the lough is evident from the presence of Stoneworts (<i>Chara spp</i>) which form a narrow shelf all around the lough edge. The calcicole Great Fen-sedge (<i>Cladium mariscus</i>) is also present amongst the reedbeds that surround most of the lough. On the lake margins are pockets of wet, marshy ground.
001604	Gibson's Lough	This lake is gradually being invaded by vegetation and surrounded by floating marshes. Around the shoreline grow Bottle sedge (<i>Crex rostrata</i>) with Bulrush (<i>Typha latifolia</i>) and the umbellifer, Cowbane (<i>Cicuta virosa</i>). Behind is a community dominated by Cotton Grass (<i>Eriophorum angustifolium</i>) with Water Horsetail (<i>Equisetum fluviatile</i>) and the sedges <i>Carex curta</i> and <i>C. rostrata</i> . Further back is a wet grassland with hummocks of Sphagnum moss and the grass Yorkshire fog (<i>Holcus lanatus</i>).
001605	Lough Egish	The lake is primarily an area of ornithological scientific interest, and it is a good over-wintering site for Whooper and Bewick's Swans and Goldeneye. Breeding birds recorded here include Black-headed Gull, Common Sandpiper, Lapwing, Coot, Great Crested Grebe, Little Grebe, Tufted Duck and Pochard.
001606	Rafinny Lough	Rafinny Lough is a small oligotrophic lough, situated at an altitude of c. 175m about 9km south-west of Monaghan Town. It is unusually species rich for an upland lake and the flora exhibits a strong northern element. The floating mat vegetation is very well developed and provides an excellent example of a successional sequence typical in small water bodies.
001607	Lough Smiley	Lough Smiley is a reed fringed lake with an extensive wetland area that includes lakes, reed swamp, freshwater marsh, transition mire, remnant raised bog, cutover bog and wet scrub woodland lying in a basin between drumlins. The area to the north of the lake is dominated by cutover bog vegetation, with low lying wet hollows generally filled with quaking transition mire communities.
001608	Monalty Lough	A lot of the lake shore is fringed by a belt of Reeds (<i>Phragmites australis</i>) which is in turn backed by a narrow strip of wet woodland or scrub, often dominated by Willow species (<i>Salix spp.</i>). A tongue of Reeds and Willow dominated woodland has spread from the north to

Site Code	Site Name	Description
		the south shore between two basins dividing the lake into two. Any low-lying wet grassland adjacent to the lakeshore is dominated by Creeping bent (<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>) with rushes and wetland herb species.
001611	Ulster Canal (Aghalisk)	The canal is very dry at this point and is almost entirely colonized by grasses with some Iris (<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>) beds and Meadowsweet (<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>).
001612	Wright's Wood	Old coppiced ash woodland on a small hillock, close to Monaghan Town with diverse herbaceous ground flora.
001666	Tassan Lough	This small site comprises an inter-drumlin lake, reed swamp, transition mire, poor fen and dry heath on rocky substrate. The small lake has a floating macrophyte zone around much of the lake edge. Dense Common Reed (<i>Phragmites australis</i>) reed swamp extends from the lake edge to the north and south-west. Old mine spoil heaps with sparse vegetation occur to the west of the lake. To the south of the lake is a small transition mire area and adjacent poor fen. Remnant bog vegetation indicates that the area was cut for peat in the past.
001671	Spring and Corcryn Loughs	Both loughs have similar botanical structures with a ring of Whitewater Lily (<i>Nymphaea alba</i>) inside a fringe of Common Reed (<i>Phragmites australis</i>). There is a narrow shelf of calcareous mud around the lake edge upon which grows a species of Stonewort (<i>Chara</i> spp.). After this shelf the lake floor drops steeply into the deeper central area. Between the two loughs is an acidic grassland community, through which a drain runs, connecting the loughs. Around the lake shores there is wet grassland, freshwater marsh and scrub adding to the interest of the site.
001781	Lisarilly Bog	Lisarilly Bog is a small, fairly remote site situated about 8 km east of Clones. This is an area of poor fen vegetation occurring on a quaking scraw in a hollow surrounded by drumlins. The poor fen has developed on a cutover raised bog and may be in transition to a raised bog. It is oligotrophic in nature and sensitive to nutrient enrichment from the surrounding farmland.
001782	Killyhoman Marsh	Killyhoman Marsh is a small area of wet scraw, supporting a marshy vegetation, which is partially invaded by trees. Wet woodland dominated by Downy Birch (<i>Betula pubescens</i>) is the main habitat type and this grades into a wet marsh vegetation.
001783	Corcreeghy Lake and Woodland	This is an undisturbed lake with a thin margin of marsh/scraw with the exception of the eastern end which has an extensive wet Willow (<i>Salix</i> spp.), Alder (<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>) stand, and harbours the Marsh fern (<i>Thelypteris palustris</i>) which is a rare plant in County Monaghan.
001784	Rosefield Lake and Woodland	This site, 4km west of Monaghan Town consists of a small calcareous lake surrounded by alder woodland (<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>) and reed bed communities. This inter drumlin calcareous lough, oligotrophic/mesotrophic in character, has extensive <i>Chara</i> communities present in the fringing reed zones and out into the open water areas.
001785	Mullaghmore Lake (South)	It is a shallow lake which is rapidly infilling, becoming colonised by floating scraw. The lake surface is colonised by Water Lilies. The

Site Code	Site Name	Description
		emergent vegetation consists of dense reed beds of Common Club-Rush (<i>Schoenoplectus lacustris</i>) and Water Horsetail (<i>Equisetum fluviatile</i>), especially in the south and west.
001835	Lisabuck Lough	The site contains a reed fringed lake with small areas of marsh vegetation behind the reed zone among willow and birch scrub, in addition to a wet woodland area in the east of the reserve. The confirmed presence of <i>Carex acuta</i> adds to the ecological interest of the site.
001836	Annagheane Lough	The lake is surrounded by dense woodland dominated by Downy Birch (<i>Betula pubescens</i>) and Purple Moor Grass (<i>Molinia caerulea</i>) which has developed on cutover bog. The open water is fringed by an area of Common Reedmace (<i>Typha latifolia</i>) quaking swamp. At the northern end of the lake the swamp grades into species poor transition mire which subsequently grades into marsh dominated by an almost pure stand of <i>Equisetum fluviatile</i> . The nationally rare plant species, Frogbit (<i>Hydrocharis morsus-ranae</i>), occurs in the lake.
001837	Mullaglassan Lough	Mullaglassan Lough is a small scraw fringed lake located 6 miles west of Monaghan Town. On the southern and western shores there are reed beds with Club Rush (<i>Schoenoplectus lacustris</i>), Common Reed (<i>Phragmites australis</i>) and in one area on the southwestern shore a species poor Great Fen Sedge (<i>Cladium mariscus</i>) stand forms a dense community. The open water of the lake supports emergent Yellow Water Lily (<i>Nuphar lutea</i>) and where reed cover is less dense stands of Yellow Flag Iris (<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>) and Branched Burweed (<i>Sparganium erectum</i>). The Lesser Tussock Sedge (<i>Carex diandra</i>) quaking transition mire, which occurs on the land ward side of the reed zone, is the main fen habitat present, and this occurs along much of the southern shore of the lake.
001838	Kilcorran Lough	At about 17ha of open water area, Kilcorran Lough is one of the larger of the highly calcareous lakes in the Finn River system. It lies less than 1km from the Monaghan and Fermanagh border at Rosslea. A small catchment in limestone drift ensures a high calcium status, with a substrate of precipitated marl, and a relatively low nutrient status. Swamps are reasonably well developed in a few areas.
001839	Killyvilly Lough	Killyvilly Lough is a small calcareous lake located on the border between Monaghan and Fermanagh, 12 km west of Monaghan Town. The southern half of the lake lies in Monaghan and includes an area of open water, alder woodland and Great Fen Sedge (<i>Cladium mariscus</i>) fen. The site, which occurs in two separate sections, in particular the southern section has an excellent and extensive quaking transition mire community developed in the base of a deep inter drumlin valley. In some areas the transition mire community supports an open wet birch scrub. In the centre of the southern section is an area of transition mire which appears to be mown on a regular basis and has developed a uniform but species rich transition mire community, similar in many regards to mown sloping fen communities that can be seen in Scandinavia.

Site Code	Site Name	Description
001841	Drumcor Lough	Drumcor Lough is a small linear lake located 4km east of Redhills on the Cavan-Monaghan border. It consists of a long linear oligo-mesotrophic lake with fringing reed community and Willow scrub.
002077	Nafarty Fen	This small wetland site is dominated by swamp and wet woodland communities. The species poor swamp vegetation is dominated by Common Reed (<i>Phragmites australis</i>), Brown Sedge (<i>Carex disticha</i>) and Meadowsweet (<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>). Other than these species the vegetation was dominated by graminoid species and was poor in herbs. The woodland is formed of Willow (<i>Salix</i>) scrub towards the centre of the site with exotic planted species including mature Scots Pine (<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>) and Spruce (<i>Picea spp</i>) (30m tall) in the north. The wet willow woodland showed a rich lichen and epiphyte flora with a well-developed herb understorey and moss flora including Pointed Spear Moss (<i>Calliergonella cuspidate</i>).

6.6.3 Sites of Biodiversity Importance

Sites that have been identified through Monaghan County Council surveys as being of International, National and County importance are listed in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4 County Sites of Biodiversity Importance

Reference	Site Name	Reference	Site Name
615	Ballyloughan Turlough D	MFS-30	Lough Aphuca
616	Ballyloughan Turlough E		Lough Bane
617	Ballyloughan Turlough F		Lough Duff
622	Ballyloughan Turlough G	MFS-31	Lough Ooney
MFS-17	Aghafin Lough	MFS-05	Morgans Lough
002904	Aghnamullen Fen,	MFS-33	Muckno Mill Lough
629	Ballyloughan Turlough J	633	Nure Beg Fen and Marsh
MFS-12	Bishops Lough	2614	Priestfield Lough
MFS-13	Cargaghmore Fen	298	Raferagh Fen
MFS-27	Carrickmore	376	Reillys Lough
MFS-15	Clonkeen Lough	586	Shankill Lough
MFS 18	Corlea	MFS-37	Shantonagh Lough
MFS 01	Cornaglare	MFS-38	Sillis Lough
	Corleadargan Bog	MFS-19	Coravoo Lough
MFS-07	Crinkill Lough		Cormeen Lough
MFS-02	Drum Lough	MFS-20	Corvaghan
89	Drumakill Lough	MFS-21	Creevaghly
MFS-23	Drumaveale Lough	MFS-04	Crumlin Lough
002732	Drumgallen Bog	545	Derryarrily Bog
MFS-24	Drumganny Lough	MFS-25	Drumgoast Lough
587	Drumgoan Fen	MFS-26	Drumharrif Lough
MFS-28	Faltagh		Drumroo
MFS-08	Killycooly Lough	002897	Greaghglas Fen
002755	Killyneil Fen		Greaghawillin
625	Kilmactrasna Turlough G		Grove Lough
555	Kilmore West Bog	MFS-29	Killyboley Lough

Reference	Site Name	Reference	Site Name
234	Kilvey Lough	624	Kilmactrasna Turlough F
600	Lagan Lough	626	Kilmactrasna Turlough H
83	Lough Egish bogs	627	Kilmactrasna Turlough J
MFS-40	Lough Nahinch	264	Kilmore Lake
93	Monalty Lough	555	Kilmore West Bog
345	Monaltyduff	599	Kilmurray heath and bog
MFS-32	Mount Matthews	583	Killygally Fen
384	Raferagh East Fen	589	Legghimore Fen
MFS-35	Rathkeevan Lough	002911	Lisinisky Marsh
MFS-36	Roosky Lough		Clen Lough
568	Tassan grassland	531	Carnquill Bog
MFS-10	Annagose Lough	MFS-14	Carrickaslane Lough
MFS-11	Annyalty Loughs	002901	Coravilla-Rakeen
585	Aughrim More Bog	535	Cloughvalley Lower Spring
340	Ballyloughan Turlough A	MFS-16	Clonoony Lough Coolcar 604
621	Ballyloughan Turlough H		

6.7 Natura 2000 Sites and Appropriate Assessment (AA)

Together SPAs and SACs make up a European network of sites known as the Natura 2000 network. These sites are designated under the European Union (EU) Habitats Directive (1992) and the Birds Directive (1979). The Directive lists certain habitats and species which must be protected due to their significance. These Directives are transposed into Irish Law through the European Union (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 and 2011.

The AA procedures implement the requirement of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the EU Habitats Directive. All plans and projects are required to undergo screening to determine the likelihood of significant effects on the Natura 2000 network before they can proceed. The cumulative impact of the proposed plan/project in combination with any other plan/project must also be considered.

If significant environmental effects cannot be ruled out at the screening stage, the Planning Authority is required to carry out an AA of the application. This may require the preparation of a Natura Impact Statement (NIS) for projects or a Natura Impact Report (NIR).

There are four stages of Appropriate Assessment:

Stage 1: Screening.

Stage 2: Appropriate Assessment.

Stage 3: Assessment of alternative options.

Stage 4: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain.

Those preparing Natura Impact Statements and Natura Impact Reports must have specialist ecological (or any other relevant specialist expertise) to comprehensively assess the potential impacts of a plan or project on any Natura 2000 site. The NIS or NIR should be based on the best available scientific knowledge available at the time. The principle objective should be to avoid any impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site by identifying potential impacts and designing the plan/project to avoid these.

The Habitats Directive advocates a hierarchy of measures to be included in a NIS/NIR to address the potential impacts of a development on a Natura 2000 site as follows:



Where this is not possible, mitigation measures should be identified to ensure no adverse impacts arise. If, despite mitigation measures, impacts are still likely to arise the plan/project should be rejected. In instances where no alternative solutions are identified, and the plan/project is required for Imperative Reasons of Public Interest (IROPI) test, Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, then compensatory measures are required to address any remaining adverse effects. IROPI cases will be determined by the European Commission.

6.8 National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)

Article 6(1) of the Habitats Directive requires that Member States establish the necessary conservation measures for European sites involving, if need be, appropriate management plans specifically designed for the sites or integrated into other development plans. The NPWS's current priority is to identify site specific conservation objectives; management plans may be considered after this is done. Where Integrated Management Plans are being prepared for European sites (or parts thereof), the NPWS shall be engaged with in order to ensure that plans are fully integrated with the Plan and other plans and programmes, with the intention that such plans are practical, achievable and sustainable and have regard to all relevant ecological, cultural, social and economic considerations, including those of local communities.

6.9 Sliabh Beagh Conservation Actions

Monaghan County Council was one of eleven partners that collaborated on an INTERREG V project – Collaborative Action of the Natura Network (CANN) which aimed to improve the conservation status of over 3,000 hectares of wetland sites and produce 25 conservation plans by 2021. This project has enhanced the condition of the protected habitats and priority species found in the North, the Border Region of Ireland and Western Scotland. Sliabh Beagh was one of the main upland sites in the project area and a range of expert organisations worked with the local community to understand and put in place conservation actions to improve habitats, including blanket bog and to protect the rare and spectacular bird of prey, the Hen Harrier. This project developed a new model of working with communities which has achieved many conservation gains at Slieve Beagh.

6.10 Sliabh Beagh Masterplan

The Sliabh Beagh Masterplan was jointly commissioned by Monaghan County Council and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council in 2017 to establish a strategic vision for the future of this important rural

area. The Sliabh Beagh Masterplan examines the role of Sliabh Beagh in the wider geographical area and seeks to set in place a road map for regeneration, helping the area to fulfil its potential as a visitor destination, while contributing to its needs for continued environmental protection, cultural interpretation, and economic development. The Masterplan comprises a total of 10 themes and 30 individual projects for delivery over the short, medium and long term by a range of stakeholders.

Heritage, Conservation and Landscape Objectives	
HCLO 10	To liaise with the Regional Assemblies, adjacent planning authorities, public agencies and community groups to protect the environmental quality of regionally significant heritage assets.
HCLO 11	To support the implementation of the Sliabh Beagh Masterplan in conjunction with stakeholders, to improve the conservation status of habitats and species on Sliabh Beagh.
HCLO 12	To cumulatively contribute towards, in combination with other users and bodies, the achievement of the objectives of the regulatory framework for environmental protection and management, including compliance with EU Directives – such as the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC, as amended), the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (2011/92/EU, as amended by 2014/52/EC) and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC), and relevant transposing Regulations.
HCLO 13	To require lower levels of decision making and environmental assessment to consider the sensitivities identified in the Strategic Environmental Assessment.
HCLO 14	To protect the County Sites of Biodiversity Importance listed in Table 6.4 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 by ensuring that any new development does not detrimentally impact on the character, integrity, distinctiveness or scenic value of the area. Any development which could unduly impact upon such sites shall be resisted.
HCLO 15	To consult with, as appropriate, Inland Fisheries Ireland in relation to any development that could have a potential impact on the aquatic ecosystems and associated riparian habitats.
HCLO 16	To consult with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, where appropriate, and take account of their views and any licensing requirements, when undertaking, approving or authorising development which is likely to affect plant, animal or bird species protected by law.
HCLO 17	Promote and encourage planting of native hedgerow species in new developments and as part of the Council's own landscaping works.
HCLO 18	A Construction Environmental Management Plan shall be prepared and implemented for all development projects, where appropriate, that may give rise to significant, adverse construction related environmental effects.

Heritage, Conservation and Landscape Policies	
HCLP 4	Any plan or project in the Plan area not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Natura 2000 site but likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site(s), either individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to Appropriate Assessment, in view of the site's conservation objectives; in accordance with Article 6(3) and Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directives (92/43/EEC), transposing national legislation, and applicable European and national guidelines.
HCLP 5	Monaghan County Council shall complete Appropriate Assessment, where required as a Competent Authority, in accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive; and

Heritage, Conservation and Landscape Policies	
	shall only grant consent for developments projects after having ascertained that such projects will not adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site.
HCLP 6	Protect, conserve and enhance natural heritage, insofar as practicable having regard to the remit of the Council; including Natura 2000 sites (SPAs and SACs), proposed Natura Heritage Areas (pNHAs), other designated sites, and non-designated areas of high nature conservation value known as locally important areas which also serve as 'Stepping Stones' for the purposes of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive, improving the ecological coherence of Natura 2000 sites.
HCLP 7	Prevent the carrying out of development that would destroy or significantly alter, damage or interfere with the integrity of a pNHA/NHA, or any of its species, communities, habitats; landforms or geological or geomorphological features; or on its diversity of natural attributes.
HCLP 8	Any plan or project which is likely to impact on the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site shall be screened for Appropriate Assessment (AA) and where pertinent, a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment (Natura Impact Statement) shall be undertaken in order to make a determination. Natura 2000 sites outside the County and located within 15km of the proposed development site should also be screened for Appropriate Assessment. A Natura Impact Statement shall incorporate a written statement which sets out mitigation measures to prevent the risk of invasive species onto a Natura 2000 site.
HCLP 9	Development within the vicinity of groundwater or surface water dependant Natura 2000 sites (Kilroosky Lough Cluster SAC) will not be permitted where there is potential for a likely significant impact upon the groundwater or surface water supply to the Natura 2000 site. Where appropriate, the applicant shall demonstrate with hydro-geological evidence, that the proposed development will not adversely affect the quality or quantity of groundwater or surface water supply to the Natura 2000 sites.
HCLP 10	The effects of agriculture related air pollution on habitats and species shall be considered by the Planning Authority when deciding on planning applications for significantly scaled agriculture development proposals. Where necessary, Applicants shall be asked to provide appropriate supporting air dispersion modelling and ecological assessment - completed in accordance with relevant guidelines - confirming proposals will not generate adverse effects on protected species or designated sites in Ireland or Northern Ireland.

6.11 Areas of Amenity

Amenity areas are specifically designated due to their important landscape quality and recreational potential. They provide an asset for the local community and visitors in terms of recreation, contemplation and tourism. All scenic views, Primary and Secondary Amenity Areas can be viewed on Map 6.1, County Monaghan Development Constraints, of this Development Plan.

6.11.1 Areas of Primary Amenity Value

County Monaghan has two principal areas of outstanding landscape quality which require protection from insensitive and inappropriate development. These are designed as areas of Primary Amenity Value and are listed in the Table 6.5. Development in these areas will only be permitted where the integrity and natural beauty of the landscape is not threatened. Any developments which are normally exempt under Article 6 of the Planning and Development Regulations will require planning permission.

Development proposals in these areas will only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that the existing landscape, landform, flora and fauna, scenic or environmental characteristics will not be compromised.

Table 6.5 Areas of Primary Amenity Value

Constraints Map Reference	Areas of Primary Amenity
PA1	Sliabh Beagh and Bragan Mountain
PA2	Lough Muckno & Environs

Areas of Primary Amenity Value Policy	
PAP 1	To restrict development in Areas of Primary Amenity Value to sites where it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the proposed development would not threaten the scenic or environmental quality of the area.
PAP 2	To conserve and enhance existing Primary Amenity Areas and design management strategies to absorb further tourism and recreational uses without damage to their unique character.

6.11.2 Areas of Secondary Amenity Value

In addition to the Areas of Primary Amenity Value, there are a number of other scenic and amenity areas that require protection from inappropriate and insensitive development. These areas are designated as Areas of Secondary Amenity Value and are generally associated with river valleys, uplands, woodlands and lakes and provide an important community, recreational and tourism resource. It is an objective to manage development in these areas to ensure that the scenic value is maintained and ensure any development proposals are sensitively designed and compatible with the overall landscape character of the area. The Areas of Secondary Amenity Value are listed in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6 Areas of Secondary Amenity Value

Constraints Map Reference	Areas of Secondary Amenity
SA1	Emy Lough and Environs
SA2	Blackwater River Valley
SA3	Mountain Water River Valley
SA4	Mullyash Mountain
SA5	Ulster Canal and Environs
SA6	Rossmore Park and Environs
SA7	Castleshane Woods and Environs
SA8	Billy Fox Memorial Park and Environs
SA9	Annaghmackerrig Lake, Woodland and Environs
SA10	Dartrey Demense and Environs
SA11	Dromore River and Lake Systems
SA12	Lough Major and Environs
SA13	Hollywood Lake
SA14	Lisanisk Lake
SA15	Lough Naglack
SA16	Rahans Lake
SA17	Lough Fea

Areas of Secondary Amenity Value Policies	
SAP 1	To limit development in Areas of Secondary Amenity Value and to only permit compatible amenity developments where they do not unduly impact on visual amenity.
SAP 2	To conserve and enhance existing Secondary Amenity Areas and design management strategies to absorb further tourism and recreational uses without damage to their unique character.

6.11.3 Scenic Routes

A number of important scenic routes which require protection are listed in Appendix 2, Views from Scenic Routes and are illustrated on Map 6.1, County Monaghan Development Constraints, of this Development Plan. Any development that would interfere with or adversely impact on these scenic routes will not be permitted.

Scenic Routes Policies	
SRP 1	To prohibit development that would disrupt or adversely affect a view from and/or along any scenic route as listed in Appendix 2, Views from Scenic Routes, of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025 - 2031.
SRP 2	<p>To protect the scenic quality of lakes by prohibiting development located between a public road and a lake where the development would interrupt a view of the lake or adversely affect its setting or its wildlife habitat. Development may be permitted between a public road and the lakeshore where the development is screened from the lake by existing topography or vegetation.</p> <p>An exception to this policy may be made for short term let tourist accommodation or recreational development where a specific need has been identified. Any such proposal should be sensitively sited and designed. Development on high exposed sites overlooking lakes or waterways shall be resisted.</p>
SRP 3	Proposals for single dwellings in or adjacent to lakes may be acceptable on secluded sites, where the proposed dwelling is modest in scale and of a sensitive design. Such proposals may only be considered acceptable where they are not visible from the public road network, do not detrimentally impact on the visual amenity of the area and comply with Chapter 15, Development Management Standards, of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025.

6.12 Geological Sites

The Irish Geological Heritage Programme co-ordinated by the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) conducted an audit of geological sites in County Monaghan following a study in 2013 in conjunction with the Monaghan County Heritage Office. The audit did not identify any nationally important sites in the County. However, 20 locally important geological sites have been classified as County Geological Sites (CGS) and are listed in Table 6.7. The cross-cutting ribbed moraines near Scotshouse form part of the largest field of ribbed moraines found in the world and will be promoted as unique landscapes. This is the only section of mapped cross-cutting ribbed moraines in the world. Nowhere else in the world have ribbed moraines been noted where they record two separate ice flows.

Geological Sites Policies	
GEP 1	To promote awareness of and access to sites of geological interest in consultation with landowners, where appropriate, and following recommendations regarding safety from Geological Survey Ireland.

Geological Sites Policies	
GEP 2	Where a proposed development is likely to impact on the setting or integrity of a County Geological Sites listed in Table 6.7 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025 – 2031 the Geological Survey of Ireland shall be consulted.
GEP 3	To protect from inappropriate development and maintain the integrity and conservation value of those features in areas of geological interest that are listed in the plan, or any sites proposed by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht or Geological Survey of Ireland during the lifetime of this plan.
GEP 4	To contribute towards the appropriate protection and maintenance of the character, integrity and conservation value of features or areas of geological interest.
GEP 5	To promote CGS15 Rockcorry- Cootehill ribbed Moraine and CGS16 Scotshouse - Redhills cross cutting ribbed moraines as unique landscapes in accordance with the recommendations of the Geological Survey of Ireland.

Table 6.7 County Monaghan Geological Sites

Site No	Site Name	Description	Townland(s) /Location
CGS 1	Aphuca Cave (Finn Mc Cools Cave)	A twin-entranced cave passage approximately 450m in length. Part of the complex of karstic features in the Carrickmacross area.	Cloghvalley Lower, Carrickmacross
CGS 2	Ballyloughan Turloughs	Three small turloughs in a valley about 1 km southeast of Lough Fea. Turloughs are exceptionally rare east of the Shannon River.	Ballyloughlan, Carrickmacross
CGS 3	Calliagh	The site consists of a small 19th-century excavation or quarry on the summit of an unnamed hill. First recorded location in Ireland and Britain where manganaxinite has been recognized. The small quarry is also the best exposure in Monaghan of red Fe (iron) and Mn (manganese) rich shales of the Coronea Formation.	Calliagh, Threemilehouse
CGS 4	Carrickatee Hill	The site comprises extensive series of outcrops on top of a partly wooded hill (230m O.D.) and large crags on its southern slopes. The rocks are mainly mafic and felsic pyroclastic volcanic rocks of the Ordovician Carrickatee Formation. Best exposure of Ordovician volcanic rocks in the central Belt of the Longford-Down inlier.	Carrickatee, Ballybay
CGS 5	Clontibret Stream	Small wooded stream section and its banks on which the remains of two mine shafts are found. Recognised as a CGS both because of the presence of stibnite, which led to the attempts to develop the Country's only known antimony mine, and of gold which has sustained significant exploration efforts over the last 50 years and have resulted in the recognition of extensive zones of anomalous gold concentrations in the Ordovician rocks of the Longford-Down inlier.	Tullybuck, Lisglassan

Site No	Site Name	Description	Townland(s) /Location
CGS 6	Creivy Cave	Mile River sinks and rising and the intervening Creivy Cave system, the largest in County Monaghan. The cave system is probably a post-glacial development formed in the last 11,000 years. Longest cave in County Monaghan.	Cloghvalley Lower, Creivy
CGS 7	Donaghmoyne Rising	A significant spring rising and an associated doline. A complement to the Moylan Lough site and as part of a suite of karstic features within the limestone terrain surrounding Carrickmacross.	Donaghmoyne, Carrickmacross
CGS 8	Finn Mc Cool's Chair and Killmactrasna Cave	Site comprises a wooded area of karstic enclosed depressions, with an enigmatic cliff feature (Fin McCool's Chair) and an old quarry exposing a small cave (Killmactrasna Cave). Site is of County Geological Site importance, both as a local landmark and as a somewhat enigmatic karstic landscape feature within a complex of dolines with an associated cave.	Dooahatty, Killmactrasna
CGS 9	Hope Mine	Hope Mine was one of a number of lead and silver mines in County Monaghan exploited in the mid-19th century. It was probably in operation between 1852 and 1869, and possibly up to 1874. The main feature of importance on the site is the Cornish engine-house chimney, the only example of its kind in County Monaghan.	Cornalough, Castleblayney
CGS 10	Knocknacran Gypsum Mine	This is a large open-cast gypsum mine, with numerous intersections into old underground mine workings. It is probably the largest man-made excavation in Ireland.	Drummond, Dernascore Knocknacran West Knocknacran East Derrynaglah
CGS 11	Leeg Drumlin	The Leeg drumlin is a drumlin which assumes a barchan, or crescent, shape. This form is extremely rare with only a few known out of about 25,000 drumlins in Ireland.	Leeg Carrickmacross
CGS 12	Lemgare	This is a former mine site occupying an overgrown area at the edge of cattle pasture. Mine waste, in the form of two small boulder piles, a collapsed, filled-in shaft and covered adit portal are the only surface remains of mining. The mine features are poorly preserved and insufficiently interesting to require any designation for the site. However, the presence of rare wulfenite means Lemgare warrants CGS status.	Lemgare Annayalla
CGS 13	Mokeeran Quarry	This is a large working quarry, producing agricultural lime.	Mokeeran Killgally

Site No	Site Name	Description	Townland(s) /Location
CGS 14	Moylan Lough	The turlough is situated within Lower Carboniferous limestones that are found around and to the northeast of Carrickmacross. It has formed in post-glacial times over the last 11,000 years.	Tullyvaragh Upper Tullyvaragh Lower Monnanagirr, Tullymackilmartin Garrifly
CGS 15	Rockorry- Cootehill ribbed moraine	These moraines form part of the largest field of ribbed moraines found anywhere in the world (which also includes the Scotshouse-Redhills cross cutting ribbed moraines). The entire field includes over 3,000 features and this subset, covering an area of 18 by 10 kilometres, contains approximately 160 individual features. The ribbed moraines were formed on bedrock of Silurian and Ordovician metasediments and volcanic rocks. The features themselves are Quaternary in age, having been deposited at the base of the ice sheet as it moved in a southeasterly direction during the maximum period of the last Ice Age.	Multiple Townlands (75)
CGS 16	Scotshouse- Redhills crosscutting ribbed moraines	These ribbed moraines form part of the largest field of ribbed moraines found anywhere in the world, and which also includes the Rockorry-Cootehill ribbed moraines. The entire field includes over 3,000 individual features and this subset, covering an area of 10 by 7 kilometres, contains approximately 50 individual features. It includes the only mapped area of cross-cutting ribbed moraines in the world. Nowhere else in the world have ribbed moraines been noted where they record two separate ice flows. Here, the major orientation of the features is northwest to southeast, but there are also forms adjoined to these that are oriented northeast to southwest. The features therefore record flow from two different directions. In plain view they appear as irregular, wavy, snake-like forms.	This portion of the field covers over 75 individual townlands, across an area of 70 km ²
CGS 17	Tamlat	The main interest in the site, apart from the geotechnical issue of potential subsidence along the line of old mine workings, is that it is probably one of the oldest mines in the County.	Tamlat Drumfaldra
CGS 18	Tassan	Tassan was the largest and most productive of the County Monaghan district lead mines. Production appears to have commenced in the late 1840s from two NNW-SSE-trending, east-dipping lodes and continued, with some interruptions, until 1865 or 1866. The site presents a good mixture of extant mine features, including mine buildings and solid	Tassan Annayalla

Site No	Site Name	Description	Townland(s) /Location
		waste, that allow an appreciation of the extent and disposition of works on the site.	
CGS 19	Tiragarvan	This site comprises a river sink and rising, with an intervening cave system, which itself is segmented by two potholes that provide windows to the surface. The site is a good example of karstic drainage and cave development and is relatively uncommon in a County Monaghan context. The limestone and cave conduits are very vulnerable to groundwater pollution.	Tiragarvan Lossets
CGS 20	Tullyvaragh	This site is a complex active sinkhole in karstic limestone, north of Carrickmacross. The site includes a stream sink, a cave and the enclosed depression containing them. The karstified limestone is of Lower Carboniferous age.	Tullyvaragh Upper Tullyvaragh Lower

6.13 Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure is a network of green spaces, habitats and ecosystems within a defined geographical area which can vary in size from the local level to the County level. Green Infrastructure incorporates wild, semi natural and developed environments and can include features such as uplands, bogs and wetlands to urban parks, canals etc, refer to Figure 6.2. The Green Infrastructure approach can provide a range of benefits to quality of life and the maintenance and improvement of ecosystems including biodiversity management, water management, recreational and tourism opportunities, regulation of climate change and the promotion of sustainable movement patterns. Green Infrastructure planning results in environmental, economic and social benefits by providing nature-based solutions to development objectives. This approach results in resilient urban landscapes adapted for and reducing the negative effects of climate change.

Green Infrastructure forms a valuable asset in supporting biodiversity, supporting stormwater and flood risk management, optimising carbon storage whilst also offering opportunities for eco-system services, active travel, amenity and recreation. Investing to maintain and enhance the natural environment and Green Infrastructure will provide a range of benefits that help to manage and reduce the risks of climate change and help build resilience by reducing soil erosion, absorbing and slowing water run-off, providing cooling and shading in urban areas, increasing wildlife and biodiversity, and contributing to health and wellbeing.

Green Infrastructure and our natural heritage perform key functions for our communities. For example, our parks and open space promote health and wellbeing and make County Monaghan a better place to live in. Green Infrastructure also enhances opportunities for recreation and tourism, sustains our food industry and encourages new businesses to invest in the County. By providing a network of multifunctional green and blue spaces and protecting the natural environment, there are opportunities to contribute to urban sustainability, climate resilience while increasing access to nature and providing a good quality of life for people. It is also recognised that Green Infrastructure is a vital component in building resilient communities capable of adapting to the consequences of climate change.

It is an objective of this Development Plan to prepare a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the County which will identify, connect and protect Green Infrastructure resources and enhance their environmental and human benefits. The achievement of this objective will require partnership and stakeholder engagement from state agencies, local communities and interest groups.

It is notable that many of the features that make up County Monaghan's Green Infrastructure have a cross-border dimension i.e. Sliabh Beagh/Bragan, Mullyash, the River Fane and the Ulster Canal and these require and can foster a more co-ordinated approach.

Figure 6.2: Interface Between Natural and Built Heritage Features and Green Infrastructure concept



Green Infrastructure Objectives	
GIO 1	To prepare a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the County which considers ecology, climate change mitigation and adaptation, environmental protection considerations, increased climate resilience, and a wide range of ecosystem services, while also enhancing biodiversity, during the lifetime of this Plan.

Green Infrastructure Objectives	
GIO 2	To prepare a detailed Green Infrastructure Network for the towns of Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney, Ballybay and Clones, during the lifetime of this Plan.
GIO 3	To support the improvement and enhancement of existing Green Infrastructure within the settlements.
GIO 4	To contribute towards the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological connectivity, including woodlands, trees, hedgerows, wetlands, rivers, streams, other landscape features and associated wildlife where these form part of the ecological network and/or may be considered as ecological corridors or stepping stones in the context of Article 10 of the Habitats Directive.
GIO 5	To encourage and facilitate, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, the development of Green Infrastructure that recognises the synergies that can be achieved with regard to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision of open space amenities - Sustainable management of water - Protection and management of biodiversity - Protection of cultural heritage - Protection of protected landscape sensitivities.

Green Infrastructure Policies	
GIP 1	Development proposals located within or adjacent to areas of Green Infrastructure shall incorporate any important biodiversity features into the overall development in a sustainable manner.
GIP 2	Any development which impacts on the integrity of existing Green Infrastructure shall be resisted, an exception to this may be where compensatory features comprising of native species can be provided.

6.14 Wetlands

The Ramsar Convention is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international co-operation for the conservation of, and wise use of wetlands.

County Monaghan contains a wide range of wetlands which provide a habitat for a range of species of national and international importance. These wetland habitats include cutover raised bog, blanket bogs, fens, marshes, large riverine species and an abundance of lakes, some fine turloughs, springs and wet woodland. County Monaghan contains some of the finest examples of transition mire fens and mesotrophic inter drumlin lakes in the Country. Monaghan County Council has undertaken extensive wetland surveying and mapping as part of implementation of the Heritage Plan. This has resulted in new important wetland areas being recorded and mapped in order to improve wildlife knowledge and conservation of biodiversity.

Wetlands perform a range of important functions which include water filtration, flood attenuation and they function as a habitat for a broad range of flora and fauna. Wetlands are important assets that deliver a range of economic benefits in relation to water supplies, fisheries, the maintenance of water tables, pollution control, timber and agricultural production, carbon sequestration, and are a recreation and tourism asset.

To date the economic and environmental benefits of wetlands have been undervalued, and their benefits are often unrecognised by people until the wetland habitat has been degraded and its ecosystem functions are no longer performed. Our wetlands are under threat from development pressures such as land drainage/reclamation, pollution and turf cutting. It is important therefore to

protect this precious resource and to consider the potential impacts before making decisions likely to affect any wetland area. The locations of some wetlands in County Monaghan are detailed on Map 8.3 Area of Natural Vegetation, Wetlands and Wet Soils in Chapter 8 Environment, Energy and Climate, of this Development Plan.

In accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), planning permission is now required for drainage and/or land reclamation of all wetlands where the area involved is over 0.1 ha. In some instances, a development proposal may be subject to the requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). A mandatory EIA is required for any land reclamation works exceeding 2 ha.

Wetlands Policies	
WLP 1	Development that would destroy, fragment or degrade any wetland will be resisted.
WLP 2	Where it is proposed to infill or reclaim a wetland area, an Ecological Impact Assessment will be required.
WLP 3	To implement the relevant parts 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 to be applied for 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. Such planning applications shall be supported by an Appropriate Assessment where necessary.

6.15 Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands

Trees, hedgerows and woodlands contribute significantly to County Monaghan's natural landscape and biodiversity. They enhance the setting of rural and urban environments, provide shelter for wildlife and people, and perform an important role in regulating pollution by filtering and absorbing air-borne particulates and regulate the climate by absorbing carbon dioxide. Hedgerows are important habitats and wildlife corridors for small mammals, birds and bat species.

Trees and hedgerows in the rural area have been under pressure from modern agricultural practices and the development of one-off housing. The County Monaghan Hedgerow Survey undertaken by the Heritage Office in 2010, found that there was approximately 9.93 kilometres of hedgerow per square kilometre. A total of 35 shrub and tree species were recorded, with hawthorn been the most common species and ash the most common tree. 72% of hedgerows comprised of solely native species. In 2021, a Monaghan Hedgerow Appraisal Survey – A Decade of Change, jointly funded by Monaghan County Council and the Heritage Council was produced which re-assessed the hedgerows surveyed in 2010. The Monaghan Hedgerow Appraisal Survey provided a number of recommendations based on the survey results and in with regard to current best conservation practice. The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) commissioned a National Survey of Native Woodland in Ireland over 10 years ago and found that only 1.72% of the County had native woodland cover.

Hedgerows are subject to protections under legislation. Restrictions on cutting hedgerows are set out in Section 40 of the Wildlife Act 1976 as amended by the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000. These Acts stipulate that it is an offence to destroy vegetation on uncultivated land between the 1st of March and the 31st of August each year.

It is an objective of the Planning Authority to seek to protect and enhance existing trees, hedgerow and woodlands. Monaghan County Council has identified trees/groups of trees in the main towns

and in the wider rural area which are worthy of protection due to their special amenity value. These are listed in Table 6.8.

The Local Authority has scope to protect specific trees/groups of trees or woodland by utilising the provisions of the Tree Preservation Guidelines 1994 to designate Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's). TPO's will prevent the removal, topping down or wilful destruction of specific trees. Any tree/trees which are subject to a TPO cannot be felled without the prior consent of the planning authority.

Table 6.8 Trees of Special Amenity Value

Location	Type of Trees	OS Reference
Blackwater Vale, Monaghan	Mixed	9-7/11
Connabury Hill, Castleblayney	Mature Beech woodland	20-13
Glen, Rockcorry	Conifers	18-14
Knockconan	Mature Scots Pine, Sycamores, Beech trees	3-8
Laragh Village	Ash, Beech, Elm, Sycamore, Hazel, some mature Oaks	27
Legacurry, Monaghan	Row of Beech	6-11
Swans Cross, Dromore	Row of Conifers	18-6
Tullybuck, Clontibret	Avenue of Lime	14

Trees and Woodlands Policies	
TWP 1	To minimise loss of tree(s) and hedgerow associated with any development proposal and encourage the retention of existing mature trees, hedgerows and woodlands in new developments. Where removal is unavoidable, transplanting trees and/or providing compensatory planting of native tree species on the site shall be provided, as appropriate.
TWP 2	To preserve trees and/or groups of trees that have a significant amenity value, and to designate Tree Preservation Orders where appropriate.

6.16 Invasive Species

Invasive species are species that have been introduced (either accidentally or on purpose) by humans to areas outside their normal habitat range. Invasive species represents the second biggest threat to biodiversity globally. Once such species become established, they can spread quickly and the economic and environmental costs of controlling and eradicating them can be considerable. Some of the most well-known invasive species include Grey Squirrel, Rhododendron, Giant Hogweed and Japanese Knotweed to name but a few. Japanese Knotweed in particular can grow through concrete and tarmac and therefore can cause substantial damage to the built environment. Preventing the introduction and spread of invasive species is even more important with respect to European Designated sites.

Invasive Species Objective	
ISO 1	To support, as appropriate, the National Parks and Wildlife Service's efforts to seek to control and manage the spread of non-native invasive species on land and water. Where the presence of non-native invasive species is identified at the site of any proposed development or where the proposed activity has an elevated risk of resulting in the presence of these species, details of how these species will be managed and controlled will be required.

Invasive Species Policy	
ISP 1	To ensure that development proposals do not lead to the spread of invasive species and to ensure that landscaping proposals do not include invasive species.

6.17 Architectural Heritage and Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

6.17.1 Architectural Heritage

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires Planning Authorities to include in their Development Plans, policies and objectives for the protection, enhancement and preservation of the built heritage in their functional area.

The principle means of doing this is by maintaining a Record of Protected Structures (RPS), which identifies buildings of special architectural, historical, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest. The full record of Protected Structures is listed in Appendices 1(a) and 1(b) Record of Protected Structures for County Monaghan of the Development Plan.

County Monaghan has 701 Protected Structures on record. The continued conservation of these structures and their setting is important in retaining the quality of the County's built environment.

Structures may be added to and deleted from the Record of Protected Structures outside of the Development Plan review process in accordance with Section 55 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Protected Structures and proposed Protected Structures cannot avail of usual exempt development provisions. An owner or occupier of a Protected Structure can make a written request to the Planning Authority to seek a Declaration under Section 57 of the Act 2000 (as amended) to determine the types of works which it considers would or would not affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

The owners and occupiers of a Protected Structure can avail of certain grant initiatives such as the Historic Structures Fund (HSF), or the Built Heritage Investment Scheme (BHIS) to carry out certain works to repair and conserve historic structures. These grants are available annually.

Applications for permission to carry out works to a Protected Structure will require the submission of drawings, photographs and surveys of the existing building together with a method statement for the proposed works. The Planning Authority may request an Architectural Impact Assessment and/or a Conservation Plan to make an informed decision on any proposed works to a Protected Structure.

Following a detailed survey of County Monaghan for the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) in 2015, a recommendation was made by the Minister for the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht for additions to the Record of Protected Structures. 78 structures were added to the Record of Protected Structures in 2016 and 2017 which include post boxes, stone bridges, water pumps, religious buildings, industrial buildings/structures and houses.

There are also structures of distinctive traditional styles throughout County Monaghan and whilst these may not be included in the record of protected structures, they reflect the unique local history and character of place. Vernacular structures are extremely vulnerable due to the changing needs and demands of the modern generation. The re-use and adaption of existing buildings is preferable to their demolition. One of the Objectives of 'Places for People' - the National Policy on Architecture, published in April 2022 is to prioritise and support sustainable practices with respect to reuse, refurbishment and conservation of buildings.

Protected Structure Objectives	
BHO 1	To protect and conserve all structures included in the Record of Protected Structures and to encourage the sympathetic re-use and long-term viability of such structures without detracting from their special interest and character.
BHO 2	To contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of archaeological heritage, in particular by implementing the relevant provisions of the Act 2000 (as amended).
BHO 3	The Council aims to conserve the built fabric of the Ulster Canal, Great Northern Railway, historic mills and other industrial heritage structures throughout the county and planning permission will be required for their removal or alteration.
BHO 4	To support and promote best practice conservation in works to Protected Structures and to encourage the use of tradespeople and professionals trained in the use of traditional skills, materials and building techniques.
BHO 5	To encourage the retention, rehabilitation and reuse of older buildings that are not Protected Structures in recognition of their contribution both individually and collectively to the unique character, heritage and identity of local areas and the County.
BHO 6	To protect vernacular architecture, such as thatched cottages, farm buildings and old school-houses in the County for the benefit of future generations.

Protected Structure Policies	
BHP 1	To contribute towards the protection of architectural heritage by requiring that proposals for works shall be carried out in accordance with best practice, the legislative provisions of the Act 2000 (as amended) in relation to architectural heritage, and the policy guidance contained in the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2011 (and any new or updated/superseding versions).
BHP 2	To review, maintain and update the Record of Protected Structures in consultation with the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage and to encourage the sympathetic conservation, renewal and repair of these structures.
BHP 3	Planning permission for the demolition or inappropriate alteration of any protected structure shall not be granted except in exceptional circumstances and in accordance with Section 57(10)(b) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).
BHP 4	To ensure that any new development proposed to or in the vicinity of a Protected Structure will complement and be sympathetic to the structure and its setting in terms of its design, scale, height, massing and use of materials and to resist any development which is likely to impact on the building's special interest and/or any views of such buildings and their setting.
BHP 5	To facilitate the retention and sympathetic re-use of protected structures and their settings in circumstances where the proposal is compatible with their character and special interest. In certain instances, land use zoning restrictions and site development standards may be relaxed to secure the conservation and reuse of a protected structure and to provide a viable use for any building which is at risk by virtue of being derelict or vacant.
BHP 6	To use the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the Derelict Sites Act 1990 to prevent the loss or deterioration of the County's Architectural Heritage.

6.17.2 Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) are areas of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or areas that are important to the setting of a Protected Structure. An ACA may or may not contain Protected Structures within it.

An ACA can consist of a town centre, a group of buildings, a terrace or street or the setting of a country house. The main purpose of an ACA designation is to control inappropriate development for the purpose of preserving and enhancing the character of the area. Like Protected Structures, works to a building within an ACA are not exempted development if the works would alter the character of the ACA. The protected status of the ACA applies to the exterior and streetscape (unless a structure in an ACA is also designated as a Protected Structure). There are 20 designated ACAs in County Monaghan, the majority of which are located in the town centres of Monaghan, Carrickmacross and Clones. Glaslough Village also designated as an ACA, has guidance to homeowners, developers, architects and planning professionals on the type of works that require planning permission due to its designation as an ACA. Details of the ACAs are listed in Tables 6.9 – 6.13.

It is an objective of this Development Plan to carry out a comprehensive review of the ACAs within the County during the lifetime of this Plan.

Architectural Conservation Areas Objectives	
ACO 1	To carry out a comprehensive review of the Architectural Conservation Areas within the County during the lifetime of this Plan.
ACO 2	To prepare character appraisals for each of the designated Architectural Conservation Areas in the County to guide new development proposals and environmental improvements by identifying the character of each Architectural Conservation Areas and designing objectives to ensure that their distinctiveness and special interest are preserved and enhanced.
ACO 3	To support and promote best practice conservation in works to structures and buildings within Architectural Conservation Areas and to encourage the use of tradespeople and professionals trained in the use of traditional skills, materials and building techniques.

Architectural Conservation Areas Policies	
ACP 1	To resist development that would adversely affect the character and appearance of the Architectural Conservation Areas. New development or alterations to existing building(s) in an Architectural Conservation Areas shall reflect the historic architecture in terms of scale, design and materials used. Regard shall be had to any objectives contained in the character appraisals (where applicable).
ACP 2	To implement and comply with the relevant guidance for Architectural Conservation Areas in relation to proposals for development.

Table 6.9 Architectural Conservation Areas, Monaghan Town

Location	Feature of Interest
Market Street (No's 18-26)	Terrace of buildings
Hill Street (No's 12-20)	Row of Protected Structures
Mill Street (No's 1,2 & 14-20)	Important streetscape
North Road (No's 17-18,21-22)	Important buildings within the streetscape
Dublin Street (No's 15,31-50, 58,59, 63,64)	Important buildings within the streetscape
Park Street (No's 6-24)	Important buildings within the streetscape
Glaslough Street (No's 3-5, 12,77,84-87,94-98)	Important buildings within the streetscape

The Diamond	Important urban space and focal area
Church Square	Important urban space and focal area
Belgium Park & Square	Stone built houses
Plantation Terrace	Terrace of single storey dwellings

Table 6.10 Architectural Conservation Areas, Carrickmacross Town

Location	Feature of Interest
Main Street	Important urban space
Courthouse Square	Fine urban space
Market Square	Important urban space
St Josephs's Terrace (Weymouth Cottages)	Bath Estate Stone Cottage
Farney Street	Facades

Table 6.11 Architectural Conservation Areas, Clones Town

Location	Feature of Interest
Mc Curtain Street (from Diamond to Ball Alley)	Fine 19 th Century Streetscapes
Diamond	Important urban space
Ball Alley	Location of number of archaeological monuments

Table 6.12 Architectural Conservation Area, Glaslough

Location	Feature of Interest
Glaslough Village	Historic village

Table 6.13 Proposed Architectural Conservation Areas

Location	Feature of Interest
Castleblaney	Market Square

6.18 Archaeological Heritage

Archaeological remains provide important evidence of past societies and the environment they inhabited. These resources are finite and once lost cannot be replaced. For this reason, great importance should be given to their protection, preservation and to the enhancement of their archaeological interest where possible.

County Monaghan has a rich archaeological heritage of rock art, earthworks, ringforts, cairns, crannogs, burial grounds, as well as items of industrial archaeology such as mills, remnants of the Great Northern Railway and the Ulster Canal. Particularly significant archaeological sites include the bronze age rock art site at Drumirril, close to Inniskeen; the Iron Age Black Pigs Dyke which stretches for almost 10km close to Scotshouse; and the cairn at Mullyash, east of Castleblaney. There is also a rich heritage of early medieval church sites, associated with various Irish saints.

Archaeological remains can be visible over ground such as earthworks and stone monuments; others are buried (underground) such as foundations, ditches and burial sites, these may only be evident through investigation such as survey or excavation.

6.18.1 Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)

All known recorded monuments (and any new archaeological discoveries) are protected under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994.

The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is an inventory of all known archaeological monuments and sites in the County and is available for inspection in the Planning Offices and the County Library. There are approximately 1365 known Recorded Monuments in the County at present. A list of all known Recorded Monuments and Places is provided in Appendix 4. In addition, there are 7 National Monuments in state control.

The main threat to archaeological sites in recent years has been the growth in large scale developments such as road building, quarrying, industrial development and afforestation.

Protected Monuments and Places Objectives	
PMPO 1	To safeguard and enhance archaeological monuments, town defences, medieval structures, historic graveyards, industrial heritage, battlefields, national monuments, and heritage sites that offer tangible historical evidence.
PMPO 2	To encourage and facilitate suitable forms of access, including disabled access, to archaeological sites and/or the provision of appropriate signage, interpretive material, and virtual access options.
PMPO 3	To promote understanding and appreciation of archaeological and cultural heritage.
PMPO 4	To identify the built and archaeological heritage in Monaghan County Council ownership and those at risk from climate change, and to undertake climate change vulnerability assessments for the historic structures and sites in the County where necessary.
PMPO 5	To contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of archaeological heritage, in particular by implementing the relevant provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and the National Monuments Act, 1930 (as amended).
PMPO 6	To identify Archaeological sites in the Plan area to which public access could be provided or improved, where appropriate in consultation with landowners.
PMPO 7	To contribute, as appropriate, towards the protection of archaeological sites and monuments and their settings, archaeological objects and underwater archaeological sites that are listed in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Those contained within the Sites and Monuments Record maintained by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. b) Those contained within the Register of Historic Monuments. c) National Monuments subject to Preservation Orders under the National Monuments Acts and those in ownership or guardianship of the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage. d) Archaeological objects within the meaning of the National Monuments Acts. e) Archaeological features not yet identified but which may be impacted on by development. f) Those which have been identified subsequent to the publication of the Record of Monuments and Places.

Protected Monuments and Places Policies	
PMP 1	Development adjacent to an archaeological monument or site will only be acceptable where it is sited in a manner which minimises the impact on the monument and its setting. Development which is likely to have an adverse impact upon an archaeological monument or site or its setting shall be resisted.
PMP 2	To protect archaeological sites and monuments which are listed in the in Appendix 4, Recorded Monuments, (and any subsequent additions by the National Monuments Service) and to require their preservation in situ (or at a minimum preservation by record) through the planning process.

Protected Monuments and Places Policies	
PMP 3	To protect the setting of archaeological sites and monuments which are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places in Appendix 4 (and any subsequent additions by the National Monuments Service) from being adversely impacted upon, co-operating with all of the recommendations of statutory bodies in the achievement of this objective.

6.19 Historic Houses and Designed Landscapes

Estate houses or “Big Houses” as they became known were physical representations of the system of land ownership that existed in Ireland from the 17th to 19th Century. County Monaghan has several fine examples of such landscapes/demesnes. In a number of cases the original houses and associated buildings have been demolished, but the demesne remains. These landscapes can include tree lined avenues, walled gardens, formal ornamental woodland, grass lawns and other formal features. The estates often included gate lodges, churches and stables blocks. Where the houses or ancillary buildings remain these are listed in the Record of Protected Structures. The lands associated with these historic properties are important from a cultural and historic viewpoint and where the historic houses remain, the associated landscapes are important in preserving the setting of the Protected Structures. Below is a list of the Historic Houses/Demesnes in County Monaghan:

- Castle Leslie Estate/Demesne, Glaslough.
- Castleshane Demense, Castleshane, Monaghan.
- Hope Castle, Castleblayney.
- Lough Fea Estate, Carrickmacross.
- Hilton Park, Scotshouse.
- Dartrey Estate, Rockcorry.
- Rossmore Park, Monaghan.
- Bessmount, Monaghan.
- Ronahans, Liscarney.
- Lough Bawn.

Conservation Plans for complex sites such as demesnes where there is a mix of cultural and natural features across a large area are a useful tool for guiding appropriate development in these areas.

Designed Landscapes Policies	
DLP 1	To ensure that any new development will not adversely affect the site, setting or views to and from historic houses, gardens and designed landscapes.
DLP 2	To require that any proposals for new development in the vicinity of historic houses or demesnes landscapes are accompanied by an evaluation of the impact of the development on the landscape, designed views and vistas to /from such a site.

Chapter 7

Transport and Infrastructure

Chapter 7

Transport and Infrastructure

7.0 Introduction

One of the strategic aims of the Development Plan is to facilitate the development of County Monaghan through the provision of essential infrastructure and services, while minimising the adverse impacts of development on the environment. This strategic aim sets the framework for the formulation of the policies and objectives set out in this chapter.

Improved national, regional, county and local infrastructure and services are essential to improve the economic competitiveness and quality of life within the county. Basic infrastructural development and investment in areas such as roads, water, energy, waste and telecommunications are required to promote balanced and sustainable economic development and to improve the quality of the built and natural environment, throughout the County.

Investment in infrastructure is heavily reliant upon funding at national government level which is channelled through the National Development Plan 2021-2030 (NDP). The NDP sets out departmental allocations to 2025 with a total public investment of €165 billion over the period 2021-2030 in infrastructural sectors such as national roads, public transport, active travel, environmental infrastructure, sustainable energy, housing and health facilities.

County Monaghan, in common with other border counties has a deficient infrastructure network. The road network, which is the only mode of transport in the County, requires additional upgrading at all levels.

It is the aim of this Development Plan to improve infrastructure for the County so that it will be an attractive location for new commercial and residential development.

Key to the effective provision of infrastructure and services in the County is the consolidation of new and existing development. This will minimise the need to travel, encourage a modal shift to public transport, and cycling and walking, will protect existing and proposed investment in public infrastructure and will ensure that infrastructure and services are delivered in an effective manner.

Infrastructure Strategic Objective	
ISO 1	To promote and facilitate the sustainable and efficient delivery of public infrastructure.

7.1 Transport Policy and Planning

The provision and maintenance of an efficient, safe, and sustainable transportation system is essential to delivering the County's economic goals, an improved quality of life and improved social inclusion. Monaghan County Council seeks to achieve a more balanced and sustainable pattern of movement in the County and aims to facilitate the provision of a greater choice of transport modes.

There is a strong interrelationship between land use and transportation. This is reflected in the Settlement Hierarchy endorsed in this Plan which aligns with national policy, to direct a significant portion of future development to the existing footprint/built up area of towns and settlements in order to reduce car dependency and to facilitate the economic provision of public transport. The adoption and implementation of the Core Strategy for Monaghan, Carrickmacross, Castleblayney,

Clones and Ballybay and the remaining defined settlements will strengthen this relationship by creating more compact urban forms which facilitate the use of public transport, cycling and walking.

It is acknowledged that road transport is the only form of long-distance goods transport available in County Monaghan, therefore investment in the maintenance and improvement of our existing road infrastructure, facilitating changes in the transport energy sector, protection of the carrying capacity of our national road network, and the delivery of new strategic routes are of key importance to the economic and social development of the County.

The transport network is invaluable in supporting the provision of utilities such as water and wastewater services, communication technology and energy networks. It is important that provision is made for the maintenance, improvement and expansion of such services, whilst protecting and prioritising the safe and efficient operation and management of the transport network.

This Plan will set out a framework of policies to deliver an improvement of the existing transport system and facilities in the County over the Development Plan period.

Transport and Infrastructure Strategic Objective	
TISO 1	To promote and facilitate a sustainable, efficient, and integrated transport system and ease of movement throughout County Monaghan by enhancing the existing and delivering new transport infrastructure in terms of road transport, public transport, cycling and pedestrian facilities, and by promoting more compact urban forms close to existing facilities to encourage more sustainable movement patterns and to reduce carbon emissions.

It is also considered necessary to include a specific objective to facilitate the necessary infrastructure required to support cross border connectivity.

Cross Border Strategic Objective	
BRO 1	To support and encourage infrastructure that ensures strong cross border transport links.

7.1.1 The Trans-European Transport Network

The European Union (EU) aims to provide a modern integrated transport system that strengthens the EU's global competitiveness and is able to meet the challenges linked to sustainable, smart and inclusive growth. Through the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) policy, supported by a number of EU funding programmes and initiatives, the EU aims to provide an effective transport infrastructure network across all member states.

The N2 Dublin-Derry Road is part of the 'comprehensive' TEN-T network which provides all European regions (including peripheral regions) with an accessibility that supports their further economic, social, and territorial development as well as the mobility of their citizens.

The connectivity of roads, railway lines, inland waterways, inland and maritime ports, airports, and rail-road terminals throughout all EU Member States is a key factor for the network's efficient, safe, and secure operation, using seamless transport chains for passengers and freight.

7.1.2 Project Ireland 2040

Project Ireland 2040 is the Government's overarching policy initiative 'to make Ireland a better country for all of us, a country that reflects the best of who we are and what we aspire to be.' From a transport perspective, there are 3 key components of Project Ireland 2040 that set out transport objectives, the

National Planning Framework (NPF), the National Development Plan (NDP) and the National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI).

The National Planning Framework (NPF) 2040

One of the principal purposes of preparing the NPF is to allow shared national development goals, including improved living standards, quality of life, prosperity, competitiveness and environmental sustainability, to be more broadly considered.

The NPF 2040 identifies and outlines ten National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs). The following NSOs, which are particularly relevant to transport are noted below:

NPF 2040 National Strategic Outcome 2 - Enhanced Regional Accessibility:

The goal of this Outcome is 'to enhance accessibility between key urban centres of population and their regions. This means ensuring that all regions and urban areas in the country have a high degree of accessibility to Dublin, as well as to each other. Not every route has to look east and so accessibility and connectivity between places like Cork and Limerick, to give one example, and through the Atlantic Economic Corridor to Galway as well as access to the North-West is essential.'

In the introductory to the Outcome itself, the NPF states that:

'Better accessibility between the four cities and to the Northern and Western region will enable unrealised potential to be activated as well as better preparing for potential impacts from Brexit.' The N2 Dublin-Derry national primary road through County Monaghan is the main transport artery between Dublin and the North-West region.

The National Strategic Outcome 2 objectives are structured under the three headings of 'Inter-Urban Roads', 'Accessibility to the North-West' and 'Public Transport'. The objectives under these headings, which are of particular relevance to the proposed Scheme, are provided below:

Inter-Urban Roads

- 'Maintaining the strategic capacity and safety of the national roads network including planning for future capacity enhancements.'
- 'Improving average journey times targeting an average inter-urban speed of 90kph'.

Accessibility to the North-West

- 'Upgrading access to the North-West border area, utilising existing routes (N2/N14/A5).'

Public Transport

- 'To strengthen public transport connectivity between cities and large growth towns in Ireland and Northern Ireland with improved services and reliable journey times.'

The importance of enhanced accessibility to the North-West, via key routes, in collaboration with Northern Ireland is further outlined in the NPF National Policy Objective (NPO) below:

- NPO 2c - 'Accessibility from the north-west of Ireland and between centres of scale separate from Dublin will be significantly improved, focused on cities and larger regionally distributed centres and on key east-west and north-south routes.'

The N2/A5 is a key 'North-South' route in the context of the objective above, whilst the importance of enhanced accessibility via improved infrastructure is identified in the objectives listed below:

- NPO 43 - 'Work with the relevant Departments in Northern Ireland for mutual advantage in areas such as spatial planning, economic development and promotion, co-ordination of social and physical infrastructure provision and environmental protection and management.'

- NPO 46 - 'In co-operation with relevant Departments in Northern Ireland, enhanced transport connectivity between Ireland and Northern Ireland, to include cross-border road and rail, cycling and walking routes, as well as blueways, greenways and peatways.'

NPF 2040 National Strategic Outcome 3 – Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities:

The goal of this Outcome is to support the sustainable development of rural areas by encouraging growth and arresting decline in areas that have experienced low population growths or decline in recent decades. National Strategic Outcome 3 is structured under the heading of 'Rural Development'. The following sections and objectives are of particular relevance to transport in County Monaghan:

- 'Invest in maintaining regional and local roads and strategic road improvement projects in rural areas to ensure access to critical services such as education, healthcare and employment.'
- NPO 22 - 'Facilitate the development of a National Greenways, Blueways and Peatways Strategy which prioritises projects achieving maximum impact and connectivity at National and Regional level.'
- NPO 27 - 'Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed developments and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages.'

NPF 2040 National Strategic Outcome 4 – Sustainable Mobility:

The NPF introduces sustainable mobility as 'The provision of a well-functioning, integrated public transport system, enhancing competitiveness, sustaining economic progress and enabling sustainable mobility choices for citizens, supports the overall Framework objectives.'

Under the heading of Public Transport, it outlines the objective to:

'Expand attractive public transport alternatives to car transport to reduce congestion and emissions and enable the transport sector to cater for the demands associated with longer term population and employment growth in a sustainable manner through the following measures':

- '...provide public transport infrastructure and services to meet the needs of smaller towns, villages and rural areas;'
- 'Develop a comprehensive network of safe cycling routes in metropolitan areas to address travel needs and to provide similar facilities in towns and villages where appropriate.'

NPF 2040 National Strategic Outcome 9 - Sustainable Management of Water, Waste and other Environmental Resources:

- NPO 54 - 'Reduce our carbon footprint by integrating climate action into the planning system in support of national targets for climate policy mitigation and adaptation objectives, as well as targets for greenhouse gas emissions reductions.'
- NPO 64 - 'Improve air quality and help prevent people being exposed to unacceptable levels of pollution in our urban and rural areas through integrated land use and spatial planning that supports public transport, walking and cycling as more favourable modes of transport to the private car, the promotion of energy efficient buildings and homes, heating systems with zero local emissions, green infrastructure planning and innovative design solutions.'
- NPO 65 - 'Promote the pro-active management of noise where it is likely to have significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life and support the aims of the Environmental Noise Regulations through national planning guidance and Noise Action Plans.'

The National Development Plan (NDP)

The NDP 2018-2027 was published alongside the NPF as part of Project Ireland 2040 and set out the framework and broad direction for investment priorities to support the delivery of projects to further the ten National Strategic Outcomes ("NSOs") identified in the NPF 2040. NDP 2021-2030 sets out future capital spending proposals for investment in infrastructure.

In October 2020, the Government pledged to review and extend the funding detailed in the NDP to further support public transport projects enhancing regional and rural connectivity and facilitate investment in ports and infrastructure, and the NDP 2021-2030 was subsequently published. It provides a €35 billion transport system investment package to enhance public transport, active travel options and the connectivity of communities. The NDP lists two road schemes to be progressed through pre-appraisal and early planning along the N2 national primary road in County Monaghan.

Sustainable transport and active travel are also supported:

- NSO3 – Government funding of €360 million has been committed to the development of walking and cycling infrastructure all over Ireland, including in towns and villages in more rural areas of the Country.
- NSO4 – Sustainable Mobility deals with the decarbonisation of transport to secure Ireland's climate action goals. The NDP supports the provisions of the Sustainable Mobility Policy and Climate Action Plan.
- NSO7 – This objective includes encouraging a significant modal shift through greater levels of investment and further development of meaningful alternatives to private car.

The National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI)

Published by the Department of Transport (DoT) in 2021, NIFTI is the DoT's high-level strategic framework to support the consideration and prioritisation of future investment in land transport. It represents the Department's contribution to Project Ireland 2040, and sits alongside other Government priorities and policy objectives, such as the Programme for Government and Climate Action Plan. As the economy has grown in recent years, transport activity and emissions have risen also, and the correlation between emissions and economic growth must be broken. This will require considerable investment in walking, cycling and public transport, which will also bring environmental benefits in terms of air quality and noise pollution. It is essential that sustainable mobility alternatives take account of the needs of transport users whose experience has not always been well considered in the design of transport systems to provide viable alternatives to car travel that are accessible to all.

NIFTI emphasises the need for improved co-ordination between transport and spatial planning. This ensures that future transport investment aligns with the National Strategic Outcomes with the following guiding principles:

- Maintenance of the strategic elements of the land transport system,
- Addressing urban congestion through (inter alia) expanding walking and cycling infrastructure and improved access to and capacity for public transport, and
- Maximising the contribution of land transport networks to national and regional development objectives by enhancing the efficiency of the existing network, improving connectivity, and providing access to poorly served regions and by addressing critical safety issues and supporting national and regional spatial planning priorities.

7.1.3 Climate Action

The National Climate Action Plan (CAP)

The National Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2024 is the third annual update to Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2019 and the second to be prepared under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021. It builds on the introduction of carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings in Climate Action Plan 2023 and sets a course for Ireland's targets to halve emissions by 2030 and reach net-zero no later than 2050. The transport sector accounted for 17.7% of greenhouse gas emissions in 2021.

In relation to transport, the CAP notes 'Meeting our 2030 transport abatement targets will require transformational change and accelerated action across the transport sector. Key targets to remain

within the sectoral emissions ceiling include a 20% reduction in total vehicle kilometres travelled relative to business-as-usual, a 50% reduction in fossil fuel usage, a significant behavioural shift from private car usage to increase the total share of journeys undertaken by walking, cycling or public transport, and continued electrification of our vehicle fleets.'

While fleet electrification and the use of renewable transport fuels will continue to provide the greatest share of emissions abatement in the medium term, we will continue to expand our walking, cycling and public transport networks in order to reorient our transport systems to a more sustainable basis and to facilitate widespread behavioural change to a healthier, safer, and more people-focused vision for transport. We will continue to pursue policy measures that promote greater efficiency in our transport system, allied with significant investment in sustainable alternatives, incentives and regulatory measures to promote the accelerated take-up of low carbon technologies'. One of the transport policies includes, 'Accelerate the implementation of smart and sustainable mobility projects through the Smart and Sustainable Mobility Accelerator project....'

Measures to delivery sectoral emissions ceiling targets are set out under the fifteen key work programmes, and the proposed decarbonisation pathway has accounted for expected levels of demographic and economic growth, and the balance of work programmes is duly cognisant of potential adverse impacts on vulnerable cohorts in the AVOID/SHIFT/IMPROVE measures selected.

Figure 7.1: National Climate Action Plan 23/24 Work Programmes



Source: Government of Ireland, Climate Action Plan 2024 Pg 242.

Key performance indicators set out how carbon abatement will be measured, and key actions set out how this abatement will be delivered. New indicators have been introduced, and certain CAP21 indicators have been reframed, to make clear how transformative the level of system change required will be.

These revised national indicators include:

- A reduction in total kilometres driven of 20%,
- To reduce our fuel use in transport by 50%,
- To have nearly 1 in 3 cars on the road as a battery electric vehicle; and
- To reduce the modal share of daily car journeys from over 70% to c. 50% by 2030.

Monaghan County Council Climate Action Plan 2024 - 2029

Monaghan County Council's CAP 2024-2029 sets out how the Council is responsible for enhancing climate resilience, increasing energy efficiency, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the County. The vision is 'That Monaghan County Council will be an exemplar organisation that leads, supports, and inspires action to achieve a Climate Resilient, Biodiversity Rich, Environmentally Sustainable County and Climate Neutral Local Economy'.

Strategic Goal 2 of Monaghan's CAP is 'To pursue climate actions to increase climate resilience of the built environment and transport and achieve emission reductions in line with national targets', and transport actions relevant to the County Development Plan include:

- Complete a Town Centre First Plan for all major towns and implement actions.
- Complete a Feasibility Study for Alternative Fuels for Council HGVs to identify viable low and no carbon vehicle fleet options and implement recommendations from this study.
- Develop and implement a fleet decarbonisation roadmap as per guidelines within Local Authority Fleet – Strategy to Decarbonisation.
- Expand pilot study on alternative "low carbon" pavement material for use on road network, with a focus on implementation of the resulting recommendations. Low Energy Bound Materials (LEBM) using Reclaimed Asphalt Pavement (RAP) Pilot Project.
- Participate in Rehabilitation of roads over peat working group to determine most environmentally appropriate intervention techniques.
- Develop an EV charging strategy and implementation plan to support the roll out of EV charging.
- Implement County Walking and Cycling Strategy (2021-2026).
- Deliver active travel and greenway projects to achieve transport modal shift by encouraging cycling, walking, and running as an alternative to travel by car.
- Promote transport modal shift and increase awareness of Smarter Travel programme to encourage local employers and communities to participate.
- Deliver Safe Route to School Programme to encourage students and staff, to engage in active travel.
- Protect and maintain active travel infrastructure in accordance with National Sustainable Mobility Policy.
- Examine feasibility of a 'Park and Stride' system at different locations in towns across the count.
- Continue to complete National Catchment based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) programme within County Monaghan to ensure all current and future flood risks are identified with a focus on implementation of the resulting recommendations.
- Resolve local flooding issues utilising OPW and Department of Transport funding (Climate Adaptation and Resilience works, OPW Minor works scheme).
- Maintain transport networks to take account of risk of surface water floods.
- Develop and implement a Sustainable Drainage Strategy for the county.
- Advocate for and support the reconnection of rail services to the county in accordance with The All Island Strategic Rail Review (AISRR).

EU Nature Restoration Law

In June 2024 the European Commission passed a new regulation to restore ecosystems for people, the climate and the planet. The EU Nature restoration Law is a key element of the EU Biodiversity Strategy, which calls for binding targets to restore degraded ecosystems, in particular those with the most potential to capture and store carbon and to prevent and reduce the impact of natural disasters. Europe's nature is in alarming decline, with more than 80% of habitats in poor condition. Restoring wetlands, rivers, forests, grasslands, marine ecosystems, and the species they host will help:

- increase biodiversity,

- secure the things nature does for free, like cleaning our water and air, pollinating crops, and protecting us from floods,
- limit global warming to 1.5°C,
- build up Europe's resilience and strategic autonomy, preventing natural disasters, and reducing risks to food security.

The European Commission estimates up to 8.9% of land in the Republic of Ireland may be affected by the new commitments, and transport infrastructure may be required to support the delivery of the regulations.

Renewable Transport Fuel Policy 2023-2025

To achieve a 50% reduction in carbon emissions in the transport sector by 2030 the Climate Action Plan (CAP) sets out a range of measures, some of which include electrification of road transport and increased biofuels in transport as a transition measure. The CAP biofuel target is for at least B20 (biodiesel equivalent) in diesel and E10 (Ethanol) in petrol by 2030 (with an interim B12/E10 by 2025 target). Modelling analysis of the CAP target projects a 1.08 MtCO₂eq abatement saving by 2030 from this biofuel target (13.7% of the transport sector carbon abatement by 2030). The CAP also has targets and actions to incentivise greater production, supply, and use of biogas, such as biomethane and green hydrogen, with potential uses across economic sectors including in transport.

Among the key considerations for greater use of renewable energy is the appropriate hierarchy of use of renewable transport fuel (RTF) across the different transport and economic sectors.

The electrification of transport through ambitious EV targets in the CAP is a pathway for greater renewable electricity in transport consumption. Production and supply of renewable electricity for consumption across all economic sectors is already supported through the renewable electricity support scheme (RESS) and public service obligation (PSO) levy, with Climate Action Fund grants for EV purchase and infrastructure supporting increased transport consumption.

7.1.4 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES)

Two of the three Regional Assembly areas have published RSES with policies and objectives that have relevance to County Monaghan.

Northern and Western Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020 - 2032

The RSES for the Northern and Western Region (NWRA) 2020 - 2032 covers nine Local Authority areas and includes the County Monaghan area. The RSES sets out five 'Growth Ambitions' as follows:

- Growth Ambition 1 – Economy and Employment – Vibrant Region
- Growth Ambition 2 – Environment – Natural Heritage
- Growth Ambition 3 – Connectivity – Connected Region
- Growth Ambition 4 – Quality of Life
- Growth Ambition 5 – Infrastructure – Enabling Our Region

Growth Ambition 3 – Connectivity – Connected Region of the RSES outlines that, 'The provision of prudently managed transport and digital infrastructure is key to delivering our vision' and in section 6.5 it states, 'Both the National Planning Framework and the National Development Plan strongly acknowledge that accessibility from the northern and western region of Ireland and between centres of scale separate from Dublin will need to be significantly improved, focussed on cities and larger regionally distributed centres and on key east-west and north-south routes. Better accessibility will enable improved road safety and unrealised potential to be activated as well as better preparing for potential impacts from Brexit.'

In the Regional Policy Objectives (RPO) related to transport in County Monaghan it includes:

- RPO 6.6 - In accordance with National Development Plan investment commitments to bring the following schemes through planning/design/ construction, the following projects shall be delivered to an appropriate level of service in the short term and in any case by 2027 having regard to the standard in the NPF of an average inter-urban speed of 90KPH:
 - A5 Road Development
- RPO 6.7 - In accordance with National Development Plan investment commitments to progress the following schemes through pre-appraisal and early planning, the following projects shall be progressed through pre-appraisal and early planning in the short term and shall thereafter proceed to construction and be delivered to an appropriate level of service within the lifetime of the RSES:
 - N2 Clontibret to the Border connecting to the A5
 - N2 Ardee to south of Castleblaney
- RPO 6.8 - The delivery of the following projects shall be pursued, in consultation with and subject to the agreement of TII, through pre-appraisal, early planning and to construction as priority projects to be delivered to an appropriate level of service in the medium-term:
 - N53 Dundalk to N2 at Carrickmacross
 - N54/A3 Cavan to Monaghan Town
- RPO 6.10 - The East-West (Dundalk to Sligo) Road will be pursued incrementally in the short and medium term, to be delivered to an appropriate level of service (Dundalk - Carrickmacross - Shercock - Cootehill - Cavan - Enniskillen - Blacklion).
- RPO 6.18 to 6.22 Bus Network - These RPOs make provision for smart technology, reduced dependence on fossil-fuel powered vehicles, undertaking reviews to provide local bus services, enhanced and connected provision of public transport service, new interchange facilities, bus waiting facilities, enhanced passenger information and utilising smart technology to enhance the bus network.
- RPO 6.23 - To provide sustainable travel which will be supported by providing walking and cycling facilities (including Greenway and Blueway projects) as a priority across the region.
- RPO 6.24 - Support Cross-border sustainable transport, including but not limited to the delivery of the following:
 - Ulster Canal Greenway.
- RPO 6.26 - The walking and cycling offer within the region shall be improved to encourage more people to walk and cycle, through:
 - (a) Preparation and implementation of Local Transport Plans for... Regional Growth Centres and Key Towns, which shall encourage a travel mode shift from private vehicular use towards sustainable travel modes of walking, cycling and use of public transport.
 - (b) Safe walking and cycle infrastructure shall be provided in urban and rural areas, the design shall be informed by published design manuals, included the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) and the NTA Cycle Manual.
 - (c) Development of a network of Greenways.
- RPO 6.27 to 6.32 - Make provision for the development of Local Transport Plans.
- RPO 6.33 - Reduce dependency on the fossil-fuel powered vehicles and have regard to the National Policy Framework for Alternative Fuels Infrastructure for Transport.
- RPO 6.34 - Promote deployment of targeted, convenient and safe recharging infrastructure across the region to meet the changing needs of the electric vehicle with particular emphasis in public parking areas and employment locations.
- RPO 6.4 - Develop and deliver strategy and infrastructure to enable the adoption and integration of future modes of transport and mobility.

- RPO 6.50 - Continue to encourage Active Travel initiatives and where possible leverage technology and digital platforms to enhance the delivery of cycleway and walking infrastructure, particularly in our urban centres.
- RPO 6.51 - Promote values and policies that make it easy to commute between home, work and school across the region in a way that contributes to a healthy, attractive and climate-friendly region.
- RPO 8.13 - Support the delivery of flood defence works planned by OPW to be implemented in the short-term.
- RPO 9.1 - Build Inclusive and Compact Places by:
 - a) Planning for Inclusive Communities through regional cooperation and collaboration, to support the wider economic and social development agendas of the region and integrating health and wellbeing outcomes across all activities...
 - c) Accessing Quality Services by maximising the use of transport and digital infrastructure to ensure people can access quality education and health services, building on the quality health and education infrastructure that exists on a cross-border basis and building more shared services and nurturing greater collaboration between actors and agencies in the co-design of new services.
- RPO 9.2 - Invest in Accessible and Connected Places through:
 - (b) Encouraging active travel with a clear focus on place building and connectivity and promoting active mobility through soft measures including information and awareness-raising campaigns to complement hard investments in routes and support activities, including activity based recreation resources.
- RPO 9.4 - Create Resilient Places and Low-Carbon Infrastructure by:
 - a) Managing Natural Resources through adhering to the principles of the circular economy, monitor air quality through the use of smart technologies, with the overall aim of improving air quality and to protect local ecosystems through the management of our natural capital.
 - b) Transitioning to a Low Carbon Economy through a presumption against development in areas vulnerable to flooding and rising sea levels, continuing to assess the probability of risk from all sources of flooding, and working with relevant stakeholders in both the assessment and delivery of any mitigation responses required; Furthermore, pursue the generation of renewable energies and their local applications through, for example, green infrastructure planning, innovative design solutions, the promotion of energy-efficient buildings and homes.

Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019 - 2031

The RSES for the Eastern and Midland Region 2019 – 2031 does not cover County Monaghan, however it makes provision for the upgrade of the N2 through County Monaghan and County Louth between Castleblayney and Ardee in RPO 8.10: ‘The RSES supports appraisal and or delivery of the road projects set out in Table 8.4 subject to the outcome of appropriate environmental assessment and the planning process... N2 Ardee to south of Castleblaney.’

7.1.5 Sustainable Mobility and Active Travel

National Sustainable Mobility Policy

The National Sustainable Mobility Policy, published in April 2022, sets out Government’s strategic policy framework for supporting walking, cycling and public transport use in Ireland to 2030, laying the foundations for the required system change in transport that will help achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. The vision is that all cities, towns, and rural areas will be bicycle friendly. This policy document sets a target of 500,000 additional active travel and public transport journeys per day and a 10% reduction in kilometres driven by fossil fuelled cars by 2030. Relevant policies details include:

- Protect and maintain the safety of existing walking, cycling and public transport networks.
- Expanding walking and cycling options across the country.

It was accompanied by an Action Plan to 2025 aimed at expanding sustainable mobility options across the country, managing daily travel demand more efficiently, and reducing the journeys taken by private car.

It indicates that, “local transport plans for the regional growth centres and key towns will allow for local implementation of national and regional level land use and transport policies. These plans will be prepared based on the Area Based Transport Assessment Guidance produced by the NTA and TII”.

The Climate Action Plan 2024 and National Sustainable Mobility Policy includes several actions to expand the availability of shared mobility options in Ireland. These are hubs where a range of shared travel options – including, for example, shared bikes, electric bikes or e-cars – come together and can be accessed in one place by people who need them. They are often located close to other public travel hubs such as train or bus stations. In March 2024 a public consultation as a first step towards the development of Shared Mobility Hubs was launched, which is likely to result in guidance and support for the future development of such hubs.

National Cycle Network (NCN)

The NCN is a plan for an inter-urban cycle network (incorporating the regional and national greenways network, as appropriate), with a view to facilitating increased cycling and walking nationally for education, leisure, tourism and commuting trips. The planned NCN links cities and towns of over 5,000 people with a safe, connected and inviting cycle network. It proposes approximately 3,500km of cycle network, which will connect more than 200 settlements and 2.8m people. The NCN will link to destinations such as transport hubs, centres of education, centres of employment, leisure, and tourist destinations with the intention of facilitating greater cycling and walking amongst students, leisure users, tourists, and commuters alike.

The NCN published in 2023 is shown in Figure 7.2: Proposed National Cycle Network in Monaghan, 2023 and includes the following cycle network connections through County Monaghan:

- Clones – Monaghan – Armagh
- Castleblayney – Ballybay – Clones
- Castleblayney – Armagh
- Carrickmacross – Castleblayney
- Carrickmacross - Dundalk.



Figure 7.2: Proposed National Cycle Network in Monaghan, 2023

CycleConnects

CycleConnects is the National Transport Authority's (NTA) proposed cycle network and aims to improve sustainable travel by providing the potential for more trips on a safe, accessible and convenient cycling network, connecting more people to more places.

Proposals for cycling links in key cities, towns and villages in each county are included in the plan, in addition to connections between the larger towns, villages and settlements. The plan also incorporates existing and planned cycle routes such as greenways and blueways. The plan does not prescribe any cycle infrastructure for the routes presented but mainly serves to illustrate the potential cycle connections between all major towns and cities.

CycleConnects classifies routes in accordance with Table 7.1.

Table 7.1: CycleConnects route classifications

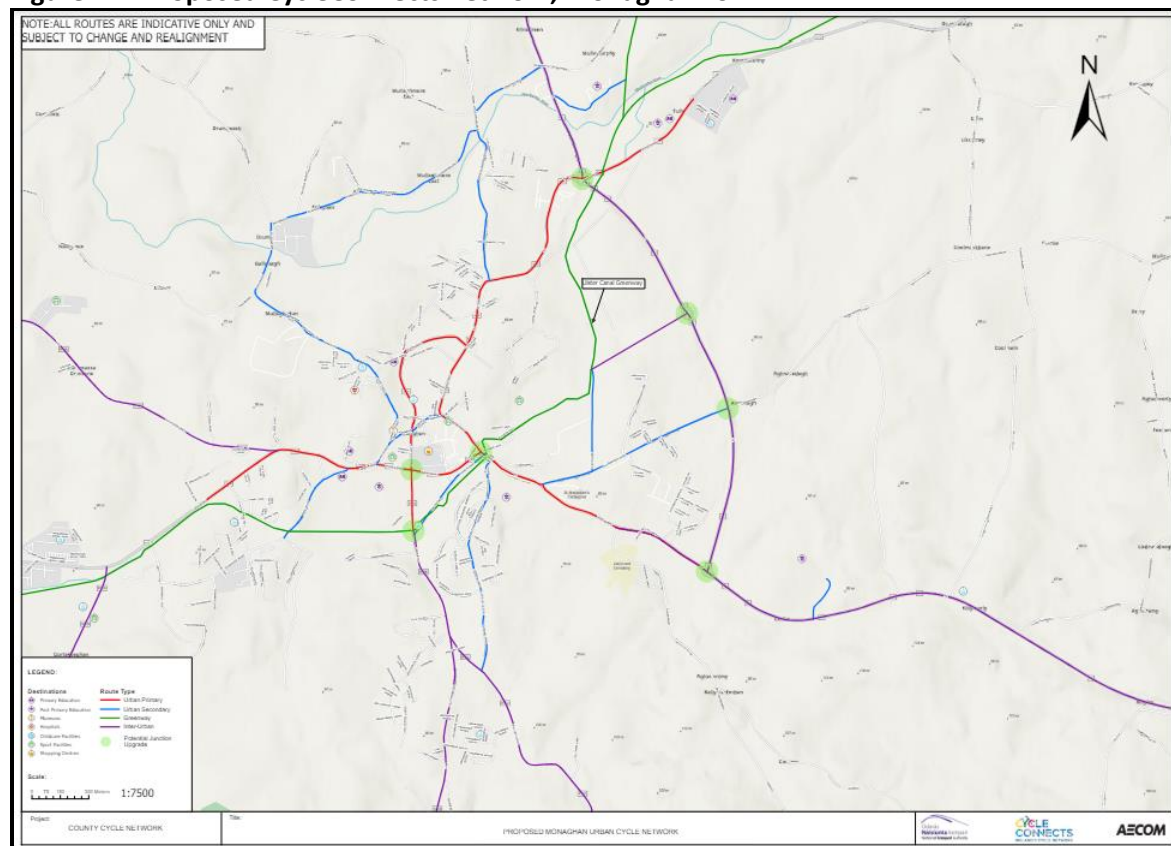
Name	Function
Urban Primary	High quality cycle route that can accommodate a high volume of cyclists typical in most urban areas. These will look to feature on major desire lines in town centres and form distinctive radial and orbital cycle routes in the major towns and cities. These primary routes should also form a cohesive and connected network within the urban area that will be simple for all types of cyclists to navigate.
Urban Secondary	Second tier cycle route in major urban areas to link with urban primary network to add greater route density and options on the network. These will typically be passing through residential areas, school and employment areas
Interurban	On-road cycle route to link all key settlements and destinations outside urban areas. These may have potential to provide off-road/segregated routes parallel to the existing road in later years.
Greenway	Off-road cycle route with no adjacent traffic for the majority of its route. These are typically located on old rail trails or Blueways (routes along rivers, lakes and canals) with cyclists sharing the route with pedestrians.

Source: CycleConnects: Draft Irelands Cycle Network (Main Report), National Transport Authority.

It is proposed to begin delivering these routes to begin from 2023 onwards and will continue over the timescales of the National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-2030.

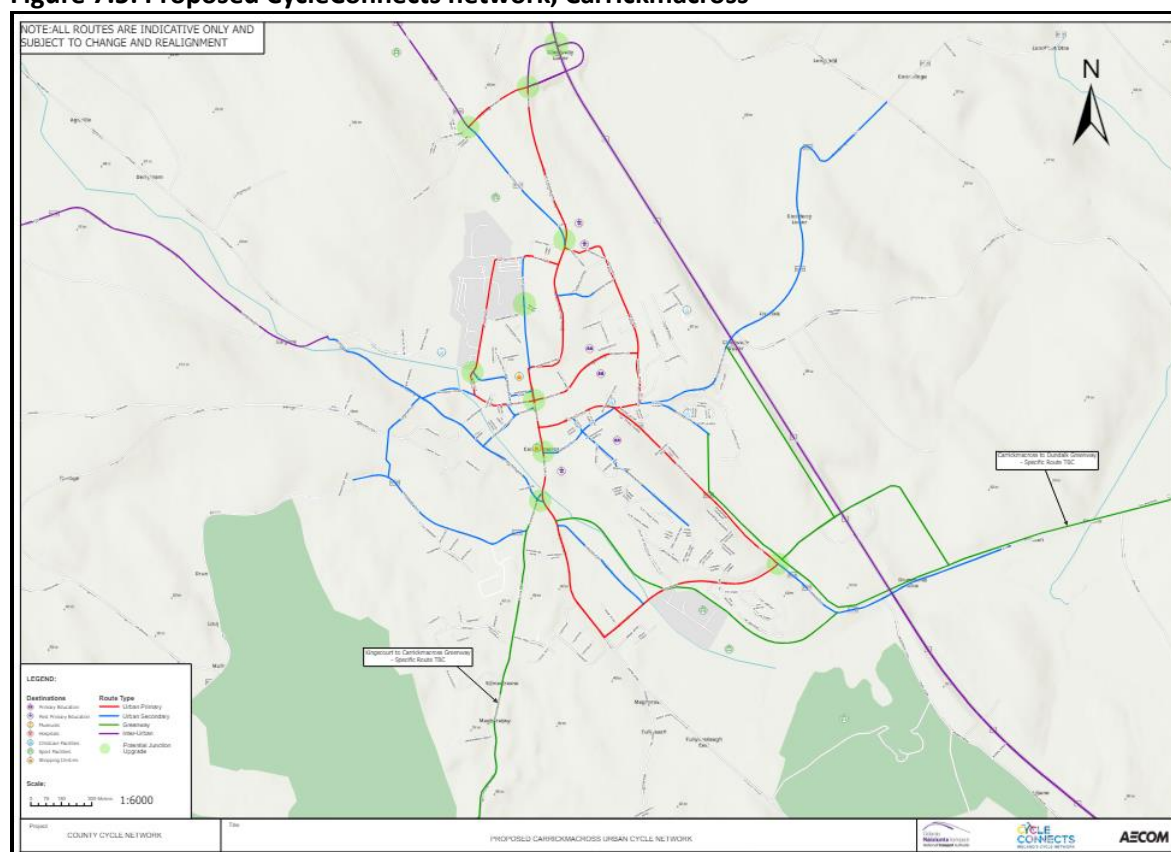
Maps of the 2022 emerging routes in County Monaghan are available to download from <https://consult.nationaltransport.ie/en/consultation/cycleconnects> and are provided in Figure 7.3, 7.4 and 7.5.

Figure 7.4: Proposed CycleConnects network, Monaghan Town



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Figure 7.5: Proposed CycleConnects network, Carrickmacross



Source: CycleConnects: Draft Ireland's Cycle Network (Main Report), National Transport Authority.

Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways (2018)

The Department of Transport published, a Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways, in July 2018, with an objective to develop new Greenways in a way which can transform more rural areas around the country, provide a wonderful experience for visitors and locals, and contribute to the health of the nation. The consideration of the policies and objectives of these guidelines will be required in any proposal to develop expand or develop Greenways. In response to a commitment documented in the Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenway, a Code of Best Practice for National and Regional Greenways was published in 2021, providing comprehensive information for landowner/property owners, project promoters and other stakeholders.

Greenway projects currently proposed in and through County Monaghan include;

- Kingscourt to Carrickmacross Greenway
- Carrickmacross to Dundalk Greenway
- Clones to Castleblayney Greenway (via Ballybay)
- Ulster Canal Greenway
- Blackwater Greenway
- Orchard Greenway

County Monaghan Walking and Cycling Strategy 2021 - 2026

Local Authorities were first directed to prepare walking and cycling strategies as an action of the National Physical Activity Plan, as a measure to combat Ireland's growing obesity crisis. Since then, walking and cycling have come to form important parts of transportation, climate change and tourism policies and strategies. Monaghan's Walking and Cycling Strategy is a high-level, strategic look at how Monaghan County Council proposes to:

- develop walking and cycling infrastructure, and
- promote walking and cycling as activities which support the economic, cultural and social wellbeing of the people of County Monaghan.

The largest single cause of journeys in Ireland is commuting to either work or school. In County Monaghan, almost 40,000 people commute daily but less than 10% of these walk or cycle, even though 15,000 of them have a journey of less than 15 minutes to make. Persuading some of these to make a modal shift from private motor cars to active travel modes would make a big difference to the County's carbon footprint.

Walking and cycling are playing an increasingly important role to our County's economic development, with Tourism Ireland reporting that they are the two most popular activities that overseas tourists engage in whilst in Ireland, and over one quarter of domestic holiday makers engaging in walking and 8% in cycling during their break. As County Monaghan is primarily seen as a destination for outdoor activities, walking and cycling amenities are an important part of our product offering.

This Strategy takes into account Monaghan County Council's role as an important agent of change in driving a number of key national programmes. The Strategy fits into a number of Council policies and plans, including the Corporate Plan and the County Development Plan, which lays down rules around what can and cannot be developed in the County and is a statutory document backed up by a raft of legislation. The Strategy will help the Council to deliver on a number of our other plans, including the Council's Healthy Monaghan Plan, the Sports Partnership's Strategic Plan, the Age Friendly Strategy and a number of local community plans.

The mission of the strategy is:

- To develop safe and appealing walking and cycling infrastructure in County Monaghan.
- To create an environment in which people will find it easy and attractive to walk and cycle, both recreationally, and for everyday journeys.

Ulster Canal Greenway Strategy

The Ulster Canal Greenway Strategy provides councils with the opportunity to collaborate on a project which will help each individual area connect to a wider region. Local Authorities are the key drivers behind the development of the proposed greenway which could provide economic opportunities for local entrepreneurs to establish and enhance businesses and bring much needed prosperity to the mainly rural area.

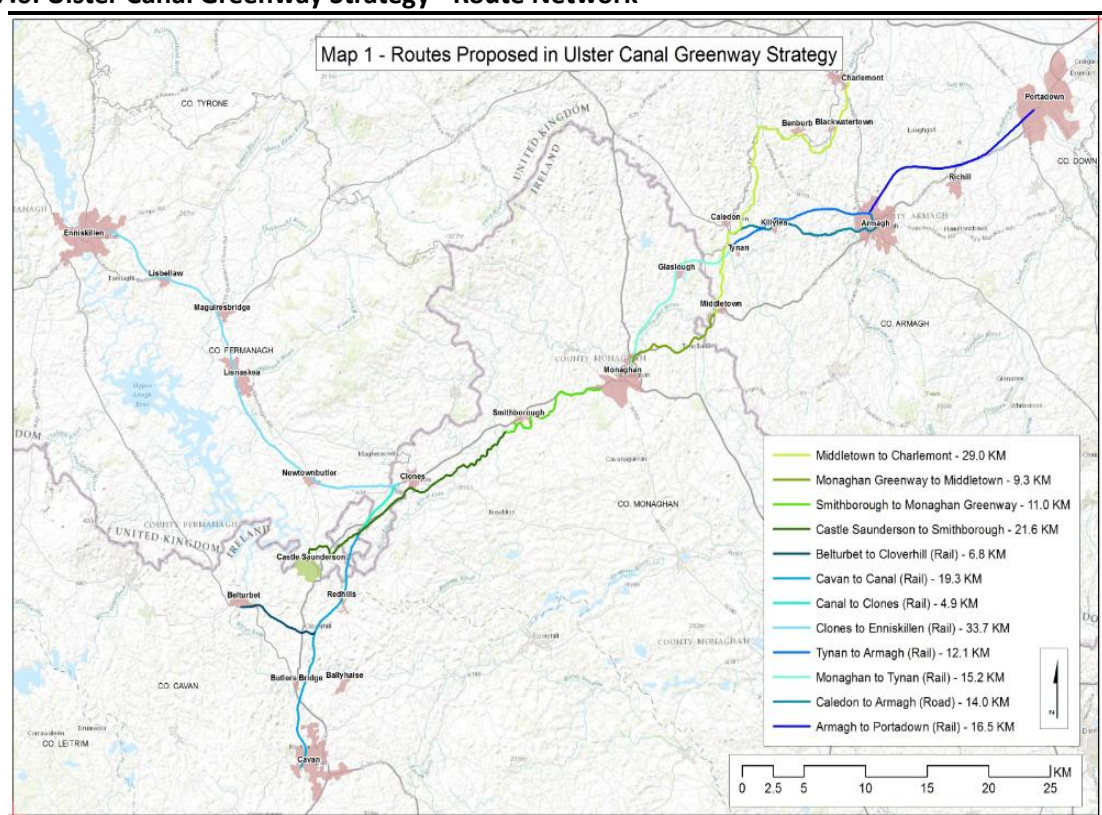
In June 2015 it was agreed that Waterways Ireland would lead on progressing development of a Greenway along the corridor of the Ulster Canal in association with relevant councils and stakeholders. The central spine of the greenway route therefore started to form around the Ulster Canal. However, the Local Authorities were keen that the route served the population centres of the region, so that it could support the Local Authorities work on promoting Local Agenda 21 around sustainable development, and in particular smarter travel choices. Therefore, the route expanded to include the main commuter destinations in the region, namely Armagh, Cavan and Enniskillen.

The long-term goal for this project is the creation of off-road walking and cycling paths using the original route of the disused Ulster Canal (as far as is practicable) and abandoned railway lines which link into it. Pathways which bring disused transportation infrastructure back into use are popularly known as 'greenways'.

Phase 1 of the Ulster Canal Greenway project opened in 2013. The 4.5km route travels from the east to west of Monaghan Town along the disused Ulster Canal. Phase 2 of the Ulster Canal project was launched in September 2017. This multi-phase project is being led by Transport Infrastructure Ireland

(TII) in partnership with Monaghan County Council and will extend over 17km across two phases i.e. Smithborough to Monaghan Town and Monaghan Town to the Monaghan/Armagh border. Both phases are due for completion in 2027.

Figure 7.6: Ulster Canal Greenway Strategy - Route Network



Source: Ulster Canal Greenway Strategy

All-Island Strategic Rail Review

The All-Island Strategic Rail Review Report, which was jointly commissioned by the Department of Transport in Ireland and the Department for Infrastructure in Northern Ireland, sets out a strategic vision for the development of the rail system across the island of Ireland over the coming decades. The Rail Review Report sets out 32 strategic recommendations to enhance the rail system in Ireland and Northern Ireland up to 2050, aligning with net carbon zero commitments in both jurisdictions. The report includes a proposal for a new single-track railway running between Portadown – Armagh – Monaghan – Clones – Cavan – Mullingar.

7.1.6 Vision Zero/Road Safety

New and developing vehicle and road technologies are becoming increasingly important as we move toward 'Vision Zero', a worldwide commitment that aims for no road deaths or serious injuries on our roads by 2050. Developments around autonomous (driverless) vehicles which can sense their environment and navigate without human input, new in-car safety technologies such as lane-assist and automatic braking, an increase in the number of people choosing active travel modes (walking and cycling), and the availability of new modes of transport such as e-Scooters and e-Bikes, have been changing the focus of road safety policy.

Ireland's Government Road Safety Strategy 2021–2030

The Strategy provides a phased strategic framework and targets to improve road safety nationally, including reducing the number of road deaths and serious injuries by 50% by 2030. This will be implemented using a range of measures, which includes actions to achieve safe roads and roadsides,

including delivering road safety improvement schemes and minor realignment schemes, increasing the length of divided roads on the national primary network, implementing low-cost safety scheme and larger safety schemes, and the construction of segregated walking and cycling facilities.

County Monaghan Road Safety Plan 2023-2024

The Plan is the first of three county level action plans covering the period 2023 to 2030. The purpose of which is to co-ordinate a multi-agency road safety policy and implementation at county level.

7.1.7 Transport Planning and Design Principles

The National Planning Framework at Project Ireland 2040, as well as the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western region set out national policy to support national and regional growth objectives, however local planning is required in order to meet those objectives and to ensure actions are delivered in a structured and measured way.

The following plans, guidelines and policy documents will be considered when planning and designing transport infrastructure in the County:

Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021 - 2025

Our Rural Future is the Government's national rural regeneration policy. It suggests that rural areas are the engine for national progress, a view which underpins the Monaghan County Development Plan, which aims 'to strengthen rural communities by supporting agricultural-diversification, tourism and opportunities for rural economic growth where local employment opportunities can be provided'.

Our Rural Future sets out a vision of engaged and integrated communities in vibrant rural places that play an integral role in the social and economic development of rural Ireland itself and the national economy. It introduces the Town Centre First Principle. The policy notes 'Local Authorities play a leading role in the regeneration and revitalisation of our rural towns and villages. Working directly with communities and local businesses, they are central to creating the conditions to improve the attractiveness of town and village centres, stimulate business and support residential development.

They do this through a range of measures including improvements in the public realm, the provision of civic amenities, the acquisition of strategic sites for development, including through the judicious use of Compulsory Purchase Orders, and the provision of a variety of services.'

Moving Together: A Strategic Approach to Improving the Efficiency of Ireland's Transport System (Draft Strategy, April 2024)

This Draft Strategy aims to manage and reduce congestion, making the country's transport system work better for everyone. The new Strategy encourages an urban first approach to rolling out measures, where other travel options exist, and aims to improve journey times for car drivers, public transport users, business and freight, leading to improvements in local air quality and reduced stress with associated health benefits for drivers and non-drivers alike.

It does not contain a prescriptive series of actions. Instead, it provides a firm policy direction and suite of options, such as road space reallocation, progressive taxation, freight efficiency, or behavioural incentives - that can be taken at national, regional and local levels to bring about the systems changed needed.

It is also intended that the Strategy will provide guidance needed for Local Authorities and local council representatives to develop plans for their own areas that suit their own communities' needs best. Once finalised, Monaghan County Council will be in a position to implement policies and options identified in the Strategy.

Spatial Planning and National Roads - Guidelines for Planning Authorities

The guidance document, 'Spatial Planning and National Roads – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, January 2012', published by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG), sets out policy considerations relating to development affecting National Primary and Secondary Roads, including motorways and associated junctions, outside the 50-60 kph speed limit zones for cities, towns, and villages. The Guidelines seek to achieve and maintain a safe and efficient network of National Roads in the broader context of sustainable development strategies. These guidelines state that Development Plans must include:

- Measurable objectives for securing more compact development that reduces overall demand for transport and encourages modal shift towards sustainable travel modes.
- Policies which seek to maintain and protect the safety, capacity and efficiency of National Roads and associated junctions, avoiding the creation of new accesses and the intensification of existing accesses to National Roads where a speed limit greater than 50 kph applies, and
- Clear policies and objectives with regard to planning and reservation of new routes and/or upgrades.

To demonstrate compliance with the guidelines, planning for significant development proposals or developments which result in cumulative road impacts may require:

- a Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) prepared in accordance with the Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines, and
- a Road Safety Audit (RSA) , undertaken in accordance with the TII Road Safety Audit standard.

The provision of off-line motorway service areas at National Road junctions and roadside service facilities on non-motorway National Roads and junctions are of a scale where they usually incorporate extensive parking and facilities that include refuelling, refreshments, and toilet facilities for road users. In any assessment for such a facility regard should be had to Section 2.8 of the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DoECLG) - Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines and the TII Policy on Service Areas.

Monaghan County Council will collaborate with TII to identify candidate sites for Park and Ride/Park and Share/EV charging/Multi-Modal Hub facilities along the National Road network in County Monaghan. These facilities can intercept car journeys, allowing people to avail of transport options that can contribute to lower carbon emissions and congestion.

Monaghan Land Use and Transportation Study 2019 - 2035

The Monaghan Land Use and Transportation Study (MLUTS) was prepared to identify detailed transportation and land use proposals for the future sustainable growth of Monaghan, in all contexts of transportation including road network, public transport, car parking, walking and cycling. The MLUTS makes key recommendations around developing lands, developing transport links, developing action plans, improving public transport and parking, and implementing traffic management arrangements.

Monaghan Local Transport Plan (LTP)

While the MLUTS considered the sustainable planning and growth of Monaghan Town, the Monaghan Local transport Plan (LTP) will establish a strategic framework for investment in transport. In Monaghan Town, there are long-standing issues with the pedestrian environment and sustainable transport connectivity. The town is surrounded by three National Roads, N2-Dublin to Derry, N12-Armagh Road and N54- Clones, Cavan Road. There is also a connection point for 5 Regional Roads,

- R186 (Scotstown)
- R189 (Threemilehouse Road),
- R188 (Cootehill Road),
- R162 (Ballybay Road)
- R937 (former N2, Dublin Road).

In 2023, Monaghan County Council commissioned specialist consultants Arup to prepare a Local Transport Plan (LTP) through the Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) process. The requirement for a LTP is set out in the NWRA's RSES.

The area subject to ABTA largely coincides with the overall population levels for each of the small areas and identifies the most densely populated parts of the settlement (population per square kilometre). This is helpful in identifying locations of high demand density, which are associated with trip generators.

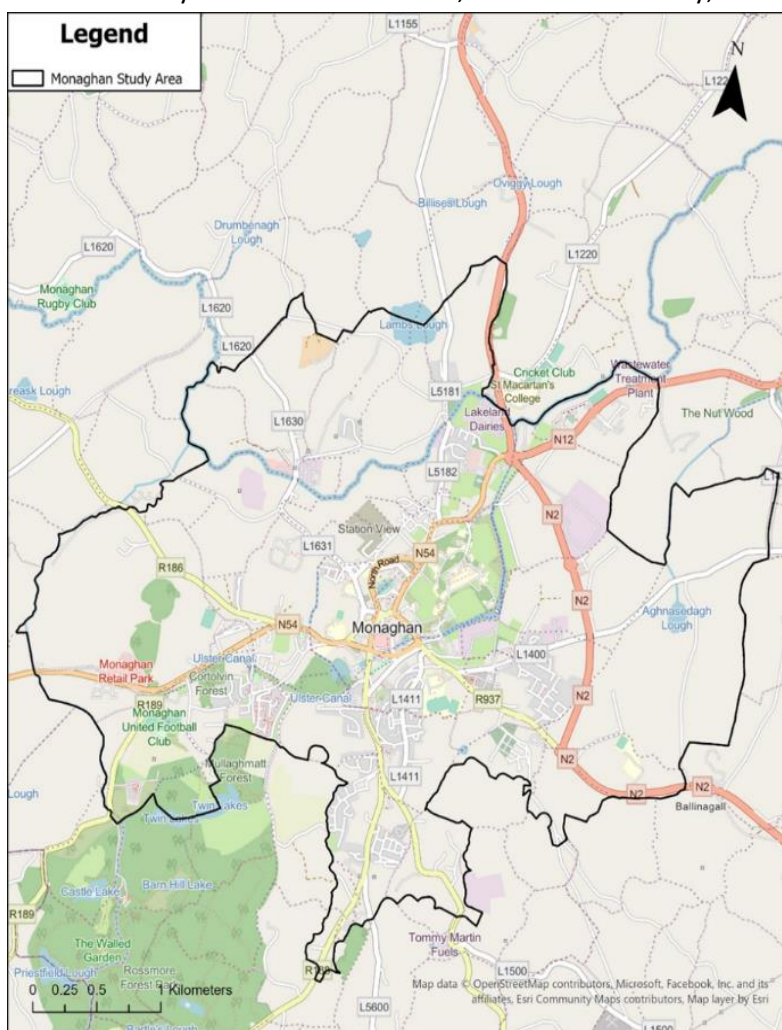


Figure 7.7: Monaghan Town LTP Study Area.

Source: Draft Baseline Report Monaghan LTP - Arup (Jan 2024).

The Baseline Assessment Report (Stage 1 of the ABTA) indicates that there is a strong reliance on the private car. According to Census 2022 Small Area Population Statistics (SAPS) for the small areas forming part of the Monaghan Town study, 79% of households own at least one car. This is slightly below the national average of 87%.

The Proposed Principles of the Monaghan Town LTP is as follows:

- P1 – Protecting the vitality and viability of Monaghan Town and its Environs,
- P2 – Support Housing through sustainable transport decisions,
- P3 – Support Climate Change Resilience,
- P4 – Support Economic Activity to maximise street life in the town centre and maintain links to the hinterland industries, and
- P5 – Support Community and a balanced transport system with great places for all users.

Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS)

Streets need to facilitate more sustainable forms of transportation such as walking, cycling and public transport therefore the need for car-borne trips is minimised in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote healthier lifestyles. In recognition of these objectives, the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTS), together with the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) commissioned the preparation of the DMURS. DMURS seeks to put well-designed streets at the heart of sustainable communities and supports boarder government policies on the environment, planning and transportation. DMURS provides the practical measures to achieve:

- Highly connected street which allow people to walk and cycle to key destinations in a direct and easy-to find manner.
- A safe and comfortable street environment for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages.
- Streets that contribute to the creation of attractive and lively communities.
- Streets that calm traffic via a range of design measures that make drivers more aware of their environment.

The principles, approaches and standards set out in DMURS typically apply to the design of all urban roads and streets (that is streets and roads with a speed limit of 60 km/h or less).

7.2 Planning for Sustainable Transport in County Monaghan

The transport sector accounted for 17.7% of greenhouse gas emissions in 2021. Cyclical increases in economic activity have always been reflected in a growth in demand for transport. When this historical trend is coupled with our projected national population growth, to 5.7 million by 2040, it is vital to consider how we can provide a sustainable transport system that can meet that anticipated demand yet assist in delivering on a 50% emissions abatement for the transport sector.

Since the closure of the railways and the Ulster Canal, County Monaghan has been heavily dependent on road-based transport for the movement of people and goods. Traditionally the public transport network has been limited, however major investment in recent years has seen new and improve bus services becoming established. Opportunities for active travel have been restricted by a lack of cohesive infrastructure, however with the establishment of an active travel unit within the Council and the availability of funding for active travel projects and Greenways, active travel infrastructure is being developed.

County Monaghan has the second highest rural road network density and has 2,409 km of roads which require ongoing maintenance and significant financial resources for their upkeep. Increasing traffic volumes and the impact of climate change (severe weather events and increased precipitation) affect road conditions.

As well as road improvement projects and road safety schemes, new active travel infrastructure is in development, along with recreational transport corridors (Greenways and Blueways). The delivery of transport infrastructure is often complex, and the planning and delivery of projects can take significant time, however many national, regional and local strategies around growth, development and climate action requires transport infrastructure to deliver those objectives. For this reason, it is essential that provision is made for transport planning, and the future delivery of transport projects is safeguarded.

The Government reaffirms its vision for sustainability in transport and 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, and

- To improve accessibility to transport.

The National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) sets out transport investment priorities as:

- Decarbonisation,
- Mobility of Goods and People,
- Protection and Renewal, and
- Enhances Regional Connectivity and Rural Connectivity.

The modal hierarchy is defined as (1) Active Travel, (2) Public Transport (3) Private Vehicles.

The investment hierarchy is defined as (1) Maintain, (2) Optimise, (3) Improve, (4) New.

NIFTI, along with other policies and strategies, provides a framework through which Monaghan County Council can approach transport planning.

The 2022 Census revealed that there has been an increase by 5% in the number of people in employment in County Monaghan compared to 2016 in County Monaghan. The average journey time to work is just under 25 mins which is below the national average of 28 minutes. As over 65% of County Monaghan's population is living in the rural area outside towns and villages, private vehicles are the main mode of transport used by rural communities.

The integration of land use and transportation is a fundamental principle of the National Sustainable Mobility Policy document. Land use planning which promotes compact building forms and restricts urban sprawl while making provision for good public transport connections and safe routes for walking and cycling will be encouraged. The policy recognises the vital importance of continued investment in transport to ensure an efficient economy and continued social development.

The following guidance documents published by the NTA will be taken into account in the development and transport planning of the County:

- Permeability Best Practice Guide,
- Achieving Effective Workplace Travel Plans; Guidance for Local Authorities,
- Workplace Travel Plans: A guide for implementers,
- Toolkit for School Travel,
- Guidance Note on Area Based Transport Assessment (NTA and TII),
- TII publication standard DN-GEO-03084, The Treatment of Transition Zones to Towns and Villages on National Roads, and
- TII publication standard DN-GEO-03030, Design Phase Procedure for Road Safety Improvement Schemes, Urban Renewal Schemes and Local Improvement Schemes

In consideration of the national Sustainable Mobility Policy 2022 (SMP), Monaghan County Council is committed to strengthening existing transport networks in the County. The Council are in favour of creating a more pedestrian and cycling centred environment within and between the County's settlements with good public transport provision, reduced car dependency and congestion and more attractive towns and villages.

The Sustainable Mobility Policy notes, 'local transport plans for the regional growth centres and key towns will allow for local implementation of national and regional level land use and transport policies. These plans will be prepared based on the Area Based Transport Assessment Guidance produced by the NTA and TII.' The following Local Transport Plans are proposed for County Monaghan, subject to NTA funding and approval through necessary project approval guidelines and statutory processes:

1. Monaghan Town (for completion in 2025)
2. Carrickmacross (anticipated to commence in 2026)

In addition, the following Sustainability Mobility Plans (SUMP) are planned, subject to NTA funding and approval through necessary project approval guidelines and statutory processes:

1. Clones (for completion in 2025)
2. Castleblayney (anticipated to commence in 2026)
3. Ballybay (expected to commence in 2026, subject to funding and resources)

Proposals for development in urban areas including villages will be subject to the provisions contained within the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS). In exceptional circumstances, consultation with TII in respect of urban national roads may be required and complimentary requirements included in TII publications may be applicable.

Planning for significant development proposals should be accompanied with a Traffic and Transport Assessment (TTA) and a Quality Safety Audit and Road Safety Audit which are assessed in association with their cumulative impact with other relevant developments on the road network. The TII Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines 2014 and requirements as set out in Appendix 9 must be complied with along with the guidance set out in the TII/NTA Area Based Transport Assessment Guidance notes (ABTA).

Climate Action and Climate Resilience are becoming increasingly important, particularly as severe weather events such as flooding, and winter weather can impact severely on transport and normal daily services. Climate Action and Climate Resilience proposals will be required to plan for and respond to climate change. Such projects may include flood management and mitigation, including integrated catchment management plans that may seek to manage flooding upstream of urban areas or locations where it impacts the transport network, or severe weather planning. Part of the Department of Transport's climate adaptation strategy for regional and local roads identifies critical infrastructure routes, which are of greatest importance from a social, economic or emergency response perspective. The strategy notes proper planning and maintenance of Critical Infrastructure Routes prevent many of the harmful effects induced by extreme weather events.

The 2,409 km road transport network in County Monaghan has legacy environmental impacts that are often taken for granted, including impacts on habitats and biodiversity and direct impacts on wildlife. With new knowledge and improved understanding and appreciation of our environment, the road and transport network could now provide new opportunities to improve or assist in the restoration of nature. The EU's Nature Restoration Law includes specific targets, and some of the potential interventions that could be delivered along the transport network are listed in

Table 7.2.

Table 7.2: Potential transport projects arising from the EU Nature Restoration Law

Relevant Target	Potential interventions within County Monaghan's transport network
Bringing back species populations and improving their habitats, including in wetland areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthen and diversify hedgerows and manage alien invasive species along transport corridors. - Address drainage to improve wetland habitats. - Provide measures for the safe movement of wildlife across and along road infrastructure (e.g. mammal underpasses, mammal proof fencing).
Improving urban ecosystems by having no net loss of green urban space by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make provision for covered green space when re-allocating road space.

and an increase in the total covered area by green urban space by 2040 and 2050	- Include for green space in the planning and design of new urban roads.
Identifying and removing barriers that prevent the connectivity of surface waters so that at least 25,000km of rivers are restored to a free-flowing state by 2030.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Replace, upgrade or install culverts and bridges that restrict river flow. - Where feasible, remove or realign sections of roads that interfere with river connectivity.

Source: EU's Nature Restoration Law

Transport Objectives	
TO 1	To support the delivery of EU, national, regional and local plans, strategies and policies in relation to supporting development and transport objectives and climate actions by developing transport plans and projects, protecting identified transport projects from development that could prejudice their future delivery, and protect existing transport routes from development that could reduce their efficiency or contribution to those plans or policies.
TO 2	Subject to funding and resources, to work collaboratively on appropriate projects with other departments and agencies and deliver projects that will contribute to EU, national, regional and local targets around climate action, nature restoration and biodiversity loss.
TO 3	To promote sustainable land use planning, having due regard to existing constraints and environmental sensitivities and relevant environmental protection requirements, to facilitate transportation efficiency, economic returns on transport investment, minimisation of environmental impacts and a general shift towards the greater use of public and active transport throughout the County.
TO 4	To support the creation of an integrated and sustainable transport system to promote a choice of transport modes and low-carbon travel options, including public transport and transport sharing, cycling, and walking facilities, and through the provision of ancillary infrastructure that facilitates modal shift or improves user experiences.
TO 5	To optimise use of the County's transport infrastructure through projects, maintenance strategies and traffic management solutions to manage traffic appropriately, improve road safety, support sustainable mobility, improve climate resilience and reduce the impact of climate change on transportation in the County.
TO 6	To protect, improve and invest in our national, regional, and local roads and to safeguard the strategic transport links to and from urban centres which are identified as key economic drivers in the region.
TO 7	To support transport options that provide for reductions in carbon emissions by facilitating the transition to lower emission fuels and energy sources, promoting public transport, walking, and cycling, and by actively seeking to reduce car use in circumstances where alternative options are available.
TO 8	To identify and develop projects that can deliver climate resilience, subject to funding and resources.
TO 9	To vary the Development Plan to incorporate the objectives and measures of Integrated Transport Plan for County Monaghan when finalised, and to implement its objectives and measures during the lifetime of this plan.

Transport Policies	
TP 1	To develop an Integrated Transport Plan for County Monaghan to provide a roadmap identifying strategic transport routes that will aim to connect towns, communities and rural areas. The plan will be prepared in collaboration with NTA,

	TII, DOT and local and national public transport providers, during the lifetime of this plan, commencing by 2027.
TP 2	To prepare Local Transport Plans using the Area Based Transport Assessments process in Monaghan Town and Carrickmacross, and Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans for the towns of Castleblayney, Clones and Ballybay during the first three years of this plan.
TP 3	Subject to funding and approvals, progress the planning, design and implementation of transport projects identified in national/regional policy, in this County Development Plan, and through other relevant transport plans.
TP 4	Ensure that new development does not prejudice the future delivery of transport plans or projects. Restrict development to protect potential route options, preferred route corridors, or designed alignments for transport projects identified in national/regional policies, in this County Development Plan, and through other relevant transport plans.
TP 5	To develop and implement strategies and projects to optimise the operation and maintenance of the Regional and Local Road network in line with available resources and priorities, including improvement works, road resurfacing and surface maintenance, bridge replacements, upgrades and repairs, signage, road markings, footpaths, public lighting, and traffic management facilities to improve road safety and traffic management, with a focus on critical infrastructure routes, strategic routes or roads carrying higher volumes of traffic and in accordance with all relevant environmental protection requirements, including conservation requirements.
TP 6	Subject to funding and resources, design and implement projects and traffic management solutions to manage traffic appropriately, improve road safety, support sustainable mobility, improve climate resilience and reduce the impact of climate change on transportation in the County.
TP 7	Subject to funding and approvals, protect, improve and invest in our national, regional, and local roads to safeguard the strategic transport links to and from urban centres which are identified as key economic drivers in the region.
TP 8	To develop an EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy for County Monaghan in line with National Guidance, during the lifetime of this plan, subject to available resources.
TP 9	Subject to funding and resources, plan and implement transport projects that can improve climate resilience, contribute to climate action targets, assist in nature restoration or address biodiversity loss.
TP 10	Where practicable, make provision for urban ecosystems by including green covered areas within urban transport projects, and provide for additional green urban space along new transport corridors.
TP 11	To ensure that new development proposals that are subject to Traffic and Transport Assessment are carried out in accordance with the requirements set out in the TII Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines.
TP 12	Road schemes proposed and identified for development locally will be developed complementary to safeguarding the strategic function of the national road network and proposals impacting on the national road network should be developed in consultation with and subject to the agreement of TII.
TP 13	Development proposals in proximity to the N2 junctions shall be appropriately assessed to ascertain the implications of traffic generation on the safe and efficient operation of the N2 and associated junctions. Proposals should consider the cumulative impact of development in the area and be subject to Traffic and Transport Assessment as appropriate.

7.3 Road Based Transport

7.3.1 National Roads

A high quality, safe and efficient main road network is paramount in County Monaghan where road transport is the only mode of travel to access ports, airports, national and regional services and wider markets in the region and Country. The National Road network is required to provide the County with safe and efficient access to Dublin and other principal towns, airports, seaports, the North-West region and Northern Ireland. Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) is responsible for securing the provision of a safe and efficient network of national roads throughout the Country, and Monaghan County Council is responsible for the maintenance and construction of the national roads in the County. Annual funding is provided to progress major and minor schemes, road safety projects and maintenance and upgrade projects.

Four National Routes traverse County Monaghan and provide important local linkages between the larger towns in County Monaghan and the wider rural hinterland:

N2 Dublin-Derry National Primary Road: Aclint Bridge-Moybridge 63.9km

The N2 runs north south through County Monaghan and is part of the North-West cross-border Corridor, linking Dublin, the Border Region and the North-West, including Northern Ireland. Sections of the N2 have a poor road safety record. The N2 passes through the urban areas of Monaghan and Emyvale;

- The NDP 2021 – 2030 makes provision for the pre-appraisal and early planning of the N2 Clontibret to (the) Border Road Scheme as listed in the NDP 2018 – 2027. This project will upgrade a 28km section of the N2 between Clontibret, bypassing Monaghan and Emyvale, and will tie-in to the existing N2 just south of the Northern Ireland Border.
- The N2 Ardee to (South of) Castleblayney Road Scheme is also listed in the NDP 2018 – 2027 and supported in the NDP 2021 – 2030 as a project to be progressed through pre-appraisal and early planning. This 32km project is in County Monaghan and Louth.

Planning and design processed for the N2 Ardee to Castleblayney and the N2 Clontibret to Border Road Schemes commenced in 2018 and in 2021 a Preferred Route Corridor was identified for each project. Details of the Preferred Route Corridor are provided in 5.0 and 5.1. The projects are expected to contribute to the Road Safety Strategy 2021–2030 objectives of increasing the length of divided road on the national primary network and the provision of segregated walking and cycling facilities. It should be noted that the lack of progress on the delivery of the N2 upgrades has resulted in the sterilisation of lands for the last 25 years.

In Northern Ireland an upgrade of the A5 is planned through the Department for Infrastructure's A5 Western Transport Corridor project (A5WTC). As the design of both projects progress, it is becoming apparent that a transboundary route may be required to link the A5WTC project in the north with the N2 Clontibret to Border Road Scheme in the Republic of Ireland.

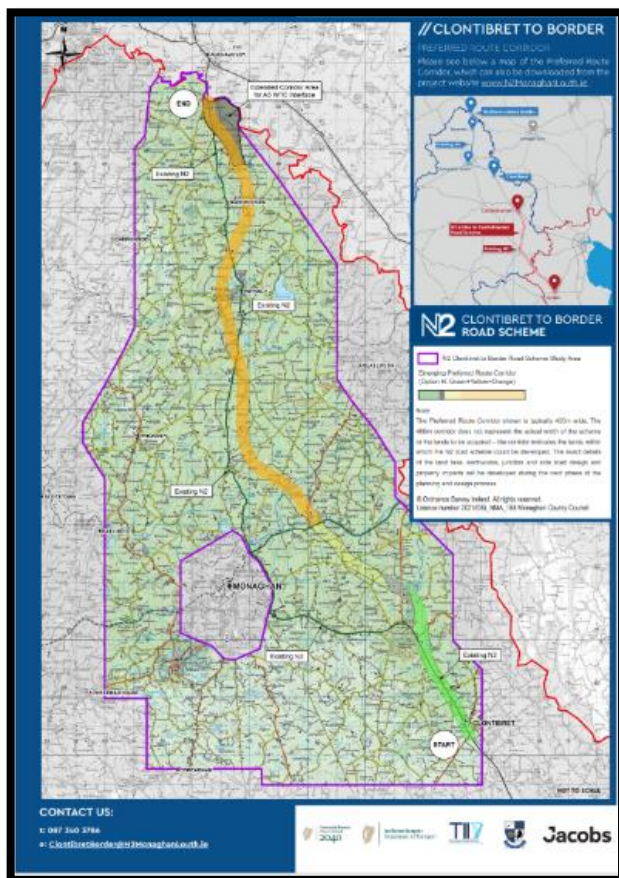


Figure 7.8: Preferred Route Corridor for the N2 Clontibret to Border Scheme (February 2021).

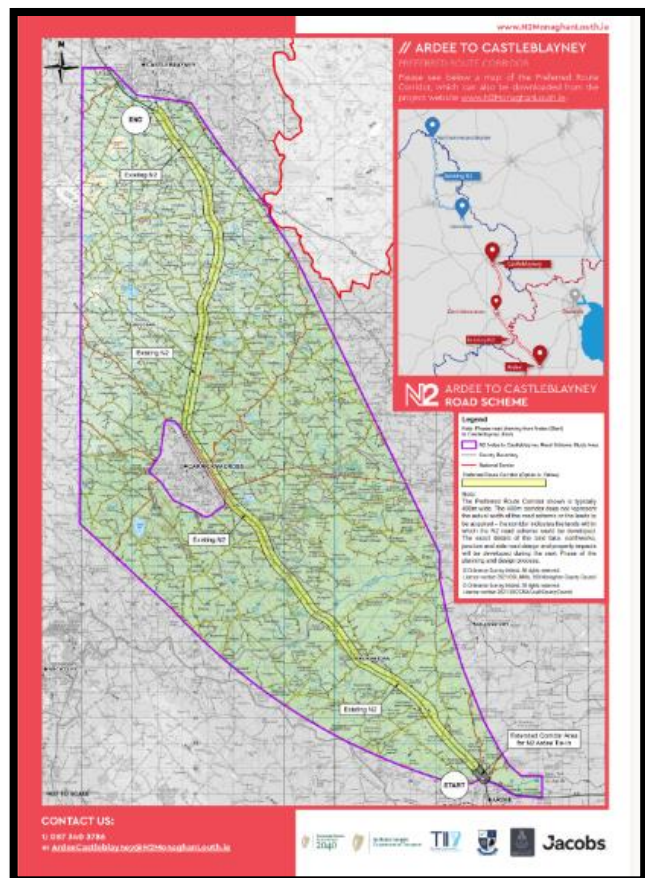


Figure 7.9: Preferred Route Corridor for the N2 Ardee to Castleblayney Road Scheme (February 2021).

N12 Monaghan-Armagh National Primary Road: Monaghan Town-Tamlet, Tyholland 6.9km

The N12 runs east-west through County Monaghan, connecting Monaghan town with Armagh City and onward toward Belfast. This is a legacy road, and while minor improvements have been undertaken, sections of the road are sub-standard and have a poor safety record.

N53 Castleblayney-Dundalk National Secondary Road: Castleblayney Town-Ballinacarry Bridge 7.7km. The N53 links the towns of Castleblayney and Dundalk and also provides a connection between the N2 North-West corridor and the M1 economic corridor.

The road has been improved in County Monaghan, however at the Northern Ireland Border the Ballinacarry Bridge has a poor alignment that is not consistent with the speed of the road. A project to realign the bridge is at the design stage.

At its western end, the N53 ties into the Tullyvin Roundabout on the N2, however the route passes through the urban area of Castleblayney, reducing the travel time on this road and introducing through traffic and commercial traffic into the town area.

N54 Monaghan-Cavan National Secondary Road: Monaghan Town-Drumully, Clones 25.4km.

The N54 runs from Monaghan Town to Cavan, passing through the towns of Monaghan and Clones and the village of Smithborough. The volume and composition of traffic in Monaghan and Clones Town contribute to congestion and restrict the delivery of active travel and road space re-allocation

projects in the urban centres.

It should be noted that this road has onward connectivity to the west, and to the east it connects with the N12 National Primary Road providing onward connectivity to Armagh and toward Belfast. This makes it an important transport corridor for traffic between Northern Ireland and the west of Ireland.

This is a legacy road, and while minor improvements have been undertaken, sections of the road are sub-standard and have a poor safety record.

A 3.1km minor road scheme is proposed between Tullygrimes and Annaghervey, and a CPO for the project was confirmed in 2024.

Major and minor National Road projects will be progressed in line with TII's Project Management Guidelines, which provide an 8-phase framework for the delivery for road projects, and in accordance with TII standards and guidelines.

Figure 7.10: TII Road Project Delivery Framework



Source: Project Management Guidelines

Minor and major national road projects proposed for progression in line with the TII Project Management Guidelines during the course of this plan are set out in Table 7.3. Progression of these projects will be subject to funding and approvals.

Table 7.3: National Road projects proposed in County Monaghan

Ref	Road	Route	Project Status (2024)
1	N2	N2 Clontibret to Border Road Scheme	Phase 3 (Design and Environmental Evaluation)
2	N2	N2 Ardee to Castleblaney Road Scheme	Phase 3 (Design and Environmental Evaluation)
3	N2/A5	N2 Monaghan – Tyrone trans-boundary project	Pre Phase 0
4	N54	N54 Tullygrimes to Annaghervey	Phase 4 (Statutory Procedures)
5	N53	N53 Ballynacarry Bridge Replacement	Phase 4 (Statutory Procedures)
6	N2/N54	Monaghan Town Northern Link Road, connecting the N54 Clones Road to N2/N12 National Primary Routes.	Pre Phase 0
7	N2/N53	N2 – N53 Link Road	Pre Phase 0
8	N12	N12 Realignment	Pre Phase 0

Changes in traffic patterns and composition may result in other sections of the National Road having a poor safety record, being substandard or not being capable of meeting national, regional or local objectives. Opportunities to upgrade or improve National Roads for the benefit of road users will be progressed in consultation with TII and will complement and safeguard other National Plans and policies.

National Roads Policy	
NRP 1	To work in association with TII to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the National Road Network, and to prevent or restrict activities or development that reduces the quality, capacity or durability of the national road network, or to seek financial contribution toward the cost of mitigating the impact of that development.
NRP 2	Subject to funding and approvals, to progress the projects in Table 7.3 in co-operation with TII and the relevant adjoining Local Authorities.
NRP 3	To resist development that could add cost, complexity or prejudice the delivery of National Road projects listed in Table 7.3
NRP 4	To protect the traffic carrying capacity of National Roads, the level of service they deliver and the period over which they continue to perform efficiently, by avoiding the creation of new access points or the generation of increased traffic from existing accesses onto the N2, N53, N54, and N12 outside the 60 km/h speed limit, in accordance with the DoECLG's publication Spatial Planning and National Roads - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012).
NRP 5	To consider, in exceptional circumstances, permitting access onto National Roads for developments of national and regional strategic importance where the locations concerned have specific characteristics that make them particularly suitable for the developments proposed, subject to such developments being provided for through the Local Area Plan or Development Plan making process in accordance with Section 2.6 of the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines, and in consultation with the TII.
NRP 6	To prohibit the erection of non-traffic permanent road signage on or adjacent to National Roads in line with the provisions of the Department of Environment, Community and Local Governments - Spatial Planning and National Roads (2012).
NRP 7	Access and road design details on National Roads shall comply with TII Publications and design standards. Any development with the potential to impact on the carrying capacity and/or safety of any National Primary or National Secondary Road shall include proposals to avoid, remedy or mitigate the impact on the National Road Network. Such proposals may include the payment of a contribution toward the cost of any required mitigation works.
NRP 8	To resist the use of National, Regional and Local roads for advertising purposes and to implement the provisions of the TII policy document "Policy on the Provision of Tourism and Leisure Signage on National Roads" (2011).

7.3.2 Regional Roads

Monaghan County Council manages 297 kilometres of regional roads throughout the County, listed in Table 7.4 Regional Roads provide vital links between the five towns, villages and settlements within the County, and to towns and villages in adjoining Counties. It provides essential links for access to retail, service, and employment centres throughout the County and beyond. Many Regional Roads are legacy roads and have non-standard cross-sections and alignments. The Council maintains and improves the Regional Road Network through re-alignment, safety projects and maintenance of road pavements, subject to available funding.

Table 7.4: Schedule of Regional Roads, County Monaghan

No.	Description	Length (km)
R162	Monaghan - Ballybay - Shercock	31
R178	Dundalk - Carrickmacross – Shercock	19
R179	Culloville- Carrickmacross – Kingscourt	21
R180	Carrickmacross – Ballybay	22
R181	Keady - Castleblayney – Shercock	27
R182	Castleblayney – Oram - Newtownhamilton	10
R183	Clones – Ballybay - Castleblayney	38
R184	Clontibret - Ballybay	9.5
R185	Glaslough – Monaghan	10
R186	Monaghan - Clogher	19
R187	Monaghan - Roslea	7
R188	Monaghan – Cootehill	23
R189	Monaghan – Newbliss – Cootehill	25
R190	Ballybay – Cootehill	10
R193	Rockcorry - Anny	2.5
R212	Clones – Scotshouse - Ballyhaise	10
R213	Castleshane - Killyneil	4.3
R214	Keady Road - Derrynoose	4.2
R867	N54 junction with Market Street to N54 junction Diamond	0.5
R927	Carrickmacross south – Carrickmacross north	3.7
R937	Old Cross Square to N2 Bypass	1.4
R938	Castleblayney North – Dundalk Road via Main Street	3

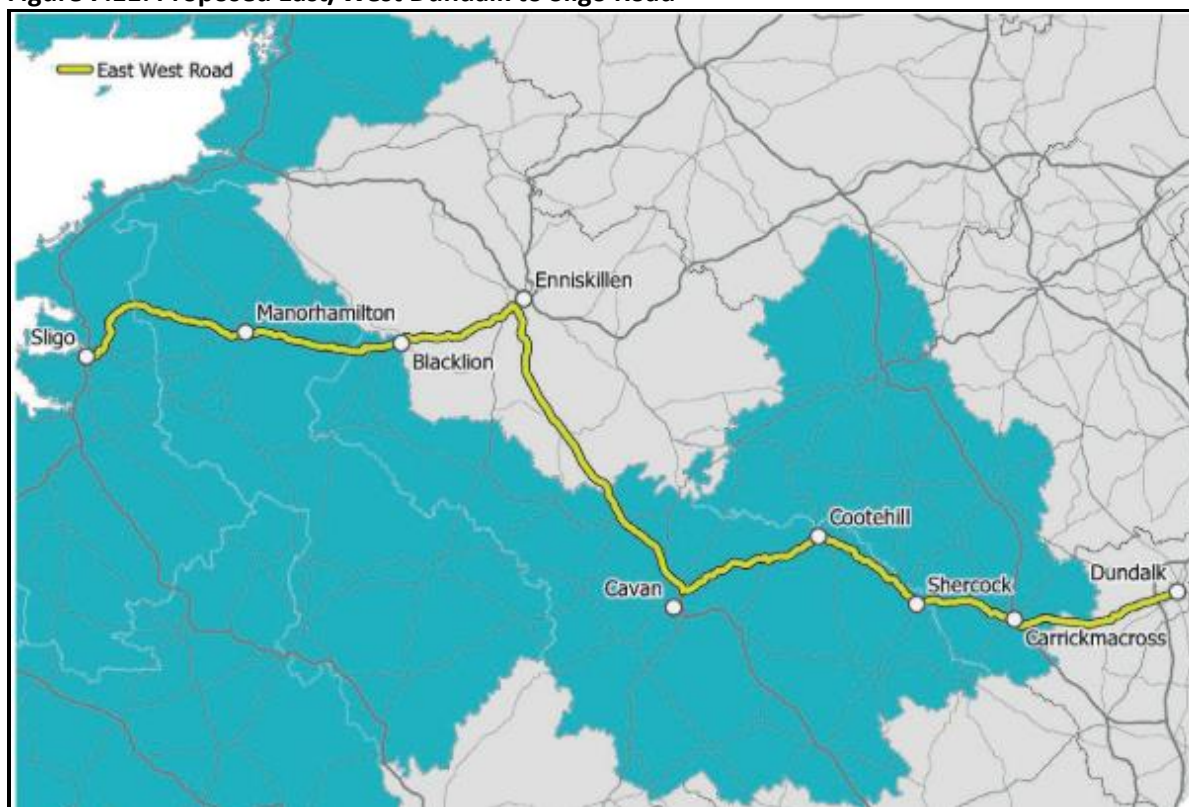
There are a number of regional routes considered to be Strategic Regional Routes that provide strategic linkages to the main settlements within the County and the wider border region or carry significant volumes of traffic. These are listed in Table 7.5.

Table 7.5: Strategic Regional Routes

Road	Strategic Regional Routes
R162	Monaghan-Ballybay
R178	Dundalk-Carrickmacross-Shercock
R180	Ballybay-Lough Egish-Carrickmacross
R181	Keady-Castleblayney-Lough Egish-Shercock
R183	Castleblayney-Ballybay-Clones
R188	Monaghan-Cootehill
R190	Ballybay-Cootehill

In addition to this, the Northern and Western Regional Assembly's Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (NWRA RSES) 2020 – 2032 makes provision for an East-West Route which follows the route of the R-178 through County Monaghan, as illustrated in Figure 7.11 'RPO 6.10; The East-West (Dundalk to Sligo) Road will be pursued incrementally in the short and medium term, to be delivered to an appropriate level of service (Dundalk - Carrickmacross - Shercock - Cootehill - Cavan - Enniskillen - Blacklion)'. Monaghan County Council will work collaboratively with other Local Authorities in the region to implement measures that can assist in delivering the objectives of the route, subject to ringfenced funding being made available.

Figure 7.11: Proposed East/West Dundalk to Sligo Road



Source: Northern and Western regional Assembly, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020 -2032.

Regional Road Policy	
RRP 1	To work collaboratively with other local authorities in the region to implement measures that can assist in delivering the objectives of the East-West route identified in the Northern and Western Regional Assembly's Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020 – 2032.
RRP 2	To develop a Regional Road Intervention Strategy, using appropriate modelling and analysis (in collaboration with other agencies where appropriate) to identify priority sections for improvement.
RRP 3	To develop proposals to improve safety on Regional Routes, including road realignments and upgrades, road widening and verge widening, pavement improvement including drainage enhancement, junction upgrades, public lighting, provision for vulnerable road users, road boundary treatments and road safety measures. Funding and resources should be prioritised on the Regional Road Intervention Strategy once developed. In the interim priority should be given to investment in Strategic Regional Routes, or at locations where specific issues have been identified.
RRP 4	To protect the traffic carrying capacity of Regional Roads, particularly Strategic Regional Roads, by ensuring new development on Regional Roads makes appropriate provision for road safety and the improvement of the route for all road users.
RRP 5	Access and road design details on Regional Roads shall comply with TII Rural Road Link Design DN-GEO-03031. Any development with the potential to impact on the carrying capacity and/or safety of the Regional Road shall include proposals to avoid, remedy or mitigate the impact. Such proposals may include the payment of a contribution toward the cost of any required mitigation works.

RRP 6	To implement a pavement maintenance strategy that optimises the management of the Regional Road Network, providing best value for money to the taxpayer while managing road safety.
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7.3.3 Local Roads

Monaghan County Council is responsible for the improvement and upkeep of 2,155 kilometres of local roads throughout the County. Each of the three Municipal Districts are responsible for the improvement and upkeep of local roads within their jurisdiction. The local roads in County Monaghan make up 84% of the road network and serve an important role. Local roads are classed as Local Primary, Local Secondary and Local Tertiary depending on the levels of traffic and carriageway width. Local roads are of critical importance to the economic and social activity within the County given the County's low level of urbanisation and dispersed settlement pattern. The maintenance and improvement of these roads is financed from local resources and supplemented by state grants. The Multi-Annual Road Works Programme sets out the order of priority of improvement works to be completed by the Council.

Local Roads Policy	
LRP 1	To prioritise improvement works at locations where road safety and traffic management issues can be addressed, including specific works at junctions, at bridges, signage, road markings, footpaths, public lighting, and traffic management facilities, and in accordance with all relevant environmental protection requirements, including conservation requirements, subject to available resources.
LRP 2	To implement a pavement maintenance strategy that optimises the management of the local road network, providing best value for money to the taxpayer while managing road safety.
LRP 3	To facilitate development on the local road network by allowing developers to contribute toward the capital and maintenance cost of the local road network by participating in the Community Involvement Scheme or through direct contributions.
LRP 4	To support the maintenance of the local road network by providing support and assistance to communities, groups or individuals who wish to participate in the Community Involvement Scheme.
LRP 5	To facilitate the improvement of non-public roads under the Local Improvement Scheme Programme funded by state grants and contributions from benefiting landowners.

7.3.4 Roads in Urban Areas

Achieving a balance between development objectives and facilitating transport can be difficult. The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets states, 'It is beyond doubt that the streets of our cities and towns, suburbs and villages, should be safe, attractive and comfortable for all users. As well as cars and other vehicles this encompasses pedestrians, cyclists, and those using public transport. It also includes people of all ages and abilities and is equally relevant to residents and visitors. As Ireland follows the global trend towards increased urbanisation we must ensure our cities and towns are pleasant, safe and healthy places to live'.

Adaptation of existing roads and urban spaces to cater for the needs of through traffic, local traffic, commercial businesses, residents and vulnerable road users may require significant intervention that re-allocates road space and may change priority. Projects in urban areas will consider the needs of all road users, while taking into account other national, regional and local strategies and objectives.

Anticipated increases in demand for serviced land for residential, commercial and industrial uses in

each of the five main towns places pressures on the existing urban road network and requires the development of new access and relief roads.

The provision of new relief roads and urban roads could reduce congestion for road users, divert traffic away from town centres, facilitate new development including compact town centre development, and assist in meeting sustainable transport and climate action objectives. A number of strategic new routes have been identified in each town, which are listed in Table 7.6.

Subject to funding, resources and approvals, these road proposals will be developed in line with relevant road transport planning guidelines, taking into consideration the need for the scheme, constraints, options and alternatives, environment, cost, and in consultation with stakeholders. Project development will be subject to the Transport Appraisal Framework and the Public Spending Code. For the purposes of this plan, the following road connections are proposed:

Table 7.6: Strategic New Routes in the Five County Towns

Town	Road Description
Monaghan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monaghan Town Northern Link Road, connecting the N54 Clones Road to N2/N12 National Primary Routes (As set out in Table 7.3. • Extension of Oriel Way Southern link road to provide transport connectivity between the N54 Clones Road and R188 Cootehill Road. • Development of a Southern link between the R162 Ballybay Road and the N2 Dublin Road. • Development of a link Road from the N12 Armagh Road to provide a connection to the N2 Monaghan Town Bypass. • Development of a link road from Roosky Vale to the rear of Dublin Street. • Development of a Mid-town transport connection between development lands at Annahagh and the town centre. • Widening of Annahagh Lane to facilitate residential development. • Upgrade of Black Lane to facilitate further development.
Carrickmacross	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an inner link road between the R178 Shercock Road and the R180 Ballybay Road/Castleblayney Road (N2). • Develop a western link road which can provides connection between the R179 Kingscourt Road, R178 Shercock Road, and R180 Lough Egish Road.
Castleblayney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link Road between the R181 Keady Road and the R938 Monaghan Road. • N2 – N53 Link Road (As set out in Table 7.3-0). • Link Road between the Bog Road and the R938 Monaghan Road. • Link from McGrath Road to Bog Road.
Clones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link from Monaghan Road (N54) to Roslea Road (LP2110) and the extension of the Monaghan Road (N54) – Roslea Road Link Road (around St. Tiarnach's Park.

Urban Area Road Policies	
UARP 1	Subject to resources, funding and approvals, to progress identified upgrades of the urban road network.
UARP 2	Re-allocate road space to optimise the use of existing infrastructure, to facilitate active travel, facilitate public and shared transport, enhance the public realm, improve road safety or deliver on climate change actions to support the delivery of national, regional and local strategies and policies.

UARP 3	Public realm, traffic calming, and transport projects will seek to balance the needs of all road users, while taking into account other national, regional and local strategies and objectives, including climate action targets.
UARP 4	The carrying capacity of strategic transport routes shall be protected in urban areas, while balancing the need to develop urban areas and cater for sustainable mobility and vulnerable road users.
UARP 5	Access and road design details on urban roads shall be designed in accordance with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets where speed limits are below 50km/h, or other relevant design standards as appropriate.
UARP 6	Any development with the potential to impact on the carrying capacity and/or safety of the urban road network shall include proposals to avoid, remedy or mitigate the impact. Such proposals may include the payment of a contribution toward the cost of any required mitigation works.

7.4 Active Travel and Recreational Walking and Cycling

Transport provision has been focused on vehicular traffic for a long number of years. There is now a greater focus on providing infrastructure to strengthen and support the creation of an environment that is attractive and safe for walking, cycling and wheeling. Every public transport trip has an active travel element, and the interconnectivity of public transport and active travel must be considered. Almost every journey has a walking component. Many short journeys are only practical by walking. Active travel measures must achieve inclusivity with the needs and requirements of people of all ages and those with disabilities (including mobility, sensory and cognitive impairments) considered.

The provision of quality cycling, wheeling and walking facilities is key to an integrated transport system in towns and villages where the potential for short trips by foot, scooter or on bicycle can provide an economical, non-polluting, and flexible form of transport which can deliver improvements to overall health and wellbeing. The provision of infrastructure such as designated cycle paths, greenways, walking paths and trails also supports recreation and tourism. The enhancement of such provision and the promotion of a modal shift away from the use of the private car is a key objective of the National Sustainable Mobility Policy, 2022.

The Department of Transport (DoT) defines active travel as ‘travelling with a purpose, using your own energy’. Walking, cycling, wheeling using non-motorised scooter, using E-scooters and E-bikes to make journeys to work, school or the shops, for example, are all considered forms of active travel. Walking, wheeling, and cycling are the most sustainable and cost-effective modes of transport with considerable environmental, social and wellbeing benefits.

Over recent years new technology has become more common and accessible, which has resulted in new regulations that clarify which modes of transport can use walking and cycling infrastructure and access pedestrianised areas:

- E-scooters: In May 2024 the Government introduced the ‘Road Traffic (Electric Scooters) Regulations 2024’, which has made e-scooters legal in Ireland. E-scooters are allowed in cycle or bus lanes and on local, regional or national roads, and provision must be made for their inclusion when planning cycle lanes. E-scooters must not use footpaths or pedestrianised areas or motorways.
- E-bikes: An e-bike is a pedal-assisted electric bike. Pedal-assisted means the electric motor stops providing power when you stop pedalling. E-bikes are treated the same as conventional bikes under Irish law. A licence is not required to ride an e-bike, and the e-bike does not need to be registered, taxed or insured. An e-bike used on a public road must have:
 - A maximum power output of 250 watts or less.
 - A motor that cuts off once you stop pedalling.

- A maximum speed of 25km per hour.
- Front and rear lights (switched on during lighting-up hours and darkness).

Cargo bikes which meet these exact requirements are also classified as e-bikes. An e-bike that does not meet these technical standards is categorised as an e-moped. Compliant e-bikes will be treated as bicycles in terms of traffic legislation and use on public roads. They will be permitted to use cycle lanes and bus lanes but will not be permitted to use footpaths.

- E-mopeds: E-mopeds, also known as speed pedelecs, s-pedelecs and throttle e-mopeds, are powered cycles with pedals that have an electrical power-assist greater than e-bikes and are often capable of speeds in excess of even fast cyclists. Because of this additional power, all e-mopeds will require vehicle registration through Revenue and to have annual motor tax (€35 per annum). Users must be 16 years or over. There are different categories of e-mopeds, and some require licencing. Some categories are permitted to use cycle lanes and bus lanes. No category of e-moped is permitted to use footpaths and pedestrianised areas.
- Powered wheelchairs are used by persons who have a mobility disability and are regarded for all intents and purposes as having pedestrian status i.e., their motorised wheelchair being an extension of the person rather than as a mode of transport vehicle. No distinction is made between self-propelled and powered wheelchairs. Powered wheelchairs can be used on footpaths, can enter pedestrianised streets and cycle tracks, and can enter buildings etc. in the same manner as pedestrians (Source: Road Safety Authority).

The Department of Transport (DoT) works closely with the National Transport Authority (NTA) to deliver, together with local authorities, a wide-ranging programme of active travel infrastructure, and the programme includes initiatives such as the Safe Routes to School Programme, Bike Week, Smarter Travel Workplaces and Campuses, CycleRight Training etc. The Active Travel Unit in the Council is a specific department whose role is to work in partnership with other departments and sectors to implement active travel initiatives and deliver active travel infrastructure, funded by the National Transport Authority (NTA). Active travel projects are also delivered through the Road Design office and funded by Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).

Policies relating to recreational walking and cycling fall under the remit of other Government Departments, including the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media (DTCAGSM), the Department of Health (DoH) and the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD), however many recreational facilities complement and provide integral and essential parts of the active travel network, and the active travel objectives and policies of this Development Plan include projects that fall into the category of 'Recreational Projects'.

Funding for Greenway projects is allocated from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), and there are a number of Greenway routes being considered through County Monaghan.

Active travel in County Monaghan will be delivered with reference to key active travel and recreational infrastructure strategies and plans, including:

- National Cycle Network,
- CycleConnects,
- Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways,
- An Integrated Transport Plan for County Monaghan, once complete,
- County Monaghan Walking and Cycling Strategy 2021 – 2026,
- Ulster Canal Greenway Strategy,
- Local Transport Plans and Sustainable Mobility Plans, and
- Any other relevant strategies that may be developing during the lifetime of this plan.

Greenways, longer distance active travel routes, and active travel projects that connect with other transport networks or service larger areas may require ancillary infrastructure for their successful operation, which may include parking areas and cycle/E-scooter parking, toilet and rest facilities, service areas including coffee docks, cafes or retail premises, CCTV, emergency access points, maintenance provision, signage and traffic management equipment. The Council should support and facilitate engagement with local communities and relevant stakeholders prior to the design and construction of any proposed greenway, particularly where the greenway route is in close proximity to dwelling houses.

All cycling infrastructure in urban areas should be designed in accordance with the NTA's Cycle Design Manual (www.cyclemanual.ie) or the TII design standard 'Rural Cycleway Design (Offline and Greenway)', DN-GEO-03047'. Shared spaces are to be designed in accordance with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets.

Active Travel and Recreational Walking and Cycling Policies	
ATP 1	Subject to funding, implement a programme of measures to support and promote active travel in the County with the support of funding from the Active Travel Investment Programme of the NTA, TII and the Department of Transport.
ATP 2	To promote cycling and walking as an efficient, sustainable, healthy, recreational and viable commuting mode of transport.
ATP 3	With reference to national, regional and local plans and strategies, develop over time an integrated network of high-quality Active Travel and recreational walking, wheeling and cycling routes with ancillary infrastructure that enhances and improves the user experience and comfort to create an environment where people are encouraged and supported to make a modal shift toward sustainable, low-carbon travel options for everyday journeys.
ATP 4	To encourage that all new developments are designed to integrate into an active travel network, linking with adjoining developments and institutions, providing cycle and pedestrian-friendly development layouts, infrastructure, and facilities. Pedestrian and cycling infrastructure shall be designed in accordance with DMURS and/or the NTA's Cycle Design Manual. The interface with the road network and connectivity to other local walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure will be considered as part of the design, and where appropriate proposals shall be included to mitigate or improve connectivity to the network as part of the development. Such proposals may include the payment of a contribution toward the cost of any required mitigation or improvement works.
ATP 5	With reference to key plans and strategies, to plan for and deliver new and/or improved Active Travel and recreational walking, wheeling and cycling facilities along new Active Travel/Greenway corridors, existing roads, proposed roads, roads being upgraded, where feasible and practical.
ATP 6	Where appropriate, make provision for other infrastructure ancillary to Greenways, Active Travel routes or recreational walking/cycling facilities to increase the attractiveness of Active Travel, to improve user experience, or to connect with public transport services.
ATP 7	To protect planned and established routes from development that would adversely impact upon them.
ATP 8	To plan for and develop, in co-operation and consultation with adjoining local authorities and cross border bodies, active travel infrastructure and greenways networks to connect main urban centres and public transport services throughout central Ulster Region.

ATP 9	To support the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure and prioritise the expansion of the greenway and blueway network and to deliver active travel and greenway projects to achieve transport modal shift by encouraging cycling, walking, and running as an alternative to travel by car.
ATP 10	To prepare Sustainable Mobility Plans for Ballybay, Castleblayney and Clones, during the lifetime of this plan.
ATP 11	To require that active travel facilities are provided for in the development of new or expanding institutions, employment centres, sports complexes, and leisure facilities, including adequate covered bicycle parking and locker rooms with shower facilities, as appropriate.
ATP 12	Proposals for new greenways should minimise the impact on residential amenity and, where appropriate, include proposals for the provision of additional native species screening. This requirement does not apply to greenways which follow the route of public roads and in instances where residential amenity has already been compromised.
ATP 13	Amenity and active travel infrastructure proposals are to be designed in consideration of the EPA Research Report, 'Connecting with Nature for Health and Wellbeing' (2020).

7.5 Public and Shared Transport

As we transition towards a low carbon economy and government policy may disincentivise private transport options, access to a broad range of transport alternatives is essential in ensuring a 'Just Transition' for County Monaghan's population. A Just Transition is one of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. While active travel is a prime focus of new infrastructure and investment, it is not always a feasible alternative to motorised transport, particularly for longer journeys, or for those with mobility impairments.

Public transport plays a key role in providing an alternative to private transport, and in County Monaghan the only public transport option is bus services. As congestion increases and with transport networks making specific provision for bus corridors, bus services are becoming a popular option for people travelling to the airport and to cities, and 'Park and Ride' facilities that allow motorists to park and access public transport have been successfully developed in other counties.

As transport costs increase, 'Park and Share' facilities may be required in County Monaghan to support shared transport. Park and Share facilities allow drivers to avail of long-term parking and share lifts with other drivers. In Dundalk, TII and Louth County Council opened a 226 bay Park and Share facility off the M1, and which it is understood has been operating at near capacity.

Taxis, hackneys and limousines are considered to be Small Public Service Vehicles (SPSV), and they also play a key role in providing access to transport services, particularly outside of normal public transport operating hours and in areas not serviced by public transport. Facilities for SPSVs may be required to create safe waiting areas, such as safe taxi ranks, CCTV systems, shelters, seating and information systems.

The National Transport Authority (NTA) is responsible for developing and implementing strategies to provide high quality, accessible, sustainable transport across Ireland. The NTA plans, procures and oversees Public Service Obligation (PSO) public transport, ensuring that vital bus and rail services are available to communities across the country under the Transport for Ireland brand. The NTA delivers the technologies and services that provide integrated information and methods of payment for public transport services. The Authority is also responsible for the licensing of taxi and bus operators and for the integration of all transport modes.

In County Monaghan, towns in close proximity to the N2 National Primary Route are served by national bus routes operating the Dublin-Letterkenny/Derry route and private operators along the Monaghan to Dublin route. Some of these routes provide a public transport service to the villages located along their route. Bus Eireann offers limited services from Monaghan, Cavan and Dundalk, while Ulster Bus operates routes to Belfast City. East – West routes and inter local village routes have traditionally not been well served by public transport.

The National Transport Authority is responsible for the Rural Transport Programme/TFI Local Link. TFI Local Link is managed and administered nationally by 15 Transport Co-ordination Units who are operating on behalf of Transport for Ireland (TFI).

TFI Local Link operate two different types of service; Regular Rural Bus Services and Door-to-Door Bus Services. Regular Rural Bus Services operate on a fixed route between towns and villages and have a scheduled timetable, just like any other public transport bus service. Door to Door Services are route-based services with the added benefit of collecting and dropping off passengers directly at their homes.

TFI Local Link Cavan Monaghan (Cavan Monaghan TCU CLG) have responsibility for the geographic area of Cavan Monaghan.

The National Transport Authority is implementing its 5-year strategy – ‘Connecting Ireland 2021–2026’, which aims to give over 70% of those living outside cities access to a public transport service that provides at least three return trips each weekday to a nearby town.

Infrastructure to support public transport use is essential if passenger numbers are to increase and must consider the needs of all passengers. This may include bus shelters, bus stops with access facilities, park and ride facilities (including bicycle and E-bike/E-scooter parking), and ancillary infrastructure such as seating, information systems and signage, ticketing systems etc.

Other new innovations around transport sharing include car and van sharing networks, these can provide lower cost options than vehicle ownership and may encourage more people to embrace alternative transport solutions instead of having personal vehicles. Provision may be required to facilitate centrally located hub or pick up/drop-off points, potentially by the Council itself, through concession contracts or partnerships, or by the private sector.

Cycle rental and cycle sharing initiatives are also common in larger urban areas of where recreational infrastructure is already in place, and support commuter journeys and recreational journeys. Recreation based initiatives can greatly enhance the tourism offering and can boost the tourism economy. As the active travel and recreational walking and cycling infrastructure in County Monaghan develops, strategically located cycle sharing and rental facilities may be required to support equipment rental and sharing services, potentially by the Council itself, through concession contracts or partnerships, or by the private sector.

Public and Shared Transport Policies	
PTO 1	To support, where possible, an integrated public transport service linking the villages and main towns in Monaghan that will assist in promoting the sustainable development of the County and service the needs of communities and businesses.
PTO 2	To support and co-operate, where possible, with the NTA and Cavan Monaghan Transport Co-ordination Unit to further the continued operation and expansion of the Local Link bus service and facilitate the planning, delivery, and implementation of improvements to the transport network of the County.

PTO 3	Provide and co-ordinate with ancillary public transport infrastructure, including active travel and shared mobility infrastructure, that enhances and improves user experience and comfort, thereby creating an environment where people are encouraged and supported to make a modal shift toward sustainable, low-carbon travel options for everyday journeys.
PTO 4	Support the creation of safe and appropriately located bus stops and ancillary facilities along the road network and make provision for the safe and effective use of those facilities by passengers and bus service operators.
PTO 5	Support the development of an integrated public transport service through the development of bus depots and hubs, bus parking or bus waiting areas in appropriate locations and where a need has been identified.
PTO 6	Provide and support the development of Park and Ride facilities that support the dispersed population of County Monaghan to access public transport services.
PTO 7	Provide Park and Share facilities that can safely and efficiently allow people to opt for low-carbon travel options.
PTO 8	Develop the infrastructure necessary to allow Small Public Service Vehicles (Taxis, hackneys and limousines) to service County Monaghan.
PTO 9	Where viable, to support the delivery (or development) of the infrastructure required to support vehicle sharing schemes in appropriate locations.
PTO 10	Where viable, to support the delivery (or development) of the infrastructure required to support cycle sharing or rental schemes.
PTO 11	Support the development of mobility hubs that can support and integrate a range of transport modes and can connect with other complementary facilities such as bus services, Park and Ride and/or Park and Share facilities.
PTO 12	To require that facilities to support public and shared transport services are provided for in the development of new or expanding institutions, employment centres, sports complexes, and leisure facilities, including shared mobility facilities bus stops, bus shelters and bus turning areas as appropriate.

7.6 Ancillary Infrastructure

A range of ancillary infrastructure is required to support the operation, maintenance and use of the transport network.

7.6.1 Service Areas and Fuel Stations

It is increasingly accepted that a safe road network includes the provision of sufficient parking areas to allow drivers to stop and rest. The Driving Time and Rest Periods Regulations seek to improve working conditions for professional drivers and road safety for all road users. The regulation defines a need for drivers to break for 45 minutes after every four and a half hours driving. In addition, drivers must take daily rest periods and weekly rest periods. Drivers are permitted to take daily and reduced weekly rest periods in their vehicles, however it is beneficial to have service areas available for such drivers, as well as the travelling public.

Service areas may include parking for cars and heavy commercial vehicles; provision of food, fuel, toilet and shower facilities, play areas and convenience stores. With the transition to electric vehicles, service areas are becoming increasingly important as opportunities to recharge on longer distance journeys, and it is important that service users have access to other services such as waiting areas and Wi-Fi. Monaghan County Council's Planning Authority will engage in a coordinated approach with TII. Any plans or proposals will take cognisance of the policies set out in Section 2.8 of the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines.

With the transition to active travel, public transport and lower energy vehicles (including electric vehicles which may be charged from home or work), the design and purpose of fuel stations may need to be reconsidered and the range of services available may need to diversify to ensure the continued operation of such amenities. It is desirable to ensure a network of fuel stations is retained to service the wider transport fleet, and to ensure local services are provided in local communities. From a transport perspective, the development and diversification of fuel stations will be supported, subject to them not adversely impacting road safety, the carrying capacity of the road network and compliance with other planning policy.

7.6.2 Renewable Transport Fuel

The Renewable Transport Fuel Policy 2023-2025 sets out actions and targets to facilitate a transition to renewable transport fuel, including electric vehicles and biofuels. The number of car owners purchasing electric vehicles is likely to rise over the plan period due to government incentives and advances in technology. To support this objective, it is considered that new development should make provision for charging facilities.

Under the Roads and Traffic Act 2023 the Minister is required to promote and seek to accelerate the uptake of zero to low emission vehicles by promoting and increasing public awareness of zero to low emission vehicles, and by increasing the availability of recharging infrastructure and refuelling infrastructure for zero to low emission vehicles. The legislation makes provision for the Minister to assist the provision of recharging infrastructure and refuelling infrastructure for zero to low emission vehicles, and provide advice, information and guidance in relation to design, standards, accessibility, operation and consumer use of zero to low emission vehicles, recharging infrastructure and refuelling infrastructure.

Vehicle charging facilities may be required to support electric vehicle use, with this infrastructure supported by the Council itself, through concession contracts or partnerships, or by the private sector. Specific infrastructure may be required to support other renewable fuels, such as biofuels or hydrogen.

7.6.3 Parking

Although active travel policy and climate action targets seek to reduce the number of private vehicle trips, not all journeys can be made by public transport or active travel modes. To support retail, commercial and industrial sectors, it is essential that public parking and loading facilities are available in appropriate locations, and that parking policy promotes the appropriate use of those facilities.

The implementation of transport plans or policies, the re-allocation of road space may require the removal or repurposing of town centre parking. To support such interventions, the introduction of bye-laws and pay parking may be required. New car parking developments may be required and may be delivered by the Council itself, through concession contracts or partnerships, or by the private sector. New developments will be required to provide parking in line with the requirements of Chapter 15 Development Management Standards. New developments and new carparks may be required to provide electric vehicle charging, and electric vehicle charging may need to be retrofitted in existing developments, in line with Chapter 15 Development Management Standards.

Bicycle/E-bike and E-scooter parking, storage and charging also need to be provided for to achieve active travel targets, in line with Chapter 15 Development Management Standards.

7.6.4 Road Noise

Under the Environmental Noise Directive (“END”) (2002/49/EC), which was transposed into Irish law through the European Communities (Environmental Noise) Regulations 2018 (S.I. 549/2018) and the

European Communities (Environmental Noise) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 (S.I. 663/2021), Monaghan County Council is required to prepare a Noise Action Plan for the County. The Regulations require Strategic Noise Maps and Noise Action Plans to be made or revised every five years. The current Noise Action Plan will span 2024 – 2028.

The purpose of the Noise Action Plan is to endeavour to manage the existing noise environment and protect the future noise environment within the action planning area. Management of the existing noise environment will be achieved by verifying noise in the Priority Important Areas (PIAs) and undertaking a cost-benefit analysis for noise mitigation, where required. Protection of the future noise environment will be achieved through the planning process such as land-use planning, development planning, sound insulation measures, traffic planning and control of environmental noise sources.

Monaghan County Council give a commitment to undertake an assessment of noise mitigation measures for Priority Important Areas (PIAs), and where appropriate to implement mitigation measures subject to funding and approvals.

7.6.5 Maintenance

As part of their remit to maintain and operate the road network, Local Authorities must plan and prepare for normal maintenance, severe weather and emergencies.

Road maintenance requires significant machinery, space to stockpile materials and store equipment, and appropriate facilities for staff and contractors to be able to operate and work safely. A major part of road maintenance is repairing and refreshing the road surface, which requires significant resources which generate carbon emissions. Supporting waste prevention and facilitating the reuse of materials in road pavement and maintenance projects, in line with the circular economy, could result in carbon savings and reduced costs. Since 2020 Monaghan County Council has spearheaded an innovative initiative through Reclaimed Asphalt Pavement (RAP) to recycle old pavement materials to make a more sustainable product for road surface maintenance and construction, which results in a reduction of up to 70% in CO₂. As circular economy projects such as this are developed, the need to be able to store and process materials at local level will increase, and new infrastructure and facilities may be required to support the process.

As new active travel and recreational walking and cycling routes develop, the Council may be required to adopt or expand its maintenance programme to include such routes, and this may require the provision of new, strategically located facilities, access points and welfare facilities.

Ancillary Transport Infrastructure Policies	
ATIP 1	Support the development of a small number of appropriately located service areas which provide a range of services and facilities, with reference to local and national policy, that can safely service the needs of long-distance travellers.
ATIP 2	To support the development and diversification of fuel stations to ensure they continue to service the needs of the wider transport system.
ATIP 3	To support the development of infrastructure for Renewable Transport Fuel, having due regard for the need for interoperability, requirements of Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Regulations (EU) 2023 and all relevant Health and Safety considerations.
ATIP 4	All residential development proposals with communal parking areas should provide Electric Vehicle charging points in line with Development Management Standards as set out in Chapter 15.
ATIP 5	All non-residential development proposals should provide Electric Vehicle charging points in line with Development Management Standards as set out in Chapter 15.

ATIP 6	Support the development of Electric Vehicle charging networks, including the enhancement of the electricity network to support charging infrastructure.
ATIP 7	Car charging spaces should be clearly demarcated with appropriate signage in accordance with the Development Management set out in Chapter 15.
ATIP 8	To support the development of appropriately located and suitably designed new carparking facilities where they can assist in compliance with the Sustainable and Spatial Planning Guidelines, facilitate urban regeneration and public realm enhancement, or support the implementation of Local Transport Plans or Sustainable Mobility Plans.
ATIP 9	To ensure that all new urban development proposals and extensions to existing developments in urban areas have appropriate car parking and Electric Vehicle charging provision in accordance with Development Management Standards as set out in Chapter 15.
ATIP 10	To ensure that all new urban development proposals and extensions to existing developments in urban areas have appropriate bicycle/E-bike/E-Scooter parking, storage and recharging provision in accordance with Development Management Standards as set out in Chapter 15.
ATIP 11	Subject to funding and approvals, implement noise mitigation measures at locations identified in the Noise Action Plan.
ATIP 12	Through the redevelopment or expansion of existing service areas, yards and depots, or through the creation of new facilities at appropriate locations around the County, develop appropriate facilities for the sustainable, efficient and effective maintenance and management of the transport network.
ATIP 13	Through the redevelopment or expansion of existing service areas, yards and depots, or through the creation of new facilities at appropriate locations around the County, provide the infrastructure and facilities necessary to support innovative new road maintenance activities aimed at reducing carbon emissions, supporting the circular economy and achieving climate action targets.
ATIP 14	Ensure that traffic noise levels are considered as part of new developments along major roads in accordance with best practice guidelines.
ATIP 15	Apply the provisions of the County Noise Action Plan to protect the designated 'Quiet Areas' within the Plan Area from increased exposure to noise.
ATIP 16	A Construction Traffic Management Plan shall be prepared and implemented for all development projects, where appropriate, that may give rise to significant, adverse traffic impacts during their construction phase.
ATIP 17	A Mobility Management Plan shall be prepared for all major development in the County, where appropriate.

7.6.6 Winter Service

As part of their remit to maintain and operate the road network, Local Authorities must plan and prepare for severe weather and emergencies. Local Authorities are required to carry out an annual review of their winter operations and prepare a Winter Service Plan prior to the onset of winter. The purpose of the Plan is to identify the processes, procedures and resources utilised in the provision of a winter maintenance service. Monaghan County Council prepares a Winter Maintenance Plan, which endeavours to maintain a clearly defined network of priority traffic routes in a passable condition subject to resource availability. Facilities and resources are required to efficiently treat these routes during winter weather, and modification and expansion of these facilities may be required to support the regular treatment of the road network.

Winter Service Policy	
WSP 1	To prepare an annual Winter Maintenance Plan to maintain a clearly defined network of priority traffic routes in a passable manner in adverse winter conditions, subject to resource availability. Best available methods should be adopted to ensure winter maintenance activities do not generate significant adverse environmental effects.

7.7 Utilities along the Transportation Network

Many water and wastewater services, communication systems and energy networks are routes along linear transport networks, whether through above grounds services or underground in ducts. Maintenance and upgrading of utility services often result in roadworks and the disturbance of the quality of the road pavement surface or the longevity of the surface. While Monaghan County Council will seek to support the provision of utilities across the County, permission to work on the transport network will require a 'Road Opening Licence', which can be applied for online via MapRoad Licensing, and must be undertaken in accordance with the 'Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads'. The needs of all road users must be considered when planning any works on the road network.

Permission for the installation of utilities or the licensing of ducting along offroad active travel or recreational walking and cycling routes will be considered on a case by case basis through applications made directly to the Local Authority, subject to demonstration that the installation and future maintenance will not result in the closure of the route, and that any works can be undertaken safely and effectively. Where they are seeking to do this, the same process as a Road Opening Licence will apply.

New road projects require the installation of ducts to service the needs of utility companies, and these will be installed in line with relevant design standards, or in partnership with utility companies.

Utilities along the Transportation Network Policies	
UTNP 1	A licence is required to undertake works on the public transportation network, and the undertaking and reinstatement of those works will be in compliance with the licence.
UTNP 2	The licencing or installation of utilities along offroad Active Travel or recreational walking and cycling routes will be considered on a case by case basis, and subject to the utility provider demonstrating that the utility can be managed without adverse impacts on the operation of the route.

7.8 Public Water and Wastewater

The responsibility of public water supply and wastewater services was transferred to Uisce Éireann, formerly known as Irish Water, in 2014. As Ireland's national regulated water utility, Uisce Éireann is responsible for the operation of public water services, management of national water assets, maintenance of water infrastructure, planning and investment, capital projects and customer care and billing.

The provision and maintenance of quality wastewater treatment infrastructure is critical in the interest of sustainable development and the protection of water quality. Uisce Éireann is responsible for the treatment and disposal of wastewater in serviced towns and villages. Uisce Éireann's operations are regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency, which sets environmental standards that must be complied with in respect of the provision of waste-water infrastructure. Uisce Éireann's Wastewater Treatment Capacity Register provides an indication of available capacity at Wastewater Treatment Plants (WWTPs) and Water Supply Capacity Register provides an indication of available water supply in Monaghan. The registers are updated on an annual basis and are subject to change throughout the year.

In respect of future investment priorities Uisce Éireann has prepared a Water Services Strategic Plan (WSSP) which it will review on a five year basis. Additionally, the Capital Investment Plan (CIP) will set out the investment in water service infrastructure over a cycle of five-six years.

Monaghan County Council will co-operate with Uisce Éireann to provide and maintain an adequate public water supply and waste water infrastructure network to serve the County over the lifetime of this Development Plan and beyond. Future capital investment in infrastructure will be achieved through the Capital Investment Plan.

The 2022 Wastewater Treatment Capacity Register provides an indication of available capacity at Uisce Éireann Wastewater Treatment Plants (WWTPs) in Monaghan.

Water and Wastewater Objectives	
WWO 1	To support and co-operate with Uisce Éireann, as appropriate, to deliver a sustainable water services in line with the objectives set out in the Core Strategy.
WWO 2	To co-operate with Uisce Éireann in order to identify, prioritise and advance the delivery of appropriately designed water and wastewater projects at appropriate locations, having due regard to the existing constraints and environmental sensitivities and relevant protections, throughout the County during the Development Plan period.

Water and Wastewater Policy	
WWP 1	To only permit development in instances where there is sufficient capacity in the public water and wastewater infrastructure, subject to executed connection agreement with Uisce Éireann.

7.9 Telecommunications

Project Ireland 2040 is the Government's overarching policy initiative 'to make Ireland a better country for all of us, a country that reflects the best of who we are and what we aspire to be.' Within Project Ireland 2040, the National Planning Framework sets out shared national development goals, including improved living standards, quality of life, prosperity, competitiveness and environmental sustainability, to be more broadly considered.

The NPF 2040 identifies and outlines ten National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) and National Planning Objectives (NPO). The following NPOs are particularly relevant to telecommunications:

- NPO 24 - Support and facilitate delivery of the National Broadband Plan as a means of developing further opportunities for enterprise, employment, education, innovation and skills development for those who live and work in rural areas.
- NPO 48 - In co-operation with relevant Departments in Northern Ireland, develop a stable, innovative and secure digital communications and services infrastructure on an all-island basis.

The existence of high quality and sustainable telecommunications network is vital to the continued growth of the economy and the quality of life in the County. There have been considerable advancements in the provision of telecommunications infrastructure in the last two decades. Broadband is central to the development of a knowledge-based economy and can help to combat social exclusion by providing access to information and services in the areas of education, banking, research and business. It is also acknowledged that small cell deployment within the County is likely to increase during the lifetime of the Development Plan, such technologies shall be sensitively located to ensure connectivity whilst protecting community wellbeing.

The National Broadband Plan has as its objective to make high speed broadband available and accessible to all homes and businesses throughout the country. As the Country move towards the objectives for digital development and increased digital public services outlined in “Our Rural Future” and “Harnessing Digital”, we must also recognise the need for a “Digital First” approach which includes the development of digital infrastructure, increased digital skills development and digital communities.

Telecommunications Strategic Objective	
TCSO 1	To facilitate the development of a high quality and sustainable telecommunications network for County Monaghan to support economic growth, improve quality of life and enhance social inclusion.

Telecommunications Objectives	
TCO 1	To support the delivery of high-capacity Information Communications Technology Infrastructure and broadband connectivity throughout the County, to promote economic competitiveness and to facilitate more flexible work practices.
TCO 2	To co-operate with the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications and public and private agencies where appropriate, in improving high quality fixed and mobile broadband infrastructure throughout the County.
TCO 3	To achieve a balance between facilitating the provision of telecommunications infrastructure in the interests of economic and social progress and maintaining residential amenity and environmental quality.
TCO 4	To comply with all of the infrastructure provisions that are set out under the EU Gigabit Infrastructure Act.
TCO 5	To support and encourage engagement between telecommunication providers and local residents, prior to the installation of telecommunication infrastructure.
TCO 6	To seek to futureproof all new buildings and infrastructure projects and to facilitate greater competition between service providers by ensuring the provision of additional ducts which will allow access for multiple telecommunications operators.
TCO 7	To future proof areas for the delivery of digital and telecommunications services through the provision of additional ducts and sub-ducts during the development phase for roads, pavements, greenways, industrial and residential developments.

7.10 Protective and Emergency Services

Monaghan Fire and Civil Protection is a service provided by Monaghan County Council. The Council also operates the Monaghan Civil Defence Service.

7.10.1 Monaghan Fire and Civil Protection

The Monaghan Fire and Civil Protection delivers a front-line emergency service charged with the task to protect its people and property from fire and accidents. The Fire Authority is a retained fire service, and it is responsible for the delivery of fire services to the entire County 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. A key role of Monaghan Fire and Civil Protection involves the operation of the fire-fighting service and the delivery of fire prevention. Not only is it responsible for the extinguishment of fires within the County, but it also responds to road traffic collisions, hazardous material incidents, flooding and oil spillages. In the event of an emergency the primary role of Monaghan Fire and Civil Protection is to ensure life safety. It will ensure that danger areas are made safe in order to permit other agencies to undertake their recovery and rehabilitation operations.

The fire-fighting service involves sixty-three retained Fire-Fighters and five Senior Officers, along with administrative support staff based in Monaghan Fire Station and operates in five fire stations located in each of the main towns. Appropriate facilities and accommodation are required to ensure the Fire

Service can cater for and train its workforce, safely and securely, house its machinery, and store the equipment needed to deliver a quality service.

Monaghan Fire and Civil Protection also delivers on the requirements stipulated in the Building Control Regulations 1997 to 2021 which includes the administration of the Building Control Management System (BCMS), Commencement Notices, Fire Safety Certifications, Regularisation Certificates, Disability Access Certifications and Certificates of Compliance, and also includes the undertaking of inspections by the Building Control Officers in accordance with statutory requirements.

7.10.2 Civil Defence

Monaghan Civil Defence Service provides back up to front line emergency services when required. It plays a very important role in assisting the front-line services with trained personnel to respond to emergencies in addition to supporting and facilitating community activities. The Civil Defence staff learn skills in an active and resourceful group, which develops them and serves communities throughout the County. The volunteers provide support during flooding incidents, water shortages and search and rescue missions.

Monaghan Civil Defence consists of over fifty-five volunteers under the command of the County Civil Defence Officer and Assistant Civil Defence Officer, who provide a variety of services, including first aid and ambulance cover, stewarding, search and rescue/recovery services (on land and water) and auxiliary fire services. Appropriate facilities and accommodation are required to ensure the Civil Defence can perform its functions.

Protective and Emergency Services Objectives	
PESO 1	To provide for adequate accommodation such as fire stations on suitable sites in County Monaghan and to facilitate accommodation of Monaghan Fire and Civil Protection vehicles and personnel welfare provisions in appropriate locations.
PESO 2	To provide and support facilities to operate the various Civil Defence Activities.

Chapter 8

Environment, Energy and Climate Action

Chapter 8

Environment, Energy and Climate Change

8.0 Introduction

The environment is a valuable and essential resource, however it is increasingly vulnerable due to the growth in population, economic development, intensive farming and other factors. Monaghan County Council seeks to adequately manage and protect the quality of the environment through the various policies set out in this chapter. The Council aims to deliver high standards of protection for water and air, promote sustainable waste management through education and regulation, and to prevent and mitigate the anticipated impacts of climate change by reducing our dependency on finite resources and committing to a low carbon future. The protection of the environmental quality of County Monaghan is intrinsically linked with other strategic objectives in the Development Plan in respect of transport, settlement pattern, core strategy and heritage.

Environment, Energy and Climate Change Strategic Objective	
EECSO 1	<p>To afford a high level of environmental protection in County Monaghan through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the provision of quality environmental services which adhere to the precautionary principle, • the adoption and application of the principles of sustainable development, • the promotion of reduced energy consumption, energy efficiency and renewable energy to deliver a low carbon future for County Monaghan, and • the implementation of measures to reduce the human causes of climate change and to consider its effects when formulating Development Plan policies.

8.1 Water Resources and Quality

The increase in population, development pressures and intensification of agriculture over recent decades has led to increased risk of environmental pollution, particularly of our natural water systems. We depend on our water resources for drinking water, as a raw material for agriculture and industry and as an important element for amenity and recreation. The quality of water is also important for fisheries, tourism, wildlife conservation and habitat protection.

Apart from its practical use, water is an integral part of our natural and cultural heritage. There is a wealth of aquatic habitats such as bogs, wetlands, lakes, rivers and streams in County Monaghan. An often undervalued aspect of our water resources are wetlands which provide buffering against flood waters and natural purification by entrapment of sediments and nutrients. Restoration of degraded waters is a complex and slow process. As the demand on water increases, so too does the need to protect the quality and quantity of our water resources for public health, economic development and ecological protection.

8.1.1 Water Management

The River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) covers the entire geographical area of the Republic of Ireland. The RBMP sets out the measures necessary to protect and improve the quality of our waters. These plans are prepared in 6-year cycles, during which a programme of measures must be implemented to achieve water quality objectives. Good water quality contributes to protecting human health by improving the quality of drinking water sources and bathing waters.

The RBMP 2018-2021 was published in April 2018, and it encompassed a new approach to catchment management and included selected waterbodies for action. The Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO) lead on the implementation of measures in these areas for action. Northern Ireland is currently in the latter stages of preparing the third cycle RBMP 2022-2027. The 2022-2027 RBMP builds on the 2018-2021 plan and expands on the approach taken for the second cycle where Priority Areas for Action were managed by the LAWPRO. The current approach is designed to provide ‘a place in the plan for everyone’ by including a wider selection of Areas for Action (AfA) incorporating Areas for Protection, Areas for Restoration and Areas for Catchment Projects. Table 8.1 and Figure 8.1 indicate the Proposed Areas for Action in County Monaghan.

Table 8.1: List of Proposed Areas for Action in County Monaghan

AFA Name	Local Authority	Lead Agency	Objective	Includes Blue Dot in the AFA
Scotstown Blue Dot	Monaghan County Council	Monaghan County Council	Protection	Yes
Truagh GWS	Monaghan County Council	NFGWS	Protection	N/A
Avaghon	Monaghan County Council	LAWPRO	Restoration	N/A
Blackwater (Monaghan)	Monaghan County Council	LAWPRO	Restoration	N/A
Bunnoe GWS	Monaghan County Council	NFGWS	Restoration	N/A
Clontibret Stream Cor River	Monaghan County Council	LAWPRO	Restoration	N/A
Dromore (Upper)	Monaghan County Council	LAWPRO	Restoration	N/A
Drumgole GWS	Monaghan County Council	NFGWS	Restoration	N/A
Glyde-Proules	Monaghan County Council	LAWPRO	Restoration	N/A
Kilroosky Lough Cluster	Monaghan County Council	LAWPRO	Restoration	N/A
Maghery	Monaghan County Council	LAWPRO	Restoration	N/A
Annalee East	Cavan County Council	LAWPRO	Restoration	N/A
Mountain (water) and Emy Lake	Monaghan County Council	LAWPRO	Restoration	Yes
Oram Churchill GWS	Monaghan County Council	NFGWS	Restoration	N/A

Note: Monaghan County Council has made a submission on the draft RBMP 2022-2027 to have Lough Muckno catchment area included as an Area for Action (AFA) to be led by Monaghan County Council.

8.1.2 Surface Water Quality

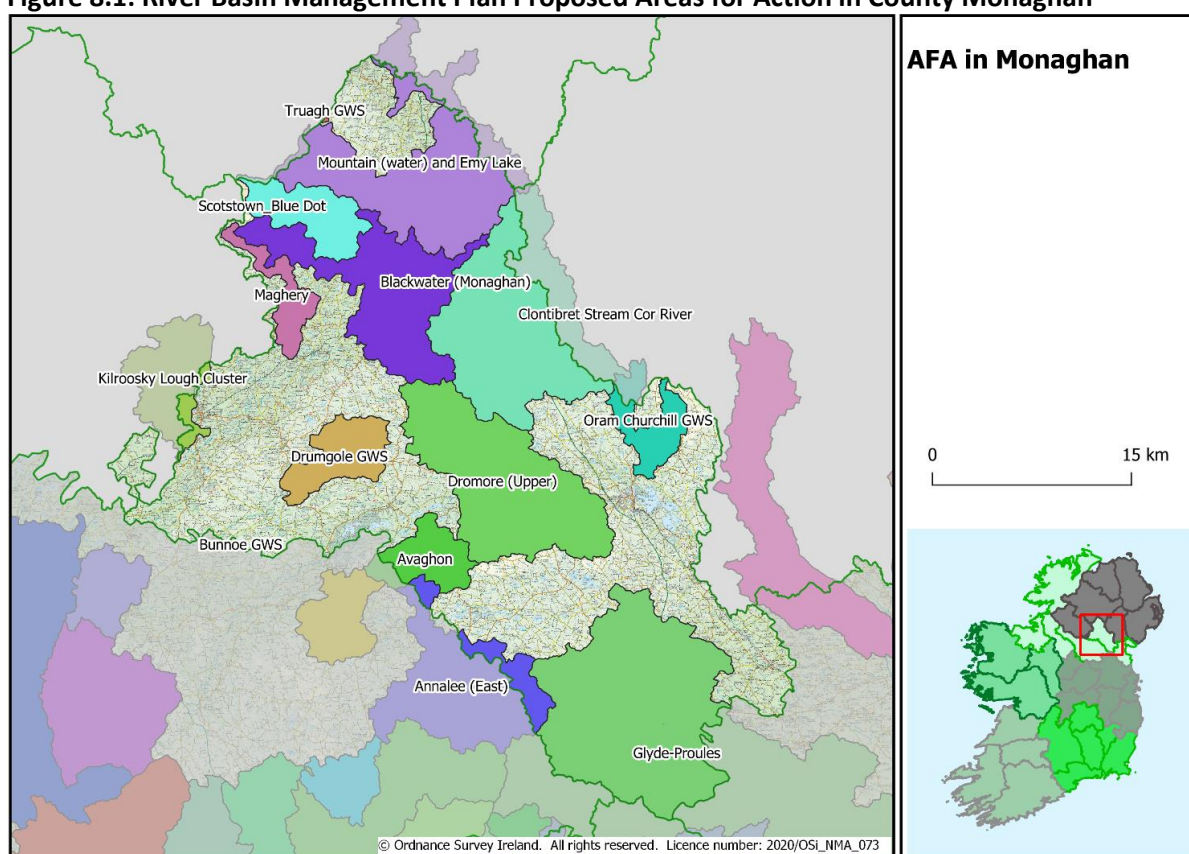
Degradation of water quality largely occurred between the mid 1970’s and the late 1990’s and today a significant number of water bodies in County Monaghan are now assigned a status of ‘less than good’. Pressures on water quality include urban waste waters, agriculture, unsewered properties (commercial and domestic), landfills and extractive industry, hard surface runoff, siltation, alien invasive species, use of pesticides and morphological changes (drainage etc).

County Monaghan’s surface water quality is poor by national standards as factors such as the drumlin topography, soil types and hydrology, contribute to water quality problems. Eutrophication of waters (i.e. excess enrichment by phosphorus) is widespread and whilst some promising improvements in river phosphate and ammonia levels are evident, lake recovery from eutrophication will take a considerable time. Excess soil phosphorus may also contribute to eutrophication and nutrient balancing. Nutrient management planning is a key tool in addressing this issue. Despite the improvements in some of the general conditions of river water quality, the biology of river and stream

habitats remains impacted. Restoration of water quality is a complex process which requires an integrated catchment management approach and the implementation of measures as set out in Ireland's River Basin Management Plan.

The protection of good and high-status water quality where it exists is a key requirement of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). Blue Dot waterbodies are those which have, or have the capacity to have, the highest water quality and it is Ireland's ambition to preserve and protect them and to restore them where necessary through the implementation of the RBMP and the Blue Dots Catchment Programme. The maps section on www.catchments.ie provides water body status information relative to County Monaghan as well as Map 8.1 Sensitive Surface Waters included in this Development Plan.

Figure 8.1: River Basin Management Plan Proposed Areas for Action in County Monaghan



Source: LAWPRO

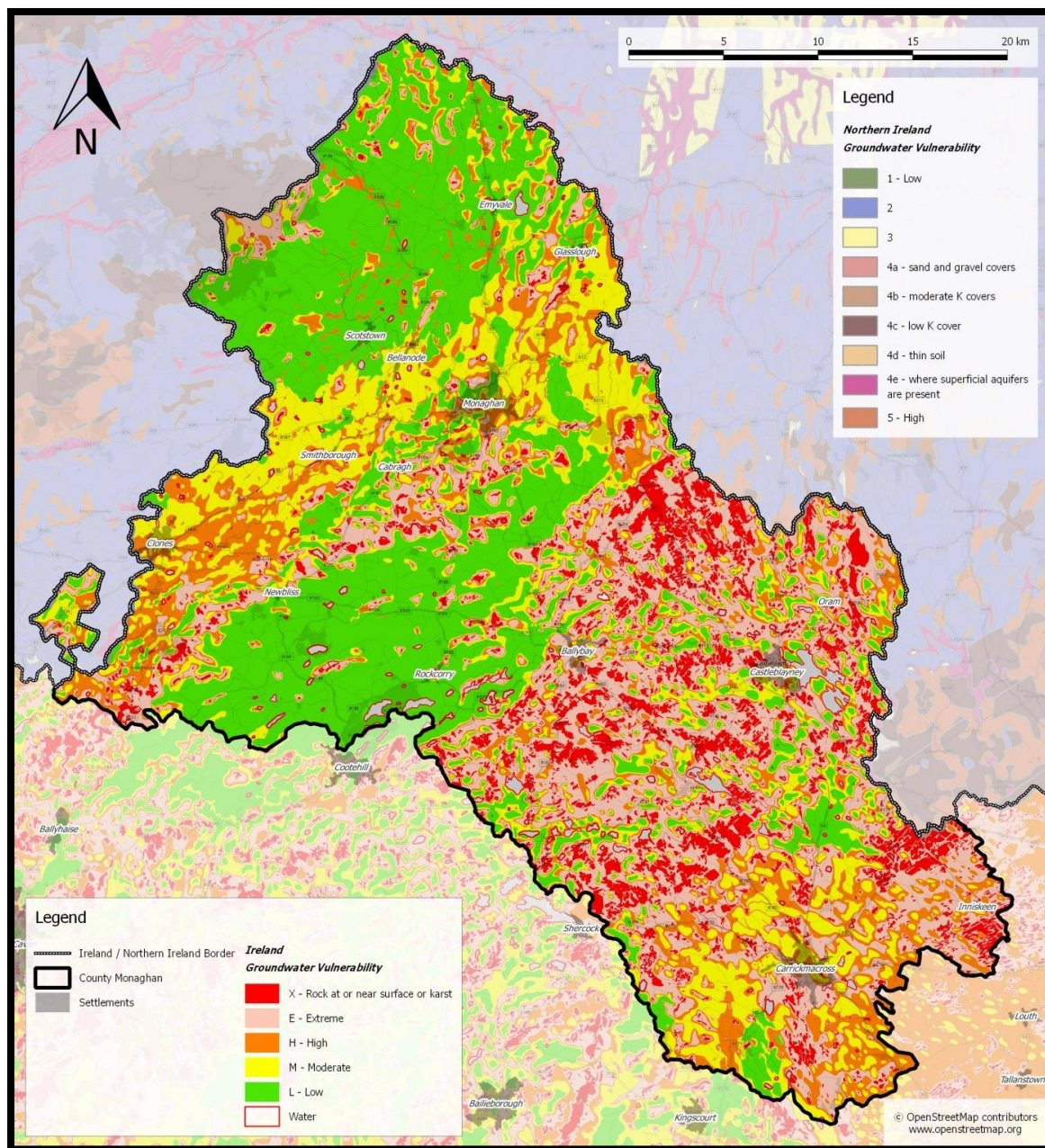
8.1.3 Groundwater Protection

An unseen element of water is groundwater, moving beneath us, feeding surface waters and wells. Currently about 30% of the County's public water supply comes from groundwater. Groundwater quality in County Monaghan is generally good. The risk of contamination is higher where shallow, free draining soils exist and in areas of karstified limestone, as found in the Carrickmacross area.

Groundwater requires protection under the RBMP. The Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) in collaboration with the Council have drawn up the 'Groundwater Protection Scheme Reports for County Monaghan Public Supply Sources'. Guidance on the Authorisation of Discharges to Groundwater was developed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2011 and any development proposing to discharge wastewaters to soil or directly or indirectly to groundwater will need to take account of this guidance.

Details of groundwater status can be found at www.epa.ie and in Maps 8.2 Sensitive Ground Waters and Landfills and 8.3. Areas of Natural Vegetation, Wetlands and Wet Soils included in this Development Plan. Figure 8.2 provides a spatial representation of ground water vulnerability in County Monaghan. Other useful references include www.gsi/mapping

Figure 8.2: County Monaghan Groundwater Vulnerability



Source: Geological Survey Ireland

8.1.4 Achieving Water Quality Targets

Ireland is currently in the latter stages of preparing the third cycle RBMP 2022-2027. The third cycle plan includes a programme of measures to protect and where necessary restore each one of the 4,842 bodies of water so that they are at least reaching 'good' status or 'good' potential by 2027 (with some limited exemptions).

Implementation of the RBMP will require setting priorities, with a higher priority being given to Priority Rivers for Action, Drinking Water Sources, High Status Waterbodies, Special Protection Areas and At-Risk Waterbodies. In addition, the 'no deterioration' objective of the management plan applies to all water bodies. The transposition of the new 2020 Drinking Water Directive will also provide the opportunity to implement a more comprehensive and robust approach to drinking water source protection.

8.1.5 Development Management and Water Quality

Development management can play a significant role in the prevention of further deterioration of water status and in the protection of existing high and good quality waters. Water protection measures are best incorporated into site selection and site design plans. Therefore, developers should adequately assess environmental risks, take account of site limitations and prepare a water protection plan. Site selection should take account of sensitive areas and sensitive water bodies.

Water protection plans should aim to prevent contamination of storm water, minimise soiled and waste waters, install proper containment for material storage, install appropriate treatment and disposal arrangement for soiled and waste waters and take account of legal requirements for discharges to ground and surface waters. Soft engineering solutions such as Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be integrated into drainage system designs to enhance water quality protection. Developments in the vicinity of waterbodies should include appropriate river riparian corridors and in-stream works should be avoided. Where necessary, in stream works should be carried out under the guidance of Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) document 'Requirements for the Protection of Fishery Habitat During Construction and Development Works at River Sites'. The IFI should be consulted prior to the submission of any plans involving works close to waterbodies.

All planning applications shall be accompanied by a completed Water Protection Plan Checklist (Refer to Appendix 6) and site drainage plan, to help identify aspects of the development which are likely to pose a risk to water. While guidance on water protection is available from a number of sources, developers will also need to seek professional advice and assistance in the preparation of plans and in assessing measures to deal with wastewaters.

Sediment pollution is an issue impacting a significant proportion of water bodies a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which includes soil management and water protection measures for the construction phase is a vital component of water protection. The preparation of the plan is critical in water protection during the construction phase.

Developments generating trade effluents (wastewaters) or discharging domestic type wastewater in unsewered areas may be subject to the discharge licensing system under the Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts 1977 and 1990. Such developments need to address requirements of the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations, 2009 (S.I. No 272 of 2009) and the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater Regulations, 2010 (S.I. No 9 of 2010) for the entire site. All wastewater discharges, including storm water discharges which come within the scope of the Wastewater Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations are required to be licensed. Incorporation of water conservation measures into developments would contribute to minimisation of wastewater generation.

8.1.6 Intensive Agriculture and Land Spreading of Manures and Sludge

In the second cycle RBMP the catchment characterisation process found agriculture to be a significant pressure on 'At Risk' waterbodies. In the most recent EPA characterisation assessment on the impacts of pressures on water quality which used data up to 2021 and was published in May 2024, agriculture

has been identified as the most prevalent significant pressure, impacting over 1000 waterbodies or approximately 60% of all waterbodies 'At Risk' of not achieving their environmental objective under the Water Framework Directive.

County Monaghan is noted for its intensive agricultural activities, and it benefits significantly from its successful poultry and mushroom industries. Substantial quantities of broiler litter, layer manure, spent mushroom compost and other intensive agricultural manures are dependent on off-site disposal. Grasslands counties, such as Monaghan, have limited spreading opportunities, and have many sensitive water bodies and substantial areas of wet soils and soils with high runoff risk. In addition, the demand for nitrogen and phosphorus in many grassland farming situations can largely be met by on-farm bovine manures. Excess nutrients, chemicals such as pesticides as well as sediment loss due to poor land management have all been identified as likely pressures on water quality. Impacts are evident in all catchments but are most prevalent in the eastern half of the County particularly where there are poorly drained soils and subsoils.

Investment in this industry continued to grow in County Monaghan through the 'Food Wise 2025' strategy. A new Agri-Food Strategy – Food Vision 2030 was adopted in 2021. Its vision is that Ireland will become a world leader in 'Sustainable Food Systems' (SFS) over the next decade. This will deliver significant benefits for the Irish agri-food sector itself, for Irish society and the environment. In demonstrating that the Irish agri-food sector meets the highest standards of sustainability (economic, environmental, and social), this will also provide the basis for the future competitive advantage of the sector.

The sustainable development of this industry depends on quality waste management systems that take account of nutrient balances, sensitive water bodies, topography and soil conditions. Applicants for planning permission or Integrated Pollution Prevention Control licensing or Industrial Emission Licensing should refer to Maps 8.1 Sensitive Surface Waters and Map 8.2 Sensitive Groundwaters and Landfills. Applicants should consult with the Local Authority in relation to sustainable utilisation arrangements for pig and poultry manure as well as spent mushroom compost.

8.1.7 Amenity Lakes and Rivers

A number of lakes and rivers in County Monaghan are currently used for paddling, bathing, water safety training and water sports. Whilst these lakes and rivers are not currently designated for bathing Monaghan County Council monitor these amenity lakes and rivers during the bathing season from June to September. The key amenity lake areas are:

- Emy Lough, Emyvale
- Hollywood Lake, Scotstown
- Gortnawinny Lough, Clones
- Dromore River at Cootehill (also known as Halton's River)
- Lough Muckno, Castleblayney
- Creevy Lake, Carrickmacross
- Greaghlonge Lake, Shercock
- The Beach, Lough Major, Ballybay

Development management measures will take account of the protection and improvement of amenity lakes and bathing waters. Such waters are sensitive to pollution in general and particularly to microbial pollution. Blue green algae have become an increasing risk to the quality of rivers and lakes, which results from excessive nutrient levels in waterbodies, primarily from agricultural runoff and sewage. Many wastewater treatment technologies do not currently remove microbial contaminants and the impact of new or expanding developments need to take account of public health issues relating to

bathing areas and drinking water sources. Land spreading of manures is another source of microbial contaminants and land spreading arrangements should take account of additional measures to protect known amenity areas.

8.1.8 Preparation of Water Protection Plans

Developers should prepare detailed site drainage plans, using the Water Protection Plan (WPP) Checklist in Appendix 6, and refer to the maps of sensitive areas and appropriate regulations prior to the submission of a planning application. Where a development is located in a sensitive area, additional risks to waters should be comprehensively addressed. The cumulative effects of developments in sensitive areas should also be addressed.

8.1.9 The Local Authorities Waters Programme

The Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO) is a shared service working with Local Authorities and State Agencies to develop and implement RBMPs in Ireland, as required under the EU Water Framework Directive. The core focus of this work is to protect and improve water quality in rivers, lakes, and groundwater.

The three strategic aims of the programme are as follows:

- Support and coordinate public bodies and other stakeholders to achieve the objectives of the RBMP.
- Activate local communities to engage with river catchments in line with the integrated catchment management approach.
- Build a foundation and momentum for long-term improvements and inform the development and implementation of the third cycle RBMP.

Integrated Catchment Planning has been identified as a key measure in the third cycle RBMP. Catchment Plans will be put in place for each of the 46 hydrometric catchments as sub-plans to the National Plan. Building over time into fully integrated catchment management plans, the initial level of detail to be included in these plans will be decided based on templates produced by LAWPRO, in consultation with stakeholders. It is envisaged that each Local Authority will also prepare a county level implementation plan as part of this process to give action to the objectives of the national and catchment plans. These plans will also provide a basis against which to assess implementation of measures through annual reports.

Water Protection Objectives	
WPO 1	To protect known and potential groundwater reserves in County Monaghan.
WPO 2	To support the implementation of the relevant recommendations and measures as outlined in the relevant River Basin Management Plan, and associated Programmes of Measures, and any new or updated/subsequent versions.
WPO 3	To contribute towards the protection of existing and potential water resources, and their use by humans and wildlife, including rivers, streams, groundwater and associated habitats and species in accordance with the requirements and guidance in the EU Water Framework Directive 2000 (2000/60/EC), the European Union (Water Policy) Regulations 2003 (as amended), the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations 2009 (SI No. 272 of 2009) (as amended), the Groundwater Directive 2006/118/EC and the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations, 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010) (as amended) and other relevant EU Directives, including relevant transposing regulations and policy guidance and any new or updated/subsequent versions.
WPO 4	To encourage the use of catchment-sensitive farming practices, and take cognisance of

Water Protection Objectives	
	departmental guidance, in order to meet Water Framework Directive targets and comply with the relevant River Basin Management Plan.
WPO 5	To prevent river fragmentation and to encourage where possible the connectivity or the re-connectivity of fisheries waters in consultation with Inland Fisheries Ireland.
WPO 6	To support the application and implementation of a catchment planning and management approach to development and conservation, including the implementation of Sustainable Drainage System techniques (SuDS) for new development with consideration given to the guidance document 'Planning for watercourses in the urban environment' published by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (2022).
WPO 7	To encourage collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including government departments, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Irish Farmers Association with the aim of facilitating sustainable development related to intensive farming.
WPO 8	To protect waterbodies and watercourses from inappropriate development, including rivers, streams, associated undeveloped riparian strips, wetlands and natural floodplains. This will include protection buffers in riverine and wetland areas as appropriate with consideration given to Inland Fisheries Ireland's guidance document 'Planning for watercourses in the urban environment' (2020).
WPO 9	To protect drinking water from the effects of development, in collaboration with relevant statutory authorities, including Uisce Éireann and Northern Ireland Water Ltd.

Table 8.2 Sensitive Surface Waters (refer to Map 8.1 Sensitive Surface Waters)

Map ID	Name	Scheme User
1	Lough More	Truagh GWS
2	Emy Lough	Glaslough/Tyholland GWS Emyvale/ Glaslough PWS Amenity and Bathing Area
3	Lough Antraicer	Tydavnet GWS
4	Kilcorran Lough	Aughnashelvy GWS
5	Greagh Lough	Monaghan PWS
6	Corcaghan Lough	Monaghan PWS
7	Corconnelly Lough	Monaghan PWS
8	Skerrick Lough	Clones PWS
9	Carnroe	Clones PWS
10	Feagh	Newbliss PWS
11	Annaghmackerrig Lough	Drumgole PWS
12	White Lough	Stranooden GWS
13	Crinkill/Toome Lough	Doohamlet GWS
14	Milltown Lough/Muckno Mill Lough	Churchill/Oram GWS
15	Lough Nagarnaman	Donaghmoyne GWS
16	Lough Namacharee	Corduff GWS
17	Lough Bawn System	Lough Egish RWS
18	Baraghy Lough	Baraghy GWS
19	Killyenagh Lough	Bunnoe GWS
20	Greaghlone Lough/Comertagh Lough	Magheracloone GWS
21	Spring Lough	Carrickmacross Public Water Scheme
22	Moynalty Lough	Kilanny Public Water Scheme
23	Fane River	Inniskeen Public Water Scheme

Map ID	Name	Scheme User
24	Ross Lough	Newry Public Water Scheme
25	Lough Egish	Lakeland Dairies
26	Dromore River	Abbots Ireland
27	Hollywood Lake	Amenity and Bathing Area
28	Dromore (Halton's River)	Amenity and Bathing Area
29	Avaghnon Lough	Amenity and Bathing Area
30	Lough Muckno	Amenity and Water Sports
31	Creevy Lough	Amenity and Bathing Area
32	Gortnawinny Lough	Amenity and Bathing Area
33	The Beach, Lough Major, Ballybay	Amenity and Bathing Area

Table 8.3 Private Abstraction Points (refer to Map 8.1 Sensitive Surface Waters)

Map ID	Name
25	Lakeland Dairies Lake Abstraction
26	Abbott Ireland River Abstraction

Table 8.4 Sensitive Groundwaters (refer to Map 8.2 Sensitive Groundwaters and Landfills)

MAP ID	Townland	Scheme User
1	Bragan	Bragan Water
2	Well at Packie McCaffrey's	Tydavnet GWS (Not used by scheme)
3	Well at Eamon McKenna's	Tydavnet GWS
4	Forge	Tydavnet GWS
5	Well at Jimmy McElwaine's	Tydavnet GWS
6	Well at Eddie McKenna's	Tydavnet GWS
7	Well at Vinny McCaffery's	Tydavnet GWS
8	Well at Freddy Carban's	Tydavnet GWS (On GWS land-not connected to network)
9	Well at Pat Woods	Tydavnet GWS (On GWS land-not connected to network)
10	Cappog/ Terrytole	Monaghan PWS
11	Drumbenagh	Monaghan PWS
12	Crosses	Monaghan PWS (Not in Use)
13	Lambes Lake/Telaydan	Monaghan PWS
14	Ballyalbany/Telaydan	Monaghan PWS (Not in Use)
15	Kilnadreen	Monaghan PWS (Not in Use)
16	The Wood/Kilnadreen	Monaghan PWS
17	Silverstream/Cavanreagh	Monaghan PWS
18	Roosky	Monaghan PWS (Not in Use)
19	Corhollan	Grove Turkeys
20	Templetate 1,2	Smithboro PWS
21	Largy	Feldhues
22	Teehill	Allied Beef Producers
23	Coolnacarte	Clones/Scotshouse PWS
24	Cavanreagh	Clones/Scotshouse PWS
25	Killyvaghon	Eugene Hillis
26	Tullybuck	Clontibret PWS
27	Corcreagh	Celtic Pure
28	Spring Lake	Carrickmacross PWS
29	Monanney	Carrickmacross PWS

MAP ID	Townland	Scheme User
30	Nafferty	Carrickmacross PWS
31	Killanny	Killanny GWS (Not in Use)
32	Donaghmoyne	Carrickmacross PWS
33	Nafferty	Rye Valley Foods

Table 8.5 Closed Landfills (Refer to Map 8.2 Sensitive Groundwaters and Landfills)

Map ID Number	Location	Operator
A	Killycronaghan	Monaghan County Council (Closed)
B	Derryarrilly	Monaghan County Council (Closed)
C	Letterbane	Monaghan County Council (Closed)
D	Corkeeran	Monaghan County Council (Closed)
E	Killycard	Castleblayney Town (Closed)
F	Tiragarvan	Carrickmacross Town (Closed)

Reference should be made to the County Monaghan Groundwater Protection Scheme, Vulnerability Mapping and Groundwater Response Matrix.

8.1.10 Public Water and Wastewater

The responsibility of public water supply and wastewater services was transferred to Uisce Éireann, formerly known as Irish Water, in 2014. As Ireland's national regulated water utility, Uisce Éireann is responsible for the operation of public water services, management of national water assets, maintenance of water infrastructure, planning and investment, and capital projects. Uisce Éireann, therefore, has a significant role and interest in the protection of water quality.

The provision and maintenance of quality wastewater treatment infrastructure is critical in the interest of sustainable development and the protection of water quality. Uisce Éireann is responsible for the treatment and disposal of wastewater in towns and villages. Uisce Éireann's operations will be regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) who set environmental standards which must be complied with in respect of the provision of waste-water infrastructure.

Monaghan County Council will co-operate with Uisce Éireann to provide and maintain an adequate public water supply and waste water infrastructure network to serve the County over the lifetime of this Development Plan and beyond.

Public Water and Wastewater Objectives	
PWWO 1	To liaise with Uisce Éireann to establish source management and protection zones around drinking water supply sources and advance appropriate management and maintenance measures for these sources (both ground and surface water).
PWWO 2	To co-operate with the National Federation of Group Water Schemes to improve the quality and capacity of water supply to areas served by group water schemes.
PWWO 3	To support Uisce Éireann in the development and implementation of Drinking Water Safety Plans which seek to protect human health by identifying, assessing and managing risks to water quality and quantity; taking a holistic approach from source to tap.

8.2 Energy

The availability of a reliable, sustainable and cost effective energy resource is vital to ensuring transport, communications, heating, cooking and for the production of goods and services. The move to a more diverse mix of energy resources reduces the exposure of the economy to price fluctuations and provides greater security of energy supply.

It is recognised that renewable energy infrastructure can have multi-tiered employment benefit which have a unique ability to underpin and strengthen the local rural economy and provide direct employment during construction and operational phases.

8.2.1 Energy Performance

In the Annual Report on Public Sector Energy Performance (2022) prepared by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) on behalf of the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DoECC), public bodies are required to report on progress toward this target on an annual basis through the SEAI Monitoring and Reporting (M&R) system. Monaghan County Council achieved 52% improvements in energy efficiency between the baseline in 2015 and the annual report in 2022. By December 2021, energy efficiency improvements of 52% had been achieved and Monaghan County Council has therefore already achieved the targeted efficiencies for 2030. However, the ultimate goal now is to become climate neutral no later than 2050.

8.2.2 EU Legislation

Energy efficiency helps to reduce overall energy consumption and is therefore central to achieving the EU's climate ambition, while enhancing present and future energy security and affordability. The 'Energy Efficiency Directive' (EED) (EU/2023/1791) and the guidance issued to Member States which pertains to the revised Renewable Energy Directive (2023/2413/EU), commonly known as RED III, significantly raises the EU's ambition on energy efficiency, and it also sets out the exemplary role that the public sector has in contributing to this EU target. Additionally, the following legislation must be adhered to:

- EU Energy Efficiency Directive (EU/2023/1791)
- EU Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC)
- European Green Deal (2019)
- Paris Agreement (2015)
- Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation (AFIR), effective in 2024

8.2.3 National Legislation

Improved energy efficiency and decarbonisation continue to be national imperatives and are key enablers in Ireland meeting its national and international energy and climate goals and objectives.

The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DoECC) is responsible for enacting a range of energy policies and measures to promote the delivery of a more sustainable energy system for Ireland. The latest national policy statement on sustainable energy is Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-2030. The Programme for Government (2020) sets out a commitment to an average 7% per annum reduction in overall greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from 2021-2030 (a 51% reduction over the decade) and to achieving net zero emissions by 2050. The strategic importance of public sector energy efficiency is not only underlined in the Programme for Government but also Ireland's National Energy and Climate Plan (2021 - 2030), Ireland's Long Term Renovation Strategy (2020) and the National Adaptation Framework, Planning for a Climate Resilient Ireland 2024.

Further to these plans, the Climate Action Plan 2024 was agreed by Government in July 2022 and sets out the roadmap to deliver on Ireland's climate ambition. The Plan indicates that the world's climate is changing rapidly with temperatures increasing faster since 1970 than in any other 50-year period over the last 2000+ years and 2023 was confirmed as the warmest year on record.

The Climate Action Plan highlights the following current and future targets:

- Rapid and significant reductions in GHG emissions are required to meet the 2015 Paris Agreement Goals.
- Adherence to the European Green Deal commitment to deliver net-zero GHG emissions at EU level by 2050, with Ireland committed to achieving a 51% reduction in emissions from 2021 to 2030, and to achieving net-zero emissions no later than 2050.
- A 50% energy efficiency target, which requires immediate action from Ireland to secure an economy-wide low carbon and energy future for all its citizens.
- A target of 30% of sales for new medium and heavy-duty vehicles (MHDVs) which includes buses, to be zero emission by 2030.

The realisation of national targets requires action at local level. Monaghan County Council will promote and support the diversification of the energy sector in accordance with EU, national and regional policy and the provisions of the Monaghan Local, Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2023 - 2029.

The National Planning Framework 2040 sets out the strategic context for the provision of energy and associated infrastructure. Regard shall also be had to the following national plans, policies and strategies when considering proposals for renewable energy, and in particular, wind energy developments:

- The National Renewable Energy Action Plan 2010 (Irish Government submission to the European Commission),
- The Government's National Energy and Climate Plan 2021-2030,
- The Government's White Paper on Energy Policy - Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-2030 (DoCENR), and
- The Government's National Mitigation Plan, July 2017 (DoCCAE).

The Planning Authority will adopt a favorable approach to renewable energy developments. Projects involving indigenous sources of energy such as solar, landfill gas, biomass, energy crops, forestry waste, biogas from sewage sludge and farm slurry will be assessed with the policy of the Planning Authority to permit developments that are environmentally sustainable and in accordance with the proper planning of the area. The provision of gas as an energy resource will be pursued for the major settlements of the County with the appropriate authority. This chapter will provide an analysis of renewable technologies and outline measures to reduce dependency on fossil fuels in order to achieve national targets.

Regard shall also be had to the following national plans, policies and strategies when considering proposals for EV Charging:

- The National EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy 2022 – 2025.
- The draft National En-Route EV Charging Network Plan 2023-2030.

8.2.4 Local Policies and Strategies

Monaghan County Council has recently adopted a 'Climate Action Plan' (2024-2029), outlining a resilient and prosperous County for all who live, work, and visit County Monaghan, and where community engagement is at the heart of the plan. This plan builds upon the successful implementation of the 'Climate Change Adaptation Strategy' (2019 to 2024).

Monaghan County Council recently supported the 'Facilitating a Sustainable Transition to EVs in the Regions' (FASTER) project; where the ambition is to facilitate a more sustainable transition to EVs in Northern Ireland, the border counties of Ireland and Western Scotland. This project was supported by

the EU's 'INTERREG VA Programme', managed by the Special EU Programmes Body. The project partnership has completed the physical rollout and installation of 75 rapid (50kW capacity) electrical vehicle charging stations in the programme area by the end of 2023, with 2 locations within the County. Monaghan County Council will continue to support the installation of EV chargers and encourage the community to make better sustainable choices for transportation.

8.2.5 Better Energy Communities

Since 2015, Monaghan County Council has acted as the exemplar for the implementation of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland Community Grants, which supports energy efficiency community projects through capital funding, partnerships, technical support, and a partnership approach. The project can involve residential housing, private and public sector non-residential and commercial buildings, voluntary and community organisations. Communities participating in this programme are encouraged to become a Sustainable Energy Community (SEC), where they will work in close partnership with similar groups from their industry and local areas, and the SEAI will provide mentoring and technical expertise in conjunction with Monaghan County Council. With significant support from SEAI, there is growing momentum and interest for the community and local businesses to harness energy efficiency and invest in renewable energy projects.

8.2.6 Wind Energy

Wind energy can make a significant contribution towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Monaghan County Council will seek to achieve a balance between enabling the wind energy resource of the County while responding to government policy on renewable energy. This requires taking account of the visual, environmental and amenity impacts to ensure consistency with proper planning and sustainable development. There are a number of issues which must be taken into consideration when dealing with applications for wind energy development. These include visual impact, landscape protection, impacts on residential amenity, impact on wildlife and habitats, connections to the national grid and impact of construction and ancillary infrastructure including access roads and grid connections.

There are currently three wind farms operating in the County including those at Drumlins Park (49MW), Old Mill, Lough Egish (17MW) and Mullanalt (7.5MW). A further 33.1MW has been approved for a wind farm development at Coolberrin in north Monaghan.

When determining applications for wind farm development the planning authority will have regard to the provisions of the Wind Energy – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DoEHLG 2006 and any new or updated/subsequent versions. These guidelines are currently under review, and it is expected that the revised guidelines will make additional provisions to deal with noise, shadow flicker and amenity concerns arising from wind farms. The draft Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines published in December 2019 is the most relevant guidance document to be used in the preparation and assessment of wind energy proposals. Regard will also be had to the 'the 'European Best Practice Guidelines for Wind Farm Development' (European Wind Energy Association). The Northern and Western Regional Assembly have also commenced the preparation of a Regional Renewable Energy Strategy which will focus on wind and solar.

All proposals for wind energy developments shall include an assessment indicating the impact of the proposed development on protected bird and mammal species. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) may also be required as part of any planning application for a large-scale commercial wind turbine scheme.

8.2.7 Bioenergy

Bioenergy is a form of energy or fuel that is made from living organisms or their waste. These fuels can be produced from purpose grown energy crops, forestry deposits all sustainable organic/suitable feedstocks, such as agricultural residues, food waste, manure, and industrial by-products. There is significant potential for the use of bioenergy to make a significant contribution toward renewable energy targets. This has positive environmental impacts such as diverting slurry from land spreading to anaerobic digestion with resultant improvements in air quality. The process of deriving biofuel from crops can also deliver multiple benefits through farm diversification and the generation of additional income streams for farmers while at the same time increasing biodiversity and additional energy security.

The Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DoCENR) published a Draft Bioenergy Plan in 2014 and this publication identified that meeting the demand for bioenergy from native sources has the potential to generate significant economic and environmental benefits for Ireland. It aligned with the national policy for waste outlined in 'A Resource Opportunity – Waste Management Policy in Ireland' (DECLG, 2012) by contributing to waste recovery.

The Government's Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy 2020-2025 was Ireland's first roadmap for waste planning and management. This plan sought to shift focus away from waste disposal towards preserving resources by creating a circular economy. The goal is to have a circular economy that reduces carbon impact and protects natural resources, environment and health. This is supported by National Planning Framework 2040 and its Policy Objective 53 which states to 'Support the circular and bio economy including in particular through greater efficiency in land management, greater use of renewable resources and by reducing the rate of land use change from urban sprawl and new development'. Monaghan County Council will continue to have regard to this National Policy Objective and those objectives which support the circular and bioeconomy as set out in the RSES RPOs 4.27, 4.28 and 4.29.

There is a commitment from Government to support delivery of up to 5.7TWh of indigenously produced biomethane by 2030. A first key step to delivering on this ambitious target is the publication of the National Biomethane Strategy.

The National Biomethane Strategy (May 2024) sets out the necessary policy and regulatory measures, and provides a roadmap, to developing a biomethane industry of scale in Ireland. The development of the Strategy focused on a framework of five interlinking pillars seen as critical to target delivery:

- sustainability,
- demand for biomethane,
- bioeconomy and the circular economy,
- economics of biomethane, and
- enabling policy requirements.

In July 2022, DECC published a target of up to 5.7 TWh, (10%) of national gas demand, to come from biomethane by 2030 as part of the Sectoral Emissions Ceilings. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Ireland's Provisional Greenhouse Gas Emissions report released in July 2023 on Ireland's provisional 2022 emissions, highlights the urgency to deliver decarbonisation options for Ireland to meet its 2030 targets. Monaghan County Council will give due regard to the National Biomethane Strategy in conjunction with any land use planning requests for biomethane facilities.

The Bioeconomy Action Plan 2023-2025 was the first national action plan for an Irish bioeconomy. The purpose of this plan is to further develop Ireland's bioeconomy in delivering the vision of the 2018

National Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy; for Ireland “to be a global leader for the bioeconomy through a coordinated approach that harnesses Ireland’s natural resources and competitive advantage and that fully exploits the opportunities available while monitoring and avoiding unintended consequences”.

The National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy 2024-2030 (DECC) has been prepared to support and supplement the wider policy base and includes specific targets, policies and actions to enable the waste and resource sector to meet the circularity (keeping materials in use for longer) challenge and accelerate the transition to a circular economy.

Monaghan County Council acknowledges the potential of bioenergy to realise several objectives contained in this Development Plan in the areas of energy supply and energy security, climate change, environmental quality and pollution and economic development and rural development. In this context Monaghan County Council will promote and support its development and proposals for Bioenergy related development shall be considered on a case by case basis in accordance with planning and environmental considerations.

8.2.8 Solar Energy

Solar energy is any type of energy generated by the sun. It is a renewable energy source which reduces demand for electricity supply from the national grid where energy is mainly sourced from finite fossil fuels. Solar can be a passive energy source i.e. sunlight heating up a room or an active energy source where sunlight is harvested and converted to electricity in solar cells. Solar technology is developing at a rapid pace and has minimal impact on the environment. Modern solar energy installations have made the production of energy from solar more viable in climates such as Ireland’s.

Passive solar design refers to the use of the sun’s energy for the heating and cooling of buildings. The incorporation of Passive Solar Design techniques at planning and design stages of a project can deliver significant savings to the owner/occupier. Due consideration of aspects such as siting, layout, built form and landscaping offer a cost-effective means of reducing energy costs and thereby achieving a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

The guiding principles for the purpose of achieving passive solar design are as follows:

- Orientation - By orientating the principal façade of a building within 30 degrees of the south, solar gain is maximised. A southerly aspect maximises solar gain in the winter months.
- Openings - Large window/door openings should be located on the southern aspect of buildings to maximise the available solar gain. Northern facades should have minimal window openings. For optimum layout non-habitable room’s i.e. bathrooms, storage, garages etc. should be located on these elevations. The use of high-performance glazing provides for optimum heat retention within the building.
- Shelter - Buildings should use existing topography and landcover to reduce the impact of prevailing winds which result in heat loss to a building.
- Avoidance of overshadowing - Where possible, associated building blocks/element and outbuildings should be carefully spaced to minimise overshadowing impacts.

Active solar systems can complement and enhance passive solar principles to harness solar energy. Such systems can be retrofitted to any existing building or designed as part of new buildings to achieve energy efficiency. Solar collectors absorb and store the heat generated from the sun to provide or supplement space heating within a building, it can also be used to heat water. A correctly specified and sized unit can provide approximately half of a household’s hot water needs.

8.2.9 Geothermal Energy

Geothermal energy utilises the renewable solar gain stored in earth, air or underground water bodies and transforms into a suitable energy use via a heat exchanger. Geothermal heat pumps extract heat energy from the ground, air or underground water sources and upgrade it using compressor technology to a higher temperature which can then be used for space or water heating. Heat pumps generate approximately three units of heat for every unit of electricity used. Maximum benefit from this type of technology can be achieved by using a dual tariff meter and use of cheaper night rate electricity.

8.2.10 Low Energy Performance Buildings

The 2011 Building Regulations (SI NO 259) require that all new buildings are designed to comply with low energy performance standards. The regulations refer to a range of fuel conservation and energy efficient measures. They also require that in the case of new buildings an element of the energy consumption of the building is supplied from renewable sources. Energy efficient heating systems such as mixed fuel or wood pellet stoves/boilers and ground source heat pumps (geothermal) can provide an alternative to conventional heating system which relies on fossil fuels. All new developments should comply with the provisions of these building regulations.

8.2.11 Passive Housing

A passive house combines high levels of comfort all year round with low to no conventional heating required. Passive houses embody high levels of thermal insulation, triple glazing, barrier free construction and air tightness to prescribed standards. In order to achieve full Passive House Certification, a dwelling is required to demonstrate certain compliance with stringent standards in relation to space heating demand and air changes. The construction of a passive house should have regard to the Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI) Passive Homes - Guidelines for the Design and Construction of Passive House Dwellings in Ireland.

Renewable Energy Objectives	
REO 1	To support and advance the provision of renewable energy resources and programmes in line with the Governments' National Energy and Climate Plan 2021 – 2030 and any new or updated/subsequent versions during the lifetime of this plan.
REO 2	To prepare a Renewable Energy Strategy for the County within one year of the publication and adoption of the publication of the Methodology for Local Authority Renewable Energy Strategies or the Regional Renewable Electricity Capacity Allocations for the Northern and Western Region, whichever is sooner. Such a Strategy shall be shaped and informed by environmental considerations, constraints and sensitivities relevant to the Plan Area - including biodiversity, European sites, and landscape and visual amenity related designations.
REO 3	To facilitate the sustainable development, renewal and maintenance of energy generation infrastructure in order to maintain a secure energy supply while protecting the landscape, archaeological and built heritage and having regard to the provisions of the Habitats Directive and other environmental and ecological considerations.
REO 4	To support the production of sustainable energy from renewable sources such as wind, solar, bio-energy and the development of waste to energy/combined heat and power schemes at suitable locations and subject to compliance with the relevant planning policy, the Habitats Directive, and other environmental considerations.
REO 5	To encourage the development of small-scale wind energy development and single turbines in urban and rural areas provided they do not negatively impact upon environmental quality, landscape, built heritage, wildlife and habitats, or residential amenity.

Renewable Energy Objectives	
REO 6	To support and promote the use of renewable energy technologies in the conversion and re-use of existing built developments
REO 7	To support and promote the development and use of passive solar design principles in all new developments taking account of national guidelines and development management policies for rural and urban areas.
REO 8	To work in partnership with local communities and other relevant stakeholders to develop energy efficient and renewable energy projects which benefit the County subject to Development Management Standards as set out in Chapter 15.
REO 9	To investigate the potential for the delivery of a renewable energy project at Scotch Corner (landfill site), during the lifetime of this plan, subject to available resources.
REO 10	To support the sustainable development, upgrading and maintenance of energy, generation, transmission, storage and distribution infrastructure, to ensure the security of energy supply and provide for future needs, whilst also ensuring the protection of the landscape, natural, archaeological and built heritage, and residential amenity.
REO 11	Support and facilitate proposals for secure, appropriately scaled energy storage systems and infrastructure, including green hydrogen gas storage which support energy efficiency and reusable energy systems, provided such proposals have regard for health and safety and accord with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
REO 12	Support and facilitate proposals for hybrid energy systems and/or co-location of renewable energy where applicable where such development has satisfactorily demonstrated that it will not have adverse impacts on the surrounding environment.

8.3 Waste Management and the Circular Economy

The legislative basis for waste management in Ireland is contained in the Waste Management Act 1996 (as amended). The objectives for waste management in Ireland have been dictated by a number of EU Directives such as the Hazardous Waste Directive (96/59/EC), the Landfill Directive (99/31/EC) and the Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC). The provisions of these Directives have been translated into national policies.

Ireland is moving away from the traditional linear ‘take-make-use-dispose’ model towards a circular economy regenerative growth model where resources are reused or recycled as much as possible, and the generation of waste is minimised. The transition to a circular economy is essential to reduce pressure on natural resources, aid in achieving climate targets, support sustainable development goals and create sustainable growth and jobs. A circular economy will support viable and sustainable enterprise opportunities, jobs and training, using the tools of the modern economy in a new way, harnessing the potential of renewable energy, design and the digital economy to create and recreate value.

The Waste Management Act 1996 requires Local Authorities to make a waste management plan either individually or collectively for their functional areas. In 2015 Local Authorities established three Regional Waste Management Planning Offices to develop and implement three regional waste management plans on their behalf. Following an evaluation, it was recommended that a single plan be prepared to replace the existing regional plans. The Regional Waste Management Planning Offices, under the auspices of the County and City Management Association National Oversight Group, have co-ordinated the preparation of the first National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy.

The National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy 2024-2030 (DECC) has been prepared to support and supplement the wider policy base and includes specific targets, policies and actions to

enable the waste and resource sector to meet the circularity (keeping materials in use for longer) challenge and accelerate the transition to a circular economy. The National Waste Management Plan sets the thresholds for 'nationally' and 'regionally' important waste infrastructure. It seeks to influence sustainable consumption and prevent the generation of waste, improve the capture of materials to optimise circularity and enable compliance with policy and legislation. The role of the waste and resource sector is central to this national transition and the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy provides a framework to support this strategy.

Monaghan County Council's strategic objectives, supporting strategies and actions in the area of waste management, include the implementation of the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy. These are incorporated through the policies set out in this chapter. Monaghan County Council will play its part in the implementation of the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy through education and awareness in the area of waste management and by performing a regulatory role by enforcing environmental legislation in respect of house holders, businesses and waste operators which are in line with the National Enforcement Priorities. In addition to this, Monaghan County Council will continue to provide and maintain recycling centres (bring sites and civic amenity sites) as appropriate within the administrative area.

8.3.1 Waste Collection

Municipal waste is collected by the private sector throughout the County. All municipal waste collection contractors are controlled by a waste permit system operated by the National Waste Collection Permit Office (NWCPO), on behalf of the Local Authorities, in accordance with the Waste Management Act. The EU (Household Waste and Bio Waste) (Amendment) Regulations 2023 introduced the requirement for a third bin, specifically for food and organic waste, being allocated to all households in the State.

8.3.2 Commercial Waste

Under the European Union (Packaging) Regulations 2014, amended in 2020 and 2024, commercial packaging waste can no longer be disposed of to landfill. Almost 40% of municipal waste (household and commercial) is packaging. The Regulations require businesses (manufacturers, hoteliers, wholesalers and retailers) to segregate specified packaging materials arising on their premises and arrange for their collection by licensed operators. There is also an obligation on specified commercial premises (under the European Food and Biowaste Regulations 2015) to have food waste collected and sent for treatment at authorised facilities.

8.3.3 Contamination and Remediation

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. The Environmental Protection Agency's publication Code of Practice: Environmental Risk Assessment for Unregulated Waste Disposal Sites (2013) shall be taken into account as relevant for proposals for development within or adjacent to old landfill sites.

8.3.4 Construction and Demolition Waste

Construction and Demolition (C and D) waste generated in Ireland has increased considerably over the last decade, corresponding with a steady increase in the level of construction activity. The management of C and D waste is a National Enforcement Priority.

The appropriate management of C and D waste is regulated by way of the Waste Facility Permit Regulations 2007 and the Waste Management (Facility Permit and Registration) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 and requires planning permission. Monaghan County Council will assess the

potential for recovery and recycling in County Monaghan when considering Certificate of Registration and Waste Facility Permit Sites. All planning applications relating to management and disposal of C and D waste must demonstrate use of the Environmental Protection Agency Best Practice Guidelines for the Preparation of Resource and Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects 2024.

8.3.5 Litter Control

The Litter Management Plan 2021 - 2023 contains objectives to promote education and awareness around litter and to support initiatives to tackle littering with a range of interest groups. Monaghan County Council will continue to use its enforcement powers under the 'Litter Act' to tackle the issue of littering.

Waste Management Objectives	
WMO 1	To implement and support the strategic objectives of the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy 2024-2030 and any new or updated/subsequent versions.
WMO 2	To implement the provisions of the Litter Management Plan 2021 – 2023 and any new or updated/subsequent versions.
WMO 3	To apply the 'Polluter Pays' Principle, proximity principle, and the precautionary principle in respect of all waste management activities.
WMO 4	To encourage best environmental practice in all agricultural, industry, business and local authority activities.
WMO 5	To support the circular and bioeconomy through the efficient use of resources and to support any development proposals which contribute to this concept.
WMO 6	To support the minimisation of waste creation and promote a practice of reduce, reuse and recycle where possible, and to safeguard the environment by seeking to ensure that residual waste is disposed of appropriately.
WMO 7	To continue to fulfil the duties of the Council under the Waste Management (Certification of Historic Unlicensed Waste Disposal and Recovery Activity) Regulations 2008 (S.I. No 524 of 2008), including those in relation to the identification and registration, authorisation and subsequent remediation of closed landfills.
WMO 8	To require that treatment/management of any contaminated material shall comply as appropriate with the Waste Management Act 1996 (waste licence, waste facility permit) and under the Environmental Protection Act 1992 (Industrial Emissions licensing, in particular the First Schedule, Class 11 Waste).
WMO 9	To ensure that all new waste management infrastructure is sited in accordance with the provisions of the Waste Management Infrastructure Guidance for Siting Waste Management Facilities included within the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy 2024-2030.
WMO 10	To have regard to the National Enforcement Priorities in the area of waste enforcement.
WMO 11	To remediate or mitigate all undeveloped, contaminated sites to internationally accepted standards prior to redevelopment.
WMO 12	To promote the sustainable management of poultry and other agricultural wastes through renewable energy facilities to reduce nutrient runoff, improve water quality, minimise greenhouse gas emissions, and support energy generation, while ensuring the protection of local and water resources.

Waste Management Policies	
WMP 1	All proposals relating to management and disposal of Construction and Demolition Materials and Waste must adhere to the Environmental Protection Agency Best













Waste Management Policies	
	Practice Guidelines for the preparation of Resource and Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects 2024, and any new or updated/subsequent versions.
WMP 2	All development proposals on contaminated lands shall be accompanied by a report from a qualified, expert consultant in remediation incorporating international best practice and expertise on innovative ecological restoration techniques. These include specialist planting and green initiatives that create aesthetically improved sites, healthy environments and contribute to the provision of new green open spaces as integral parts of newly created areas.
WMP 3	All development proposals on contaminated lands shall include a full contaminated land risk assessment to demonstrate how: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the proposed land use/s will be compatible with the protection of health and safety (including the durability of structures and services), during both construction and occupation, and any contaminated soil or water encountered will be appropriately dealt with.
WMP 4	Development proposals for the infilling of lands with Construction and Demolition Waste will only be acceptable where it is demonstrated that there will be no adverse impact upon surface and groundwaters. These proposals shall include measures for the prevention and mitigation of any perceived impacts which satisfy the targets of any Waterbody and Catchment Management Plans as developed by Monaghan County Council, LAWPRO and Uisce Éireann and also any Source Protection Plans developed by Group Water Schemes.
WMP 5	Development proposals for the infilling of lands for agricultural improvement, shall only be acceptable where it is demonstrated by means of an Agricultural Improvement Plan how the infilling of the lands will meet current farm management requirements or proposed future expansion and will not adversely affect water quality and biodiversity.

8.4 Climate Action

Mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change is now largely accepted as one of the greatest societal challenges of our time and will remain the case for future generations to come. It is experienced across a range of occurrences such as increasing global temperatures, extreme weather events, rising sea levels, impact on air quality and air pollution, flooding, changes in the distribution and lifecycle of plant and animal species and the emergence of new pathogens and diseases.

In line with global and national projections of climate change, the climate of County Monaghan is projected to change. The frequency of heatwaves, droughts and flooding are expected to increase while projections indicate a decrease in the frequency of cold spells and heavy snowfall. As a result of climate change, the frequency of extreme weather events is projected to change. For County Monaghan, this means that some hazards may occur more often while others may reduce. Below is an overview of projected changes in the frequency of climate hazards for County Monaghan by 2050.

Table 8.6 – Projected change in frequency of climate hazards for Monaghan County by 2050

HAZARD PROJECTED CHANGE IN FREQUENCY	CLIMATE PROJECTIONS
Heatwaves Increase  	Projections indicate an overall increase in average temperature of between 1.2 and 1.6°C for County Monaghan relative to the 1981- 2000 period. Under a high emission scenario, projections indicate that heatwaves will become more frequent by mid- century.
Droughts Increase  	Summer rainfall is expected to reduce by between 5 and 11% in the future when compared with the baseline period of 1981 to 2000, contributing to a potential increase in frequency of drought conditions.
Cold Spell Decrease  	Because of the increasing temperatures, a decrease in the number of frost days and ice days is projected for the period from 2041-2060 when compared with the baseline period of 1981 to 2000.
Heavy Snowfall Decrease  	The annual snowfall in the region is projected to decrease substantially by the middle of the century.
Severe Wind-storms No Change  	Projections of storms are subject to a high level of uncertainty. By mid-century, projections indicate that average wind speed will remain like those currently experienced. However, some projections indicate an increase in the frequency of the most intense storms which are currently rare events.
Flooding Increase  	Projections indicate an increase in the frequency of heavy rainfall days (days with precipitation >30mm) for County Monaghan with some areas projected to see increases of up to 89%. This will likely result in an increased frequency of associated river and surface water flooding.

Source: Monaghan County Council – Climate Action Plan 2024-2029.

Land use planning continues to play a critical role in balancing development with the protection of the environment. Land use planning is becoming increasingly prominent in mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change, principally in influencing the reduction in Green House Gas (GHG) emissions. It can achieve this by providing for more compact forms of growth, mixed development uses, greater connectivity and more sustainable development.

Monaghan County Council is committed to playing its role in transitioning towards a climate resilient low carbon County and this commitment is documented in its Climate Action Plan 2024-2029. Included in the range of actions set out in the County Climate Action Plan is the requirement to embed climate action into all Council plans, policies and strategies including the County Development Plan. Rising to the challenge of climate change is a theme that runs through the County Development Plan and is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

This Development Plan seeks to ensure that it:

- Supports the implementation of international and national objectives on climate change,
- Works closely with the Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA), Climate Action Regional Office (CARO) and other stakeholders to promote climate action policies and objectives, and
- Promotes spatial planning policies that are consistent with climate mitigation and adaption.

The aim of this Development Plan is to enable the transition of County Monaghan to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable county and climate neutral local economy, with an emphasis on reduction in energy demand and GHG emissions, through a combination of effective mitigation and adaptation in responses to climate change.

8.4.1 International Legislative and Policy Context

Ireland has committed to addressing climate change through a series of international agreements to limit global temperature rise, reduce GHG emissions, improve energy efficiency, and increase energy consumption from renewable sources. These include:

- 2030 Climate and Energy Framework (2014)

- The Conference of the Parties (COP21) Paris Agreement (2015)
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (2015)
- The European Green Deal (2019)
- 2030 Climate Target Plan (2020)

8.4.2 National Legislative Policy Context for Climate Action

The policy making and implementation role of local government in support of national and international climate action has been expanded through climate legislation. There is a greater emphasis on Local Authorities and Regional Assemblies as leaders in creating more sustainable, cleaner, biodiversity rich administrative areas, as set out below:

- The Climate Action and Local Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 requires each Local Authority to prepare and make a plan (referred to as a Local Authority Climate Action Plan – LA CAP) specifying the mitigation and adaptation measures to be adopted for a period of five years.
- The Climate Action Plan 2024 (CAP24) is the third annual update to Ireland’s Climate Action Plan. The purpose of the Climate Action Plan is to lay out a roadmap of actions which will ultimately lead us to meeting our national climate objective of pursuing and achieving, by no later than the end of the year 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy. It aligns with the legally binding economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings that were agreed by Government in July 2022.
- The National Adaptation Framework (NAF) 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 NAF outlines the government and society approach to climate adaptation in Ireland. It also aims to improve the enabling environment for adaptation through ongoing engagement with civil society, the private sector, and the research community.
- The National Planning Framework sets out the role of the planning system in facilitating the mitigation of, and adaptation to, the effects of climate change while ensuring that sustainable infrastructure networks build resilience to climate change.

8.4.3 Regional Legislative Policy Context for Climate Action

The policy making and implementation role of local government in support of regional climate action has been expanded through the documents set out below:

- Northern and Western Regional Assembly - Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020 – 2032 (RSES) provides regional expression to the National Strategic Outcomes and National Policy Objectives of the NPF and identifies climate change as a key issue for the RSES. In this regard, the RSES provides policy support addressing climate change, renewable energy development, flood mitigation and adaptation and ‘Green Infrastructure’ through a number of Regional Policy Objectives (RPOs) which, in turn, have been given local policy expression within this Plan.
- The Eastern and Midland Climate Action Regional Office (CARO) - Monaghan County Council is one of 17 Local Authorities cooperating under the Eastern and Midland Climate Action Regional Office (CARO) set up in 2018 in response to Action 8 of the 2018 National Adaptation Framework (NAF) – Planning for a Climate Resilient Ireland to drive climate action at both regional and local levels. The 17 Local Authorities are grouped together based on shared climate change risk characteristics. The risk in this region includes fluvial, rural pluvial and groundwater flooding.

8.4.4 Climate Action at Local Authority level

Delivering Effective Climate Action 2030 (DECA 2030) is the local government strategy on climate action published in April 2021. The strategy represents an overarching sectoral commitment to ensuring a coherent approach to climate action across the administrative and political structures of all 31 Local Authorities. The strategy is a stated roadmap for Local Authorities in delivering the required decarbonisation and adaptation responses to climate change.

The Local Authority Climate Action Charter, signed by Monaghan County Council in October 2019, represents a commitment to scale up efforts and play a key role locally and nationally in delivering effective climate action.

8.4.5 Monaghan County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, sets out that Local Authorities are required to prepare their own Climate Action Plans. These plans must cover both mitigation and adaptation and must be updated at least once every five years.

The Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 was adopted by Monaghan County Council in February 2024. The ambition of this plan is aligned to the Government's National Climate Objective which seeks to achieve the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy by 2050. The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 frames Ireland's legally binding climate ambition to deliver a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 51% by 2030. To secure this sustainable future for the citizens of County Monaghan, the Council prepared the Climate Action Plan for the period 2024 - 2029 to create a low carbon and climate resilient county, by delivering and promoting best practice in climate action in County Monaghan. The Plan sets out how the Council is responsible for enhancing climate resilience, increasing energy efficiency, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, across its own assets, services, and infrastructure, which it is fully accountable for, whilst also demonstrating a broader leadership role of influencing, advocating, and facilitating other sectors, to meet their own climate targets and ambitions and to increase climate literacy.

A Climate Change Risk Assessment identified flooding as among the main potential threats to communities in County Monaghan. Monaghan County Council will need to proactively plan for and adapt to the current and future climate change risks identified.

Within the plan, strategic goals and objectives set the context for the mitigation and adaptation actions proposed. Five key themes were identified as the strategic goals to be adopted in the Plan and these are shown in Figure 8.3.

Figure 8.3 – Thematic Areas for CAP Implementation



Source: Monaghan County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029.

The Monaghan County Council Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029 identifies the following strategic goals for Climate Action:

- To develop and implement climate action across all council activities and operations.
- To pursue climate actions to increase climate resilience of the built environment and transport and achieve emission reductions in line with national targets.
- To enhance the natural environment of County Monaghan and support nature-based solutions for climate resilience and emission reductions whilst promoting enriched biodiversity.
- To support and empower communities to achieve local climate actions to enhance sustainability and resilience.
- To create a sustainable and circular economy culture within the organisation of Monaghan County Council and support communities in achieving the same.









8.5 Monaghan Town Decarbonising Zone (DZ)

A Decarbonisation Zone (DZ) is a spatial area, identified by each Local Authority in Ireland, in which a range of measures are selected to increase energy efficiency, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, and enhance climate resilience and biodiversity to contribute to reaching wider national climate action targets.

Monaghan Town has been selected as the DZ for County Monaghan as it offers the Local Authority the opportunity to maximise its impact across the town through the delivery of actions across its own assets and staff and due to the wide range of stakeholder groups and potential opportunities associated with decarbonisation. The town area contains many buildings, properties and infrastructure that are under the ownership/control of the Local Authority and other Government departments and agencies providing substantial opportunities for decarbonising initiatives.

The DZ also provides opportunities to identify carbon saving initiatives across a wide spectrum of activity including industry, retail, leisure, residential, education and health. Additionally, the area provides a range of opportunities for active travel initiatives, greenways, urban cycleways, and footpaths. DZ's are a demonstration and testbed of what is possible for decarbonisation and climate action at a local and community level. Through a feedback loop of experimentation and evaluation, the DZ enables a flexible, incremental, and community-driven approach to ensure that its objectives are delivered.

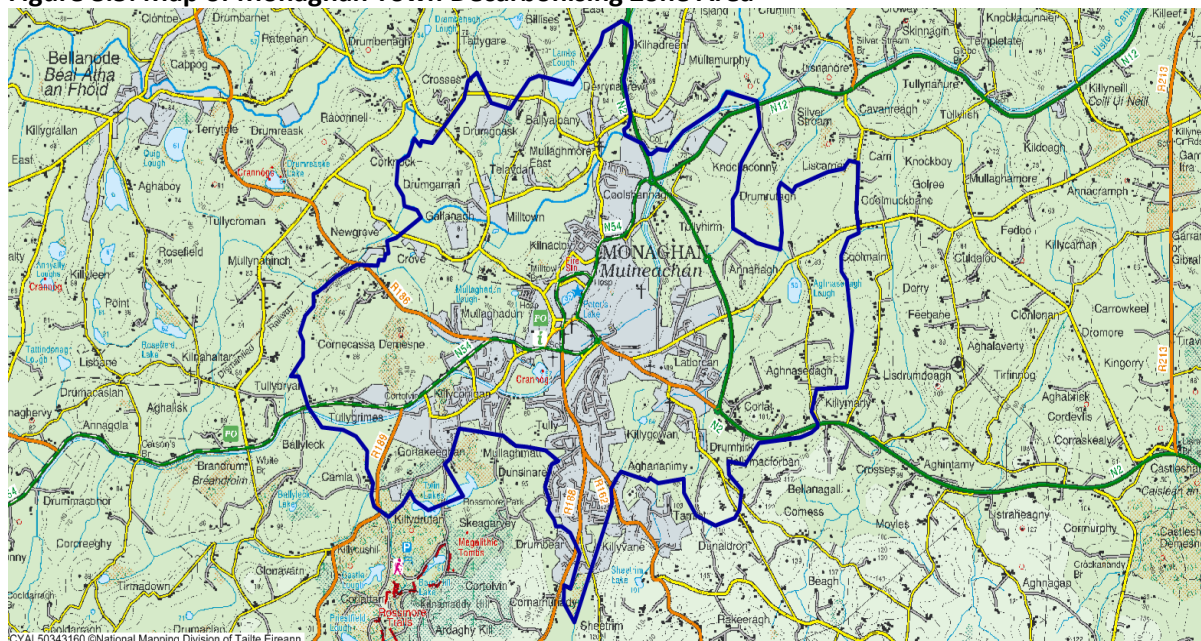
Figure 8.4 Monaghan Town Decarbonising Zone Area features

Monaghan Town DZ Area features		
	Critical Population level	
	Wide range of stakeholder groups	
	Properties & infrastructure under control of MCC= decarbonising opportunities	
	Wide spectrum of activity e.g., business, residential, education and health	
	Opportunities for Active Travel initiatives	

Source: Monaghan County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029.

The Monaghan Town DZ has a total land area of approximately 16.6 km². It includes three Electoral Divisions as shown in the blue line boundary in Figure 8.5.

Figure 8.5: Map of Monaghan Town Decarbonising Zone Area



Source: Monaghan County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029.

Within the Council's adopted Climate Action Plan, a register of opportunities has been developed for Monaghan Town. These opportunities identify and compile a portfolio of projects, actions, technologies, and interventions including mitigation, adaptation, and biodiversity measures, to deliver the targets set for energy and emission reductions across the DZ.

Table 8.7 Decarbonising Zone Register of Opportunities (High Level)

Sector	Opportunities
Private Residential	Improving BER of all private residential housing units to a B2 minimum. Installing Solar PV on as many properties as possible.
Social Housing	Improving the BER of social housing units under Monaghan County Council's control to a minimum B2. Installing Solar PV on all suitable properties.
Commercial and Public Sector	Improving energy efficiency of all buildings and swapping fossil fuel consumption to zero/low carbon options.
Transport	Active travel opportunities and enhanced zero emissions public transport which will decrease the total km travelled by private car in the DZ. Electrification of private cars and HVO used by freight carriers.
Municipal (Electricity supply)	Electricity supply for all local authority buildings in the DZ procured via renewable sources.
Agriculture	Support and enable diversification options for farmers to reduce livestock emissions. Alternative fuel sources for farm machinery will help reduce agricultural related emissions.
Waste	Improved composting rates to reduce waste emissions.

Source: Monaghan County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029.

8.6 Integrating Climate Action into the Development Plan

Land use planning is one of the most effective processes to facilitate local adaptation to climate change. Tools such as land use zoning, policies in relation to compact growth and sustainable transport all can assist in minimising the development risks from increasing greenhouse gas emissions. Development should also be prevented from occurring in inappropriate locations, such as areas of flood risk, or areas at risk due to the adverse impacts of changing climate. A range of policies and objectives are required to address these issues.

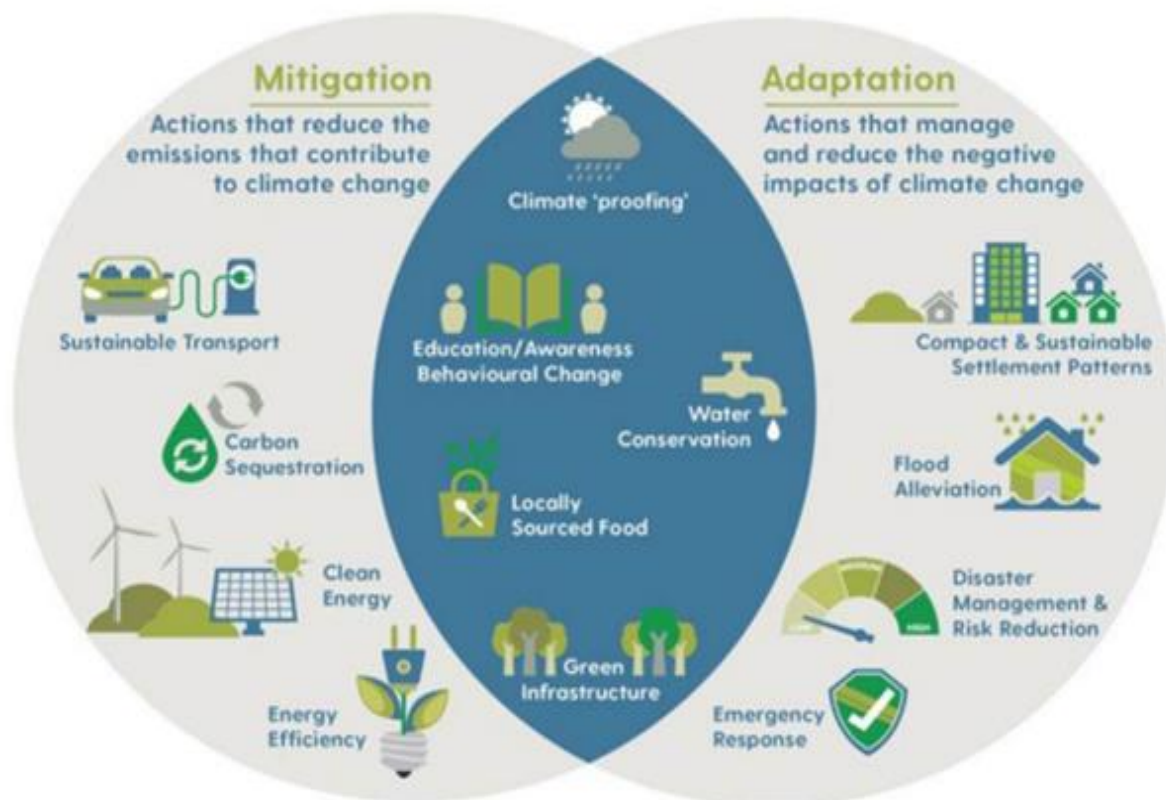
Key measures include:

- Facilitating population and employment growth that delivers more compact growth in appropriate locations.
- Reduced car dependency and transitioning to more sustainable modes of transport.
- Enhanced energy efficiency and security through developments in renewable energy.
- Protection of our natural resources, including water supply and utilising blue – green Infrastructure, urban greening and nature-based solutions to minimise the risk of flooding and address surface water disposal.

Progressing climate action is a priority for this County Development Plan which will be done through a Climate Strategy which incorporates national and regional policy through an approach which includes mitigation and adaptation.

One of the key issues for land-use planning in the context of climate adaptation is the consideration of flood risk. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) undertaken to inform this Development Plan facilitates the appropriate zoning of areas that are at an elevated risk of flooding and the integration of flood risk management provisions into this Development Plan.

Figure 8.6 Mitigation and Adaptation Measures



Source: Eastern and Midland Climate Action Regional Office.

The list of measures and adaptations set out in Table 8.8 and Table 8.9 seek to mitigate and reduce the severity of future climate change and seek to manage the risks and impacts associated with existing or anticipated impacts of climate change.

Table 8.8 Climate Mitigation Measures

Topic	Climate Mitigation Measures
Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support energy-efficient building design and emission reduction measures. • Promote building of energy efficient homes, density appropriate to demographics and in areas with greatest infrastructure provision. • Promote renewable and low carbon energy. • Create or enhance carbon sinks.
Agriculture, Land Management, and Forestry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the agriculture sector and our farming communities to adapt and change to produce more of our food locally to facilitate us all to shop local. • Encourage local food markets and shops to stock and sell local food produce. This will increase local employment and wealth generation as opposed to exporting it abroad. • Establish new community woodlands in urban/urban fringe areas. • Support production of sustainable energy including farm contributions to localised energy supplies through biofuels and wind energy production. • Implement higher level plan recommendations, objectives and policies.
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support construction of green routes, cycleways and pedestrian routes, subject to normal environmental considerations. • Support low-car use developments in suitable locations and car sharing. • Strengthen public transportation linkages and encourage their use. • Support localisation of jobs/shops/services to minimise needs for most common travel patterns. • Support electric vehicle charging points and electrification of Council fleet.
Energy Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote energy-efficient building design. • Promote links between developments and renewable energy resources, for instance by sourcing energy on-site (renewable or from low-carbon fuel sources). • Consider public lighting upgrades. • Facilitate building retrofits.
Minerals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate developments strategically to minimise need to travel, subject to health aspects and business needs.
Resource Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support waste prevention and water conservation measures.

Table 8.9 Climate Adaptation Measures

Topic	Climate Adaption Measures
Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land use zoning to be informed by flood risk. • Promote the use of green roofs and natural ventilation. • Enhance flood resilience of buildings, such as elevated work surfaces and storage facilities, raised sockets and electrical infrastructure, enhanced flood boards.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of permeable surfaces to decrease runoff rates. • Institute grey-water recycling schemes to decrease abstraction of potable surface water resources, thus reducing water stress during periods of low rainfall. • Maximise water conservation. • Plant drought-resistant plants/trees in public amenity areas to provide shade and increase green infrastructure linkages. • Integrate climate adaptation measures for Protected Structures at risk directly or indirectly because of climate change.
Agriculture, Land Management, and Forestry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support diversification of rural economy to promote crop viability options, etc. • Encourage afforestation (where environmentally appropriate) to enhance interception and infiltration of precipitation. • Support restoration of peat bogs when turf cutting has ceased. • Support the recommendations of the National Peatlands Strategy.
Water Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase resilience to flooding through Sustainable Drainage Systems. • Harvest rainwater/grey water. • Ensure adequate/appropriate water supply and drainage. • Support Water Conservation Strategies.
Infrastructure, including flood defences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure critical infrastructure and services (particularly emergency services) are resilient to new climatic conditions. • Facilitate flood defences and flood resilient urban design. • Coordinate emergency response plans.
Wildlife and biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create/enhance ecological linkages and buffer zones from development. • Create/protect ecologically resilient and varied landscapes to help support a wide range of species. • Carry out a review of the Wetland Survey undertaken in 2008 to include measures for climate adaptation.
Economy and Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support opportunities for increased tourism as a result of warmer summers, within the limits of existing infrastructure and sensitive habitats.
Human Health, Risk and Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide green infrastructure to provide shade in urban areas. • Provide building methods and materials to reduce the impacts of heat stress. • Ensure appropriate maintenance of surface water drainage infrastructure to avoid flood risk. • Land use zoning to be informed by flood risk.

Climate Action Objectives	
CAO 1	To support and encourage the implementation of the National Climate Action Plan 2024, the National Adaptation Framework, Preparing for a Climate Resilient Ireland 2024 and the National Energy and Climate Plan for Ireland 2021–2030 and any new or updated/subsequent versions during the lifetime of this Development Plan.
CAO 2	To promote a settlement strategy which provides for the re-use of brownfield lands, the consolidation of existing settlements and integration of land use and transportation.
CAO 3	To support and assist a shift to a low carbon society and a reduction in the dependence on fossil fuels in County Monaghan by implementing measures to deliver reduced

	energy use, energy efficiency, compact urban forms and sustainable transport patterns.
CAO 4	To support diversification and innovation in the local economy by endorsing investment in emerging products, services and technologies that assist in the delivery of a low carbon future for County Monaghan.
CAO 5	To encourage the integration of positive climate change mitigation and adaptation measures into the design, planning and construction of development projects.
CAO 6	To support the implementation of the Monaghan County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 in consultation and partnership with stakeholders including the Eastern and Midlands Climate Action Regional Office (CARO).
CAO 7	<p>To encourage the implementation of the measures for the Monaghan Town Decarbonisation Zone over the lifetime of the Development Plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase pedestrianised space in Monaghan Town. • Pilot a scheme for Car Free Zones around schools. • Complete a local transport plan for Monaghan Town and investigate the feasibility of free public transport options to increase the number of journeys made by public transport. • Complete Urban Mobility Plan for Monaghan Town. <p>Develop a green infrastructure Masterplan for Monaghan Town to coordinate planning for the enhancement of the natural environment and to connect public green space and greenways within the DZ.</p>
CAO 8	To encourage those measures which address climate change by way of both effective mitigation and adaptation having regard to the measures listed in Tables 8.8 and 8.9 within Chapter 8 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.
CAO 9	To promote the connection of new developments to district heating networks where such systems exist or can be developed.
CAO 10	To support the ongoing efforts and future development of Sustainable Energy Communities in Monaghan through the SEAI 'Sustainable Energy Communities' Initiative'.
CAO 11	To ensure that sufficient charging points and rapid charging infrastructure are provided on existing streets where such infrastructure does not impede persons with mobility issues and in new developments subject to appropriate design, siting and built heritage considerations.
CAO 12	To encourage and promote the retrofitting and reuse of existing buildings rather than their demolition and reconstruction, where possible.
CAO 13	To encourage the submission of a Climate Action Energy Statement with large scale development proposals as part of the overall Design Statement. This should demonstrate how low carbon energy and heating solutions, have been considered as part of the overall design and planning of the proposed development.
CAO 14	Promote the use of construction materials that have low to zero embodied energy and CO2 emissions.
CAO 15	To encourage innovation in architecture to ensure that developments deliver high-quality, climate-resilient urban design contributing to place-making and urban regeneration and enhance the Plan Area's existing character and distinctiveness.
CAO 16	To promote water conservation and demand management measures among all water users, and to support Uisce Éireann in implementing water conservation measures such as leakage reduction and network improvements, including innovative solutions in specific situations.

8.7 Flood Risk Management

Flooding is a natural occurrence, however its effect can be exacerbated by built development and will become more common in the future due to the effects of climate change. While it is acknowledged that flooding cannot be fully prevented, its impact can be minimised by proper management. Accordingly, it is necessary to restrict and manage development in certain areas to reduce the risk of exposure to flooding. Managing flood risk is becoming increasingly important as the impacts of climate change are being felt throughout the country.

In 2011 the Office of Public Works (OPW) carried out a national screening exercise in order to assess and measure flood risk nationally. This study identified areas exposed to significant flood risk. These areas and associated sources of flood risk were identified through the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA). The final report of the PFRA was published in March 2012 along with the designation of Areas for Further Assessment (AFA). The OPW designated 300 AFAs at potentially significant risk from flooding, which include in the order of 80% of properties at risk in Ireland from rivers and seas, the primary source of flooding in Ireland. AFAs were considered at greater detail as part of the National Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Programme.

The CFRAM Programme, Ireland's largest study of flood risk, undertaken by the OPW in consultation with the Local Authorities and supported by external engineering consultants was completed in 2018. This studied the flood risk for two-thirds of the population against risk of flooding from rivers and the sea. County Monaghan is covered by the Neagh Bann CFRAM and the Northern and Western CFRAM. Four AFAs were identified in County Monaghan:

- Monaghan
- Carrickmacross
- Ballybay
- Inniskeen

An output of the CFRAM Programme was the Government's Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMP) which were produced by the OPW in April 2018. The FRMPs and associated flood maps set out flood relief schemes that have already been constructed and provide the outline for 118 new proposed schemes. FRMPs have been produced for Monaghan Town, Ballybay and Inniskeen and set out recommendations for works that will alleviate the flood risk in these settlements. FRMPs provide the evidence for a proactive approach for designing and constructing flood relief schemes for the most at risk communities. The delivery of these plans is supported by €1.3 billion through the National Development Plan 2021–2030 (NDP). Further information is available at www.floodinfo.ie.

National policy in relation to flood management is set out in the document, 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (DECLG and OPW, 2009). The document sets out fundamental principles to guide Regional Authorities, Local Authorities, developers and their representatives when evaluating flood risk. These are:

- Risk Avoidance.
- Substitution to alternative locations where avoidance is not feasible.
- Mitigate/Manage risk where avoidance and substitution cannot be achieved.

The Flood Risk Management Guidelines define flood zones on the basis of three tiers. These tiers are physical areas where the likelihood of flooding occurring is within a specified range. The identification of flood zones can inform flood risk management in the planning system and can assist emergency planning for flood events. The flood risk zones identified in the guidelines are:

- Flood Zone A - highest probability of flooding (greater than 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding or 0.5% or 1/200 for coastal flooding).

- Flood Zone B - moderate probability of flooding (between 0.1% and 1 in 1000 and 1% or 1 in 100 for river flooding between 0.1% or 1 in 1000 and 0.5% to 1 in 200 for coastal flooding).
- Flood Zone C - low probability of flooding (less than 0.1% or 1 in 1000 for both river and coastal flooding).

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been prepared for the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025 - 2031 (Appendix 19). The document has been prepared on the basis of the best available current data and is subject to change over the plan period as new data and maps become available.

The SFRA identifies and maps the locations that flooding is most likely to occur within the Tier 1, 2, 3 and 4 settlements of County Monaghan. Therein flood risk is categorised under two strands - Flood Risk A and Flood Risk B. Any development proposals located in such areas shall be required to prepare a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment in accordance with the methodology set out in 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities'.

Flood Risk Management Objectives	
FRMO 1	To fully implement and support, in conjunction with the Office of Public Works, the provisions of the EU Flood Risk Directive, The Flood Risk Regulations, The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) and any new or updated/subsequent versions issued during this plan period.
FRMO 2	To seek to obtain the required funding for the implementation of the measures set out in the Flood Risk Management Plans for Monaghan Town, Ballybay and Inniskeen.
FRMO 3	To have regard to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for County Monaghan and any new or updated/subsequent versions during the lifetime of this plan.
FRMO 4	To protect rivers, streams, riparian corridors, flood plains and wetlands from inappropriate development which will contribute to increased flood risk.
FRMO 5	To support the development of long and short-term flood remediation works and flood relief schemes throughout the County subject to environmental considerations, ensuring that development proposals support and do not impede or prevent the progression of these schemes.

Flood Risk Management Policies	
FRMP 1	Applications for development, as required on previously developed lands within Flood Zones A or B, shall be subject to site specific flood risk assessment and shall provide details of structural and non-structural flood risk management measures, such as those relating to floor levels, internal layout, flood-resistant construction, flood-resilient construction, emergency response planning and access and egress during flood events.
FRMP 2	Where a Justification Test applies, it must be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the planning authority that the flood risk can be adequately managed, and that the use and the development of the lands will not cause unacceptable impacts elsewhere.
FRMP 3	Extensions of existing uses or minor development within flood risk areas will be supported, provided they do not: obstruct important flow paths; introduce a number of people into flood risk areas; entail the storage of hazardous substances; have adverse impacts or impede access to a watercourse, floodplain or flood protection and management facilities; or increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.
FRMP 4	Where only a small proportion of a site is at risk of flooding, the sequential approach shall be applied in site planning, in order to seek to ensure that no encroachment onto or loss of the flood plain occurs and/or that only water compatible development such as

Flood Risk Management Policies	
	Open Space would be permitted for the lands which are identified as being at risk of flooding within that site.

8.8 Surface Water Drainage

New development and its associated roads, yards and parking areas increase impervious surfaces which result in an increase in surface water runoff. This has the potential to cause localised flooding and pollution from contaminated surface waters. Surface water runoff is normally dealt with in two ways, either through natural drainage to watercourses such as drains, streams, and rivers, or through artificial drainage systems.

Monaghan County Council will require that all developments incorporate 'Sustainable Drainage Systems' (SuDS) as part of the development proposals. SuDS offers a total solution to rainwater management and is applicable in both urban and rural situations. SuDS are effective technologies which aim to reduce flood risk, improve water quality and enhance biodiversity and amenity. By using SuDS techniques, water is either infiltrated or conveyed more slowly to the drainage system and ultimately to water courses via permeable paving, swales, green roofs, filter drains, rainwater harvesting, detention basins, ponds, and wetlands. Ponds, artificial wetlands, and water features can make a positive contribution to the provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and to the amenity of an area. The systems should aim to mimic the natural drainage of a site to minimise the effect of a development on flooding and pollution of existing waterways. Properly designed and located SuDS features can be incorporated within and can complement the amenity and aesthetic value of open spaces. SuDS areas do not form part of the public open space provision, except where they contribute in a significant way to the design and quality of open space as defined by the Planning Authority.

The advantages of incorporating natural water retention measures within both public and private development proposals is recognised as important in limiting flooding and water pollution. In 2022 the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DoHLGH) published the best practice guidance Nature-based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas which demonstrates how through appropriate changes to the way urban areas are planned and designed, these issues can be addressed. It promotes the use of long-term and plan-led approaches that combine nature-based solutions with spatial planning, particularly at the level of the individual urban settlement, large or small. Climate change, and the need to adapt our urban areas to a changed climate in terms of rainfall patterns is the unifying concept in terms of the scope of this document.

Monaghan County Council encourages and promotes the use of green solutions such as swales, tree pits, green roofs, downpipe planters, ponds, and wetlands for drainage. Green solutions minimise negative environmental impacts resulting from development. Above ground drainage solutions maximise the benefits in terms of water quality, flooding, biodiversity, amenity, climate change and maintenance amongst others. These measures can provide a cost effective and sustainable means of managing stormwater and water pollution at source, keeping surface water out of combined sewers (thus increasing capacity for foul drainage from new developments), while providing multiple benefits e.g. improved air quality, amenity, noise reduction. The use of green solutions is underpinned in the National Planning Framework (NPF) and Monaghan County Council's recently adopted Climate Action Plan and is a key cornerstone of achieving flooding and Water Framework Directive objectives.

The Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GDSDS) provides best practice guidance on SuDS. Development proposals will be required to meet the design criteria (adjusted to reflect local

conditions) and material designs therein. Guidance is also available in Monaghan County Council's Storm Water Technical Guidance Document (2017).

Surface Water Drainage Objective	
SWDO 1	To require the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems and Green-Blue Infrastructure in new developments including the public realm and retrofitted in existing developed areas, in line with National Policy Objective 57 of the National Planning Framework.
SWDO 2	All development proposals, as required shall carry out a surface water and drainage assessment and shall be compliant with the following to ensure that drainage from the site is managed sustainably: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) 'Nature based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas – Water Sensitive Urban Design' (March 2022) • CIRIA SuDS Manual C753 (2015) It is noted that updates to the above documents and / or new published documents during the lifetime of the SFRA are to be implemented as part of Development Management where appropriate.
SWDO 3	To ensure that the Local Authority provides adequate storm water infrastructure in order to accommodate the planned levels of growth within the plan area and to ensure that appropriate flood management measures are implemented to protect property and infrastructure.
SWDO 4	To require all new development to provide a separate foul and surface water drainage system and to incorporate sustainable urban drainage systems where appropriate in new development and the public realm.
SWDO 5	To prohibit the discharge of additional surface water to combined (foul and surface water) sewers in order to maximise the capacity of existing collection systems for foul water.

8.9 Veterinary Services

Monaghan County Council's Veterinary Services are responsible for Dog Control and Food Safety in the County. The Control of Dogs Act 1986 (as amended) gave statutory responsibility for dog control and licensing to Local Authorities. Local Authorities can appoint dog wardens, provide dog shelters, seize dogs and impose fines and initiate court proceedings against dog owners. The Control of Dog Regulations 1998 placed additional restrictions in relation to twelve dog breeds (or crosses of breed) which are considered to be dangerous.

In relation to Food Safety, the Veterinary Service of Monaghan County Council operate jointly with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI), the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) and Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM) with regard to the inspection of abattoirs and meat processing plants (in the wholesale sector).

Veterinary Service Policy	
VSP 1	To support the implementation of the veterinary functions of the Council.

8.10 Lighting

The Council will consider the potential for light pollution from development and the intensification or alteration of existing development. The prevention of light pollution is important in the interests of nature conservation, residential amenity and energy efficiency.

Lighting Policies	
LP 1	To control lighting in urban and rural areas and in sensitive locations, in order to minimise impacts on residential amenity and habitats and species of importance.
LP 2	To require the use of energy efficient public lighting in all new development proposals.
LP 3	To require that lighting fixtures should provide only the amount of light necessary and should be designed to avoid creating glare or emitting light above a horizontal plane. Lighting fixtures should also have minimum environmental impact and protect light sensitive species such as bats.

8.11 Noise

The impact of noise pollution is an important consideration in assessing all development proposals as it can impact on people's quality of life and health. The Environmental Noise Regulations 2018 (as amended 2021) give reference to the EU Directive 2002/49/EC relating to the assessment and management of noise pollution. A Noise Action Plan is in place by the Council for major roads within County Monaghan carrying more than 3,000,000 vehicles per year.

Using the provisions of the development management process, the Planning Authority will aim to take account of and mitigate noise and/or vibration at site boundaries or adjacent to noise sensitive locations, in particular residential properties with reference to layout, design and/or noise attenuation measures.

Consideration also needs to be given to avoid adverse impacts when introducing noise sensitive uses in proximity to existing and future national roads. Where warranted, proposals should include mitigation and should have regard to Section 3.7 of the DECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines (2012).

Noise Objectives	
NO 1	To promote the implementation of the Noise Directive 2002/49/EC and associated Environmental Noise Regulations 2006.
NO 2	To ensure development design considers noise alleviation measures, where appropriate, to reduce noise and vibration impacts on surrounding amenities, particularly residential amenity and other noise sensitive locations (e.g., places of worship, healthcare facilities).

8.12 Air Quality

At present County Monaghan enjoys a high-quality environment with limited air pollution. However, emissions caused by increased traffic, the burning of fossil fuels for heating and the operation of businesses is likely to have a detrimental impact on our environment.

Air Quality Objectives	
AQO 1	To promote the preservation of best ambient air quality compatible with sustainable development in accordance with the EU Ambient Air, to ensure that all air emissions associated with new developments are within Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (2008/50/EC) and Environmental Quality Standards as out in the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011 (SI No. 180 of 2011) and any new or updated/subsequent versions.
AQO 2	To contribute towards compliance with air quality legislation, greenhouse gas emission targets, management of noise levels, and reductions in energy usage.

8.13 Environmental Hazard Zones

The European Communities (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations 2006 transposes the SEVESO II Directive 96/82/EC (relating to the prevention of major accidents involving dangerous substances) into Irish Law. The Directive aims to prevent accident hazards from dangerous substances and to limit the consequence of such accidents through the following measures:

- The appropriate siting of new establishments.
- Modification of existing establishments.
- Control of other development in the vicinity of an establishment which by virtue of its type or siting is likely to increase the risk or consequence of a major accident.
- Development of site-specific emergency planning by the local authority and site operator.

There are currently no SEVESO sites in County Monaghan, but there are SEVESO sites in adjoining counties.

Environmental Hazard Zones Objective	
EHZO 1	To comply with the provisions of the SEVESO Directive in respect of any development with the potential to cause a major accident.

Chapter 9

Strategic Objectives for Settlements

Chapter 9

Strategic Objectives for Settlements

9.0 Introduction

This County Development Plan incorporates Settlement Plans for the five towns of County Monaghan, as listed in Tiers 1, 2 and 3 of the Core Strategy.

This chapter sets out the strategic objectives for development within each of these settlements. These should be read in conjunction with the settlement plans for each of the five towns and the associated zoning maps contained within this Development Plan. This chapter also sets out the strategic objectives and settlement maps for the Tier 4 Villages in the County.

9.1 Vision

The aim of this chapter is to set out a shared vision, demonstrating how sustainable and co-ordinated growth and development of the towns and villages in the County can be shaped in a planned manner, whilst also acting as a catalyst for the balanced economic, physical, cultural and environmental development of the towns and villages.

The concept of sustainable development is a theme which runs throughout this Development Plan which is, development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This approach also protects the natural and built environment by requiring new development to be of a high standard taking account of surrounding properties and land uses.

A key challenge of this Development Plan is to identify the most appropriate areas for the growth of the designated settlements over this plan period. Achieving development which will consolidate the town and village structures, and which provides for the sustainable management of the environment including cultural and natural heritage is of fundamental importance.

The specific strategic objective for each town pertains directly to the position of the settlement within the Settlement Hierarchy set out in Chapter 2 Core Strategy of this Development Plan.

Settlement	Settlement Strategic Objectives
SSO 1 Monaghan Town	To facilitate the development of Monaghan Town to maintain its position as the Tier 1 Principal Town in the County at the top of the settlement hierarchy and its status as a Key Town as defined in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, and to ensure that its expansion takes place in an orderly and sustainable fashion that will not detract from the vitality and viability of the town centre.
SSO 2 Carrickmacross and Castleblayney	To promote and develop the Tier 2 Strategic Towns as prosperous and thriving towns where the principles of environmental, economic and social sustainability including protection of the towns' heritage and natural and built environment are enshrined.
SSO 3 Clones and Ballybay	To promote and develop the Tier 3 Service Towns to create self-sufficient sustainable and vibrant communities which will act as local economic and service centres for the Border and Mid Monaghan catchment hinterlands, whilst protecting the significant, natural, built and archaeological heritage of Clones and Ballybay town.

Monaghan County Council aims to address the future sustainable development of the towns through the:

- Establishment of a viable and growing population, sufficient to support a wide variety of employment and services,
- Development of infrastructure to support the existing towns and accommodate future growth within the towns,
- Improved transport links both within the County and destinations outside it,
- Re-development of backlands and derelict sites throughout the towns where appropriate, and
- Provision of sufficient parking within the town centres, where necessary.

Strategic Objectives for the Towns and Villages	
SSO 4	To create a clear strategic framework for the sustainable development of the towns and their hinterlands through the zoning and servicing of lands in a manner consistent with the Core Strategy as set out in Chapter 2 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.
SSO 5	To provide a basis for public and private sector investment in infrastructure, services and development in the towns and Tier 4 villages, offering clear guidance to both sectors in framing development proposals, in partnership with the community.
SSO 6	To facilitate the provision of adequate services and facilities in the towns in the areas of education, medical/health, transport, public administration, industrial and commercial centres, and to encourage the co-location of these services.
SSO 7	To attract investment and new employment opportunities to the towns while supporting sustainable enterprises.
SSO 8	To promote the towns as residential, employment, industrial, commercial, retail and service centres.
SSO 9	To protect and enhance the heritage, character and streetscape of the towns and ensure they are attractive places to live and work.
SSO 10	To provide a wide range of amenity, sporting and cultural facilities including public spaces and parks in the towns.
SSO 11	To prepare, as resources permit, specific local area action plans and/or masterplans for the towns to provide for the most efficient and suitable co-ordinated development to take place.
SSO 12	To appropriately designate development envelopes around the towns and Tier 4 villages in order to manage development in a sustainable manner and restrict urban sprawl and the merging of distinctive areas.
SSO 13	To promote the development of the towns and Tier 4 villages with an appropriate range of facilities and services including social infrastructure, retail units, commercial offices and local enterprise in accordance with the provisions of the Core Strategy, Chapter 2 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.
SSO 14	To promote sustainable compact development forms, including more comprehensive backland development, in the towns and Tier 4 villages, where appropriate, and to promote the efficient use of available public infrastructure and services.
SSO 15	To facilitate and/or provide the infrastructure and services necessary to accommodate the anticipated population growth in the towns and Tier 4 villages in accordance with the Core Strategy, Chapter 2 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.
SSO 16	To protect important landscape features within or on the edge of the towns and Tier 4 villages by prohibiting development within designated Landscape

Strategic Objectives for the Towns and Villages	
	Protection/Conservation (LPC) areas unless it is proven to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the proposed development would not detrimentally impact on the amenity of the LPC areas or the wider setting or character of the towns and Tier 4 villages.
SSO 17	To promote strategies that could facilitate public transport services in the towns and Tier 4 villages.
SSO 18	To encourage the creation and development of specialist niche activities that could help distinguish and promote the growth of the towns and Tier 4 villages.
SSO 19	To ensure that new development within towns and Tier 4 villages is appropriate in terms of use, siting, scale, layout, design, materials and character.
SSO 20	To promote and encourage the regeneration of the back lands in the towns and Tier 4 villages as well as appropriate development on infill sites, derelict sites, vacant properties and brownfield sites.
SSO 21	To develop, as resources permit, sustainable transport solutions within and around the towns which encourage a transition towards more sustainable modes of transport.
SSO 22	To apply the precautionary principle in relation to development on lands identified as being at risk of flooding and to restrict development to uses that are compatible to the level of flood risk unless supported by a site-specific flood risk assessment and development management justification test.

9.2 Land Use Zoning

The settlement plans for each of the towns aim to promote growth and development while protecting the natural and built environment. The primary tool to achieve this is through land use zoning objectives which indicate the purpose for which areas of land may be used. Land use zoning objectives allow for the appropriate and rational use of land, protecting the amenity of the towns and facilitating adequate space for current and future developments. Favourable consideration will be given to proposals for community facilities, on suitable sites within all land use zoning categories, where such a proposal is suitably located within the settlement boundary and is easily accessible for all sections of the community.

Land Use Zoning Objective	
LUZO 1	To implement the land use zoning categories and objectives in each of the settlement plan areas as set out in Table 9.1, Chapter 9 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

The land use zonings categories and objectives in respect of each area identified on the settlement maps are set out in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1: Land Use Zoning Categories and Objectives

	Land Use Zoning Category	Land Use Zoning Objective	Map Colour
LUO 1	Town Centre	To provide, protect and enhance town centre facilities and promote town centre strengthening. The principal permitted land use is town centre related uses including retail, residential, commercial, social, cultural, medical/health and other similar type uses.	Purple
LUO 2	Existing Residential	To protect and enhance existing residential amenity, to facilitate residential development on small infill sites within established residential areas, the comprehensive	Peach

	Land Use Zoning Category	Land Use Zoning Objective	Map Colour
		<p>redevelopment of brownfield residential sites for sustainable residential development, and to facilitate and encourage the completion of commenced and not yet completed residential developments.</p> <p>The principal permitted land use is residential. However other uses open for consideration include education, nursing homes, creches, health centres, community facilities, and guesthouses provided that all such proposals are in keeping with the established built character of the area and do not adversely impact upon the amenity of existing residential properties.</p> <p>Infill residential development on small sites and the comprehensive redevelopment of large residential plots for proposed residential development will be acceptable subject to the development proposal having regard to the character of the surrounding residential development.</p>	
LUO 3	Proposed Residential A	<p>To provide for new residential development and for new and improved ancillary services.</p> <p>The principal permitted land use is residential. However other uses open for consideration include education, nursing homes, creches, health centres, community facilities, and guesthouses provided all such proposals are in keeping with the established built character of the area and do not adversely impact upon the amenity of existing residential properties.</p> <p>Single dwellings will be considered on these lands provided they do not compromise the overall objective of comprehensively developing the lands for sustainable urban housing in the future. In such cases the applicant will be required to demonstrate by way of an overall plan for the development of the lands, how the proposed development would not adversely affect the comprehensive development of the lands in the future.</p>	Light Blue
LUO 4	Proposed Residential B	<p>To facilitate the provision of serviced residential sites and low-density residential development in a structured and co-ordinated manner.</p> <p>The principal permitted land use is residential. Development permitted on these lands will be low density residential development or serviced residential sites. However other uses open for consideration include education, nursing homes, creches, health centres, community facilities, and guesthouses provided all such proposals are in keeping with the established built character of the area and do not adversely impact upon the amenity of existing residential properties.</p>	Medium Blue

	Land Use Zoning Category	Land Use Zoning Objective	Map Colour
		<p>Where a landbank in single ownership is zoned for both Proposed Residential A and Proposed Residential B, the location of the low density or serviced site development can be located within any part of the landbank, provided a comprehensive layout for the entire land bank is being proposed and where the equivalent area of 'Proposed Residential B' zoning is not reduced.</p> <p>As the quantum of Proposed Residential B lands has been doubled within the Core Strategy to offer more locational and market choice and to provide an incentive to release these lands for development, only 75% of the Proposed Residential B quantum shall be developed during this plan period.</p> <p>Single dwellings will be considered on these lands provided they do not compromise the overall objective of comprehensively developing the lands for sustainable urban housing in the future. In such cases the applicant will be required to demonstrate by way of an overall plan for the development of the lands, how the proposed development would not adversely affect the comprehensive development of the lands in the future.</p>	
LUO 5	Strategic Residential Reserve	<p>To protect lands that are considered strategic in location for future residential development.</p> <p>The principal permitted use is residential. The comprehensive development of these lands will only be permitted in instances whereby 75% of the Proposed Residential A and B lands have been developed. Any development which would prejudice the principal use of these lands for residential development in the future will be resisted.</p> <p>Single dwellings for landowners or their immediate family members will be considered on these lands provided they do not compromise the overall objective of comprehensively developing the lands for residential development in the future.</p> <p>Justification for a dwelling in this instance will have to be demonstrated by the applicant including the submission of documentation to show that the landholding has been in family ownership for at least 5 years. In such cases the applicant will also be required to demonstrate by way of an overall plan for the development of the lands, how the proposed development would not adversely affect the comprehensive development of the lands in the future.</p>	Dark Blue

	Land Use Zoning Category	Land Use Zoning Objective	Map Colour
LUO 6	Industry, Enterprise and Employment	<p>To provide for new industrial, enterprise and employment generating development and to facilitate the expansion of existing industrial and employment generating enterprises.</p> <p>The principal permitted use is a range of employment, industry and business uses.</p>	Red
LUO 7	Existing Commercial	<p>To provide for established commercial development and facilitate its appropriate expansion.</p> <p>The principal permitted use shall be related to the existing established commercial use on site. The redevelopment and expansion of existing commercial lands may be permitted.</p>	Yellow
LUO 8	Community Facilities and Services	<p>To protect, provide and improve community facilities and services.</p> <p>The principal permitted use is community, civic, religious, medical/health, educational facilities and any uses ancillary and related to these uses such as playing fields or car parks.</p>	Orange
LUO 9	Recreation and Amenity	<p>To protect and provide for recreation, open space and amenity.</p> <p>The principal permitted use is passive and active recreation and any uses ancillary and related to this use such as recreational buildings or car parks.</p>	Light Green
LUO 10	Landscape Protection/ Conservation	<p>To protect important landscape features within the towns from development that would detrimentally impact on the amenity of the landscape, on the natural setting of the town, or on the natural attenuation offered by flood plains.</p> <p>To only permit development where it has been clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the development will not be contrary to the overall zoning objective of the lands, for example the provision of open space or services to adjoining land uses.</p> <p>Tree felling in these areas will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.</p>	Dark Green
LUO 11	Flood Risk Areas	<p>To apply the precautionary principle and require justification for development on these lands.</p> <p>Any development proposed on these lands or, where deemed necessary by the Planning Authority, within the vicinity of these lands, shall demonstrate full compliance with the requirements of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009 and any new or updated/subsequent versions.</p>	Green Lines
LUO 12	Local Area Action Plan	<p>To resist development which would prejudice the preparation and implementation of Local Area Action Plans for areas identified within the towns.</p> <p>Local Area Action Plans will be developed to establish strategic planning principles for each identified area</p>	Yellow Outline

	Land Use Zoning Category	Land Use Zoning Objective	Map Colour
		including land use, infrastructure provision, layout, open spaces, linkages and design. Development will only be considered on these lands where it is demonstrated that it does not compromise the overall objective for sustainable development in the future. In such cases the applicant will be required to demonstrate how the proposed development would not adversely affect the comprehensive development of the lands in the future.	

Development within each zoned area will be determined having regard to the Land Use Zoning Matrix set out in Table 9.3. Uses other than the primary use for which an area is zoned may be permitted in certain circumstances provided they are not in conflict with the primary land use zoning objective.

The Land Use Zoning Matrix illustrates the acceptability or unacceptability of various uses for each of the zoned areas. The Land Use Zoning Matrix is intended to provide guidance to potential developers and members of the public on the category of development which is acceptable in principle, open for consideration in certain circumstances, or not normally permitted. The Land Use Zoning Matrix relates to land use only and important factors such as density, building height, design standards and traffic generation are also relevant in establishing whether a development proposal would be acceptable at a particular location.

✓ = Acceptable in Principle

A development type which is acceptable in principle is one which complies with the primary zoning objective for the area and is generally permitted subject to compliance with the relevant policies, standards and requirements contained within the Development Plan.

O = Open for Consideration

A development type that is open for consideration is one that by reason of its nature and scale would not be in conflict with the primary zoning objective for the area subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

X = Not Normally Permitted

A development type that is not normally permitted is one that would be contrary to the zoning objectives and thus will not normally be permitted, except in exceptional circumstances.

Other Uses

Proposed uses that are not listed in the Land Use Zoning Matrix will be considered on the merits of the individual planning applications having regard to the most appropriate use of a similar nature indicated in the Land Use Zoning Matrix. Uses that conflict with the general overall objective of the zoned area will not be permitted.

Non-conforming Uses

It is acknowledged that there are existing established uses which are inconsistent with the primary zoning objective. It is not intended that these established uses should be curtailed. Where extensions or improvements to these uses are proposed, each proposal shall be considered on its own merits in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Table 9.2: Land Use Zoning Matrix Codes

Town Centre	TC	Existing Commercial	EC
Existing Residential	ER	Community Facilities and Services	CS
Proposed Residential (A and B)	PR	Recreation and Amenity	RA
Strategic Residential Reserve	SR	Landscape Protection/Conservation	LPC
Industry, Enterprise and Employment	IE		

Table 9.3: Land Use Zoning Matrix

Development Type	TC	ER	PR	SR	IE	EC	CS	RA	LPC
Abattoir	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X
Advertising and Advertising Structures	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	X
Agricultural Buildings	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Allotments	O	✓	✓	O	O	O	O	O	O
Amusement/Gaming Arcades	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bank/Financial Services	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
B&B/ Guest House	✓	✓	✓	O	X	O	X	X	X
Betting Office	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Boarding Kennels	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X
Business/Technology Park	O	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	X
Builders Providers	O	X	X	X	✓	O	X	X	X
Call Centre	✓	X	X	X	✓	O	X	X	X
Camping/Caravan Park	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	O	X
Car Park/Park and Ride	O	X	O	O	O	O	X	X	X
Car Wash	O	X	X	X	✓	O	X	X	X
Cash & Carry/Wholesale unit	O	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	X
Cemetery	X	X	X	O	X	X	O	O	X
Church/Place of Worship	✓	O	O	O	X	O	✓	X	X
Cinema/Theatre/ Bingo Hall	✓	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X
Community Facility	✓	O	O	O	X	O	✓	O	X
Conference Facility	✓	X	X	X	X	O	O	X	X
Creche/Nursery	✓	O	O	O	O	O	O	X	X
Cultural/Library/Museum/Gallery	✓	O	O	O	X	O	O	X	X
Nightclub/Dance Hall	✓	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Doctor/Dentist/Health Practitioner	✓	O	O	O	X	O	✓	X	X
Drive Through	O	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X
Education/Training/Schools	O	O	O	O	O	O	✓	X	X
Enterprise Centre	✓	X	X	X	✓	O	X	X	X
Factory Outlet	✓	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X
Farm Shop	✓	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X
Fire/Ambulance Station	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	X
Fuel Filling Station	O	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X
Fuel Depot/Distributor	X	X	X	X	✓	O	X	X	X
Funeral Home/Mortuary	✓	X	X	X	O	O	O	X	X

Development Type	TC	ER	PR	SR	IE	EC	CS	RA	LPC
Garden Centre	✓	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X
Golf Course	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	✓
Health Centre/Primary Care Centre/Hospital	✓	O	O	O	X	O	O	X	X
HGV Park/Transport Depot	X	X	X	X	✓	O	X	X	X
Hostel	✓	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Hot Food Take Away	✓	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Hotel	✓	X	X	O	X	O	X	X	X
Industry (light)	X	X	X	X	✓	O	X	X	X
Industry (heavy)	X	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X
Offices (non-ancillary)	✓	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X
Park/Playground	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	O	✓	✓	✓
Pitch and Putt/Driving Range	X	X	X	X	X	X	O	✓	X
Playing Fields	O	O	O	O	X	X	O	✓	O
Public House	✓	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Public Transport Depot	O	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	X
Infrastructure, Services & Utilities	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Quarrying/Extractive Industry	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Recreational Facility/Sports Club	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Recycling Facility/Waste Transfer Site	O	X	X	X	✓	O	X	X	X
Residential	✓	✓	✓	O	X	X	X	X	X
Restaurant/Cafe	✓	X	X	X	O	O	O	X	X
Retail (Convenience)	✓	O	O	O	X	O*	X	X	X
Retail (Comparison)	✓	X	X	X	X	O*	X	X	X
Retail Warehouse	O	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X
Residential Home/Retirement Home/Nursing Home	O	O	O	O	X	O	O	X	X
Science Technology Enterprise	✓	X	X	X	✓	O	X	X	X
Taxi Office	✓	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X
Telecommunications	✓	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	X
Tourist Facilities	✓	X	X	X	O	O	O	O	X
Traveller Accommodation/Halting Site	O	O	O	O	X	X	O	X	X
Vehicle Servicing & Repairs	X	X	X	X	✓	O	X	X	X
Vehicle Sales	X	X	X	X	✓	O	X	X	X
Equipment Hire	O	X	X	X	✓	O	X	X	X
Vehicle Breakers Yard	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X
Veterinary Surgery	✓	X	X	X	O	O	X	X	X
Warehousing	O	X	X	X	✓	O	X	X	X
Wind Turbine	X	O	O	O	✓	✓	O	O	X
Workshop	O	X	X	X	✓	O	X	X	X

*Retail (Convenience) and Retail (Comparison) are acceptable in principle at the Monaghan Retail Park.

9.3 Compact Growth, Consolidation and Urban Regeneration

In line with national and regional planning policy, Monaghan County Council will continue to promote the regeneration of the County's towns and villages by encouraging the revitalisation of underutilised

and neglected areas such as, infill, brownfield lands and backlands within the built-up areas of towns and villages.

The benefits of such development do not relate solely to the individual site or building but can also result in multiple benefits to the wider area, including enhancement to the public realm, creation of new public open spaces and with good quality architectural design, significant visual improvements to the streetscape. Particularly within the main towns and villages, the re-purposing of brownfield, under-utilised or vacant sites can result in additional housing options and types. The introduction of residential use above commercial premises whereby community services, retail provision and public transport are locally accessible, increases the vibrancy of our towns and villages and reflects the thrust of the Town Centre First Policy.

Special attention to design and impacts on neighbouring properties should be carefully addressed for all proposed developments, in accordance with Chapter 15, Development Management Standards of this Development Plan.

9.3.1 Derelict Sites

A derelict site is any land, that detracts or is likely to detract, to a material degree from the amenity, character or appearance of land in the neighbourhood of the land in question because of:

- The existence on the land in question of structures which are in a ruinous, derelict or dangerous condition, or
- The neglected, unsightly or objectionable condition of the land or any structures on the land in question, or
- The presence, deposit or collection on the land in question of any litter, rubbish, debris or waste.

The Derelict Site Act 1990 affords Local Authorities the power to:

- Require owners to clean up their sites,
- Prosecute owners who don't comply with notices served,
- Carry out necessary work themselves and charge the owners,
- Acquire land by agreement or compulsorily in the functional area, and
- Issue an Endangerment Notice in respect of a Protected Structure specifying works to be carried out to prevent a Protected Structure from becoming or continuing to be endangered.

Monaghan County Council maintains a register of derelict sites in its area. Owners of urban land entered on the Derelict Sites Register are liable to pay an annual levy to the Local Authority. Monaghan County Council will continue to investigate and prioritise reports of dereliction and take relevant action, in accordance with the Derelict Sites Act 1990, in an effort to have the dereliction abated and ensure the re-use of existing urban lands throughout the County.

9.3.2 Dangerous Structures

The Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act 1964 gives powers to Local Authorities to address dangerous structures in their administrative area. A Section 3 Notice can be served on owners of a property, which is considered to be in a dangerous condition requiring them to carry out specific works to make the property safe.

9.3.3 Vacant Sites

The commencement of the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015 (which amended Section 10(2)) of the Planning and Development Act (the Act) 2000 (as amended) introduced a new statutory obligation for all Planning Authorities to establish a register of vacant sites and to make provision for

a Vacant Site Levy. Monaghan County Council established a Vacant Sites Register on 1st January 2017 for sites in excess of 0.05 hectares in designated areas. Where a site is on the register for a period of 12 months, the County Council may apply a levy at the set national rate of the market valuation of the vacant site. The levy may be applied to all identified and registered regenerated land and residential land in the land use zoning categories set out by this County Development Plan. This site activation measure aims to stimulate the regeneration of vacant, urban sites and to encourage the release of zoned lands to deliver housing at appropriate locations.

Tables 9.4 and 9.5 identify the Land Use Zoning Categories and Objectives identified for both regeneration and residential lands in respect of the Vacant Site Levy.

Table 9.4: Applicable Land Use Zoning Categories identified as regeneration land in respect of the Vacant Site Levy (Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015).

Land Use Zoning Category	Land Use Zoning Objective
Town Centre	To provide, protect and enhance town centre facilities and promote town centre strengthening.
Industry, Enterprise and Employment	To provide for new industrial, enterprise and employment generating development and to facilitate expansion of existing industrial and employment generating enterprises.
Existing Commercial	To provide for established commercial development and facilitate appropriate expansion.
Community Facilities and Services	To protect, provide and improve community, civic and educational facilities.
Recreation and Amenity	To protect and provide for recreation, open space and amenity.

Table 9.5: Applicable Land Use Zoning Categories identified as residential land in respect of the Vacant Site Levy (Urban Regeneration and Housing Act 2015).

Land Use Zoning Category	Land Use Zoning Objective
Town Centre	To provide, protect and enhance town centre facilities and promote town centre strengthening.
Existing Residential	To protect and enhance existing residential amenity, to facilitate residential development on small infill sites within established residential areas, the comprehensive redevelopment of brownfield residential sites for sustainable residential development, and to facilitate and encourage the completion of commenced and not yet completed residential developments.
Proposed Residential A	To provide for new residential development and for new and improved ancillary services.
Proposed Residential B	To facilitate serviced low density residential development and serviced residential sites in a structured and co-ordinated manner.
Strategic Residential Reserve	To protect lands that are considered strategic in location for future residential development.

9.3.4 Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT)

The Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT) was introduced in the Finance Act 2021 and was committed to in Housing for All, A New Housing Plan for Ireland 2030. The objective of the tax is to activate land that is serviced and zoned for residential use or mixed use where residential development is permitted, in

order to increase housing supply and to ensure the regeneration of vacant and idle lands in urban locations. In accordance with statutory requirements, Monaghan County Council must prepare an annual draft map of the lands considered to be in the scope for RZLT.

The RZLT is an annual tax which will be administrated by the Revenue Commissioners from 2025 onwards and will be undertaken on a self-assessment basis. The RZLT will replace the current Vacant Site Levy however in the interim period, the Vacant Sites Levy shall apply. Lands zoned as Strategic Residential Reserve are not currently liable for the RZLT.

9.3.5 Town Centre First

The Town Centre First (TCF) policy was issued jointly by the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) in February 2022. It is the overarching national strategy for the renewal and regeneration of Irish towns which aims to tackle vacancy, combat dereliction, and breathe new life into town centres. The policy advocates for a holistic, place-based approach to sustainable rural development and contains thirty-three actions which gives towns the tools and resources they need to become more viable and attractive places in which to live, work, socialise and run a business.

A Town Regeneration Team lead by the Town Regeneration Officer has been established within Monaghan County Council to drive the implementation of the Town Centre First Policy. The Town Regeneration Team acts as a link between Town Teams, the expertise within the Council and other organisations and will facilitate the Town Teams in accessing funding and delivering projects at local level.

A key element in the delivery of the Town Centre First Policy at local level is the preparation of Town Centre First Plans. These plans are non-statutory, community-level plans, underpinned by surveys and Town Centre Health Check data analysis and will be carried out by the Town Teams. Town Centre First Plans must be informed by the policies and objectives of the County Development Plan and vice versa.

Following receipt of funding from the Department of Rural and Community Development, the Carrickmacross Town Centre First Plan was launched on the 22nd March 2024. The Plan maps out a series of transformative projects specifically tailored for Carrickmacross, encompassing a spectrum of scales and ambitions. The Plan is a live document, and will remain responsive to ongoing input and feedback, ensuring its adaptability to the evolving needs and aspirations of Carrickmacross.

Subject to further funding, Town Centre First Plans will be prepared for the towns of Ballybay, Clones, Castleblayney and Monaghan.

Urban Regeneration Objectives	
URO 1	To promote the regeneration of the County towns and village centres and foster compact and sustainable growth by encouraging new development on infill sites, brownfield sites or underutilised lands before considering edge-of-town and village sites.
URO 2	To identify and secure funding from relevant agencies and Government sources including the Rural and Urban Regeneration and Development Funds (RRDF/URDF) for town and village renewal projects throughout the County.
URO 3	To address the impact of derelict site(s)/structure(s) upon the amenity of an area through the application of the statutory mechanisms afforded through the Derelict Sites Act 1990.

Urban Regeneration Objectives	
URO 4	To implement an Active Land Management Strategy in relation to vacant land in the Tier 1-4 settlements within County Monaghan in conjunction with the Town Regeneration Officer to ensure efficient and sustainable use of the County's land resources.
URO 5	To support the preparation and implementation of Town Centre First Plans in accordance with the Town Centre First Policy which promotes sustainable development and positive environmental benefits.
URO 6	To encourage collaboration with the Land Development Agency to accelerate regeneration and provide a sustainable supply of housing during the lifetime of the Development Plan, where appropriate.

9.4 Population

Population trends are central to the planning process. Changes in population, household patterns and spatial distribution form the basis on which decisions on land use, service provision, housing, employment, retail, community and recreational needs are determined.

The Core Strategy set out in Chapter 2 indicates, how the development objectives set out in this Development Plan are consistent with national and regional objectives. As a consequence, the quantum of residential land use zonings must be commensurate with population growth targets set out within Chapter 2 Core Strategy of this Development Plan.

Strong population centres become self-generating in terms of employment, attracting inward investment in industry and commerce and supporting a wider range and quality of infrastructure, services and facilities. However, the rural areas immediately surrounding the four larger towns have been designated as Rural Areas Under Strong Urban Influence to protect these areas from sustained urban pressure. Therefore, achieving development which will consolidate the urban areas and ensure sustainable management of the environment and heritage of the urban areas is fundamental. An evidence-based approach that underpins the preparation of the Core Strategy and the land use zoning maps for each of the towns, has identified suitable lands that will provide for the projected population growth of County Monaghan over the plan period.

9.5 Urban Residential Developments

It is important to ensure that new housing is provided for all sectors of the community including older people, families and single persons. A high standard in terms of aesthetics and functionality will be required in all new residential developments within the settlements, with particular consideration to the range of potential occupiers and the surrounding urban form. All new residential developments should fully integrate with established settlement patterns and provide for the establishment of neighbourhoods as opposed to housing estates.

Urban Residential Developments Objectives	
UDO 1	To promote the towns as residential centres and encourage the development of new residential accommodation on zoned residential lands.
UDO 2	To ensure there is sufficient zoned, serviceable land to meet the future housing needs of the towns as set out in Chapter 2, Core Strategy, of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.
UDO 3	To provide directly, or in partnership with the voluntary or private sector, sufficient social and affordable housing to meet the needs of the area.
UDO 4	To encourage social integration and a mixture of tenures in all residential developments.

Urban Residential Developments Objectives	
UDO 5	To encourage the refurbishment and reuse of derelict buildings and development on derelict lands and infill sites in the towns for residential developments which will result in the renewal and regeneration of towns.
UDO 6	To comply with Chapter 3, Housing Strategy, of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.
UDO 7	To promote compact forms of residential development such as infill and back land development and ensure, through the development management process, that access points to backland areas are reserved or that adequate frontage is reserved to provide future road access, to enable comprehensive backland development.
UDO 8	To encourage and support proposals for new residential development that will result in the regeneration/renewal of town centre areas and/or a reduction in vacancy/dereliction in the context of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

9.6 Town Centres

The town centres consist of a mixture of land uses, many of which are interdependent. While retailing underpins the function of a town centre, it also acts as an employment and service centre for the town and the wider rural hinterland. New development within town centres shall be compliant with the relevant objectives and policies of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

Town Centre Objectives	
TCO 1	To promote and develop the town centres as the principal location for retail, office, leisure, entertainment, cultural and service uses and to encourage the refurbishment, renewal and re-use of existing buildings and derelict sites within it.
TCO 2	To protect the vitality and viability of the town centres by promoting a diversity of uses within them, with a presumption in favour of development that would make a positive contribution to ensuring that the town centres continue to provide a focus for shopping.
TCO 3	To promote the vitality and viability of the town centres by prohibiting, except in exceptional circumstances, the location of town centre uses such as financial institutions, offices, etc outside the designated town centres.
TCO 4	To use statutory legislation to discourage and prevent dereliction and encourage regeneration and development in the town centres.
TCO 5	To ensure that sufficient parking is available for town centre uses.
TCO 6	To continue to provide public investment directly and in partnership with the voluntary and private sector to support the vibrancy of the town centres.
TCO 7	To encourage the principal of living over the shop within the town centres.
TCO 8	To encourage and facilitate the undergrounding of utility cables in the town centres.
TCO 9	To continue to encourage and accommodate the regeneration of backlands in the town centres where appropriate, including the construction of new urban streets to provide access to inaccessible lands.

9.7 Retailing

The County Monaghan Retail Development Strategy 2016-2022 was prepared in accordance with the provisions set out in the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012. The overriding aim of the strategy is to create the appropriate conditions necessary to foster a healthy and vibrant retailing environment over the period of the strategy. Any new retail development should be located within the town centres and if no sites are available, consideration may be given to retail development

on edge of town centre sites. All retail development proposals shall comply with the sequential approach and may also require the submission of a Retail Impact Assessment and/or a Traffic Impact Assessment, depending on the nature, size and scale of the proposed development.

Retailing Objectives	
RTO 1	To protect the vitality and viability of the town centres as the principal shopping area by encouraging development that would maintain and consolidate the retail core (as defined by the town centre zoning) of the towns.
RTO 2	To prohibit the location of retail development outside the town centres unless the development is compliant with the policies contained in the County Monaghan Retail Strategy 2016-2022 and the DECLG Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (and any new or updated/subsequent versions).
RTO 3	To encourage the provision of a wider range of convenience and comparison goods, and size of retail units in the town centres.

9.8 Industry, Enterprise and Employment

It is recognised that there is a need for greater employment opportunities within the towns in order to sustain and retain the growing population of both the towns and the wider rural hinterland. The population of County Monaghan primarily works within the County but there is a significant cohort of County Monaghan's population that commutes to larger urban areas and across the border for employment opportunities. Due to their strategic location, a higher proportion of the population of Carrickmacross and Castleblayney are attracted to job opportunities outside of the County, primarily due to their close proximity to the key transport corridor (Dublin to Belfast) and large urban centres such as Dundalk and Dublin. The priority for the large towns is to cater for economic growth to provide secure and sustainable jobs. Business growth and development will be encouraged to provide secure, sustainable jobs and promote economic development including tourism and rural diversification.

The provision of sufficient zoned industrial and employment lands provides an indicator to potential employment generating uses as well as encouraging the location of new industries into the towns. This Development Plan sets out to assist anyone who wishes to establish or expand industrial, commercial or other such endeavours that will provide increased employment opportunities in the County, subject to normal development management requirements and technical criteria.

Industry, Enterprise and Employment Objectives	
IEO 1	To ensure that sufficient and suitable land is reserved for new industrial development at appropriate locations, where there are existing infrastructural facilities, services and good communications, or where they can be provided at a reasonable cost.
IEO 2	To facilitate the growth and/or expansion of existing industrial enterprises where appropriate, subject to the Development Management Standards in Chapter 15, of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031. Such developments should not unduly impact on the residential amenity of existing residential properties.
IEO 3	To encourage and promote the sustainable development of industry within the towns over the plan period.
IEO 4	To co-operate with Industrial Development Agency (IDA) Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, community groups and other relevant bodies to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the provision of necessary infrastructure and services to support industrial development.

Industry, Enterprise and Employment Objectives	
IEO 5	To ensure that a high standard of design, layout and amenity is provided and maintained in all new industrial developments.
IEO 6	To continue to support and facilitate cross-border co-operation and trade between County Monaghan and Northern Ireland.
IEO 7	To consider proposals for industrial and commercial development on sites located in close proximity to the edge of towns, where it has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the proposed development cannot be accommodated within the town settlement envelope due to lack of available suitably zoned lands, or on the grounds of amenity or environmental considerations.

9.9 Infrastructure and Services

County Monaghan's national and regional road network ensures strong connectivity with the larger towns of Dundalk, Cavan, Enniskillen, Armagh and Omagh. Improvements to this road network including the by-passes of Castleblayney and Carrickmacross, have strengthened the County's position and its future development potential.

Infrastructure and Services Objectives	
ISO 1	To construct new roads and improve the existing road network in, around and through the towns, to open up development lands and improve traffic safety.
ISO 2	To reduce traffic congestion and improve access and traffic flow throughout the towns.
ISO 3	To construct and maintain pedestrian and traffic safety measures, and implement traffic control measures, where required, throughout the towns.
ISO 4	To regulate and manage car-parking facilities throughout the towns in accordance with Chapter 15 Development Management Standards, of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 and ensure that adequate off-street car parking and servicing space is provided in all new developments.
ISO 5	To strengthen and reconstruct all deficient sections of road pavement and footpath and provide additional pavements and footpaths in residential areas when resources become available.
ISO 6	To co-operate with developers in the provision of access points, roads, footpaths and services where it is deemed necessary.
ISO 7	To ensure that, where appropriate, adequate space is provided in all new developments for off-street car parking and the provision of loading space within the curtilage of new developments, having due regard to any current National Guidelines aimed at reducing congestion.
ISO 8	To control and restrict any new direct access points or intensification of use of existing accesses onto the national road network within the general speed limit areas in accordance with the Spatial Planning and National Planning Guidelines (2012) or any new or updated/subsequent versions, and all relevant policies contained within the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

9.10 Natural and Built Heritage

County Monaghan has a rich heritage, both natural and built, and the setting of County Monaghan's towns is shaped by the natural topography which provides the County with a unique character. There are fine examples of built heritage within all five towns which enhance the appearance and character of each town. Each of the towns enjoy a wealth of natural amenities which include lakes, rivers,

woodlands in proximity to them, some of which are designated areas of Primary and Secondary Amenity Areas or proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs). This Development Plan sets out to protect these amenities from any development that would detrimentally impact on them or their designation.

Natural and Built Heritage Objectives	
NBHO 1	To promote the value of Monaghan's natural and built heritage resources as an asset for the local economy and a key benefit to the amenity of the area and the well-being of the community.
NBHO 2	To prohibit development that would detrimentally impact on the value or designation of areas of natural amenity in the towns.
NBHO 3	To protect individual trees, groups of trees and woodland areas because of their nature conservation value or their contribution to amenity of the town and require the retention of existing mature trees and hedgerows in all new developments, except in exceptional circumstances.
NBHO 4	To prohibit development in Landscape Protection/Conservation (LPC) areas unless in exceptional circumstances, where it has been clearly proven to the Planning Authority that the works would not be contrary to the zoning objective as outlined in Chapter 9 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.
NBHO 5	To have regard to nature conservation issues when considering proposals for development which may detrimentally impact on habitats, species, or features worthy of protection.
NBHO 6	To protect and preserve the Protected Monuments and Structures located within the towns.
NBHO 7	To protect existing Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) by ensuring that all developments within them comply with the policies set out in, Chapters 6 and 15 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 and the DEHLG Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines (2011) or any new or updated/subsequent versions. In these areas the repair and refurbishment of existing buildings will be favoured over demolition and new build.
NBHO 8	To protect the architectural quality of the towns by investigating the potential of designating additional Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) in accordance with the DEHLG Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines (2011) for Planning Authorities during the plan period, subject to resources.
NBHO 9	To protect and conserve the streetscape character, architectural quality and heritage of the towns.
NBHO 10	To ensure that new developments enhance, respect and compliment the form and scale of the existing town streetscape and architecture.
NBHO 11	To preserve features which contribute to the townscape and character of the town (e.g. archways, facades, stonework, iron railings etc).

9.11 Recreation and Amenity

There are a range of existing cultural and civic facilities within each of the five towns including the County Museum, Libraries, the Garage Theatre, the Carrickmacross Workhouse, Ballybay Wetlands Centre, the Peace Campus, Ulster Canal Stores and the Íontas Centre. Natural amenities in close proximity to the towns also provide for walking, angling and golfing. It is therefore recognised that areas of public open space and networks of green areas should be protected. It is also a policy of this Development Plan to provide for essential areas of private and public open space within any new residential developments which are being proposed. The Council will endeavour to protect and preserve areas of high amenity and open space value and restrict overdevelopment of urban areas.

Recreation and Amenity Objectives	
REO 1	To promote the value of the County's recreational and amenity resources as a key asset to the local economy and to the health and wellbeing of the community.
REO 2	To prohibit development on zoned recreation and amenity/open space lands unless it is clearly demonstrated that it is of compatible amenity value and that there will be no adverse effect on the environment.
REO 3	To provide sufficient recreation and amenity/open space areas within the towns for their populations and prevent the loss of existing public or private open space unless alternative facilities are provided in a suitable location elsewhere.
REO 4	To support the development of social, recreational, sporting and community facilities in appropriate locations.
REO 5	To co-operate with relevant educational authorities in developing additional facilities in the towns with the view of improving the availability of ancillary facilities for education.
REO 6	To maintain existing rights of way and investigate the creation of additional public rights of way, either by agreement, or by use of compulsory powers.
REO 7	To require recreational facilities such as a cinema or bowling alley to be located within the town centre or on the edge of the town centre. Alternative sites within the settlement limit shall only be considered acceptable where it is clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that there are no town centre or edge of town centre sites that are suitable, viable or available.

9.12 Tourism

County Monaghan needs to establish itself as a tourism destination by improving the visitor facilities and amenities on offer. This can be achieved by focusing on protecting the built and natural environment and capitalising upon the vibrancy of the towns. It is recommended that the town centres should be developed as attractive places to visit.

Tourism Objectives	
TUO 1	To promote and facilitate the development of County Monaghan as a tourism centre in co-operation with the public and private sector.
TUO 2	To accommodate sustainable tourism related projects related to the natural assets of the towns.
TUO 3	To encourage and accommodate the reopening of the Ulster Canal.
TUO 4	To promote and develop improved cross border networks to encourage tourism and business to operate in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.
TUO 5	To develop facilities to provide accessible tourist information throughout the towns and their environs within the plan period.
TUO 6	To support and facilitate the provision of parking facilities including spaces for motorhomes, associated with tourism amenities at appropriate locations.

9.13 Local Area Actions Plans (LAAPs)

LAAPs will be prepared for specified sites within Carrickmacross and Castleblayney. They will establish strategic planning principles for each area including land use, infrastructure provision, layout, open spaces, linkages to surrounding lands and urban design. Within these LAAPs, strong consideration to existing residential amenities must be given as well as the potential to create safe and accessible pedestrian and vehicular linkages to surrounding lands.

A LAAP should include:

- Policies and objectives which are consistent with the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.
- A written statement and a plan indicating the objectives, in such detail as may be determined by the Planning Authority, for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which it applies.
- Overall design principles for development including details of maximum heights, external finishes of structures and overall appearance which positively contributes to the public realm.
- The identification of pedestrian and vehicular linkages within the town centre which are safe and accessible.
- Guidance with regard to quality architectural treatment, topography, urban structure and built form which is consistent with the established character of the town.

Notwithstanding the land use zoning provision set out in this Plan, development which would prejudice the development and implementation of a LAAP will be resisted.

Generally, planning permission will not be granted on a site within an area identified for a LAAP in the absence of a LAAP. However, in these instances development proposals which set out an overall urban design framework for the development of the area and are prepared in consultation with the Planning Authority may be considered acceptable.

Local Area Action Plan Objectives	
LAAPO 1	To prepare and implement Local Area Action Plans for lands identified on maps of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031, in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders. All Local Area Action Plans shall be consistent with the provisions of national and regional policy as well as the relevant objectives and policies of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

9.14 Social Inclusion

The provision of new and existing accessible services, facilities and amenities is important in helping to reduce rural isolation and promoting more sustainable communities. Public transport provision is limited in many of County Monaghan's settlements which means that the population is heavily reliant on using private cars. The level of community facilities provided varies greatly between the settlements. It is important that recognition is given towards the provision of necessary local services and community facilities in order to prevent further isolation.

Social Inclusion Objectives	
SIO 1	To identify and zone land for the purposes of providing or extending educational, community or recreational facilities.
SIO 2	To secure greater social inclusion through the provision of an appropriate mix of house types within residential areas in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 3 Housing Strategy, of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.
SIO 3	To require that the quantitative and qualitative standard for public open space in all new residential developments as required in Chapter 15 Development Management Standards, of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 are accessible to all.
SIO 4	To ensure that adequate provision is made for public transportation infrastructure including pedestrian and cycling linkages which are accessible to all.

9.15 Tier 4 Village Plans

County Monaghan has a strong village network providing basic services to the wider rural community. There are fourteen villages contained in Tier 4 of the Core Strategy Settlement Hierarchy as listed below, each of which has a designated village settlement envelope to provide for appropriate growth and to protect their character, setting and function.

Tier 4 Villages	
Annyalla, Ballinode, Clontibret North, Doohamlet, Emyvale, Glaslough, Inniskeen, Newbliss, Oram, Rockcorry, Scotshouse, Scotstown, Smithborough, Threemilehouse	

Tier 4 Villages Strategic Objective	
VSO 1	To support the Tier 4 villages in their role as local rural service centres for their population and rural hinterlands and where the principles of environmental, economic and social sustainability, including the protection of their heritage and natural and built environments, is paramount.

Within the settlement envelope of these villages, the Planning Authority will normally grant planning permission for appropriate development proposals that are in keeping with the size and character of the settlement, can be accessed and serviced satisfactorily and are appropriate in terms of use. It should be noted that the inclusion of lands within the village settlement envelope does not guarantee that planning permission will be granted for any particular development.

The village settlement envelopes are based on the existing established footprint with the aim to consolidate existing development and promote the regeneration of existing derelict and/or vacant sites. Lands are not zoned for specific uses within the village plans in order to provide for a less restrictive approach to the suitable expansion and growth of the villages. Notwithstanding this, development constraints may exist which include protected structures, protected monuments and flood risk areas.

Residential development within the village settlement envelope will be considered on its merits in terms of quantum, location and in accordance with the relevant objectives and policies set out in this Development Plan including Chapter 2, Core Strategy and Chapter 15, Development Management Standards.

Proposed development within the Tier 4 villages may be permissible where there is capacity in existing wastewater treatment facilities both in terms of volume and environmental loading. Otherwise, proposed development within these settlements may be permissible where they include individual wastewater treatment systems, where they comply with the relevant Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Code of Practice. This is considered necessary in order to protect the environment.

In recognition of the importance of Tier 4 villages in sustaining the vitality of rural communities, it is an objective of the Development Plan to prepare Tier 4 Village Plans during the lifetime of the Development Plan. It is envisaged that these plans will be delivered on a strategically phased basis following agreement with the Elected Members of Monaghan County Council. Community engagement will be a key element to enable interested parties to become involved in shaping the future of these villages and influence how their communities grow and develop.

Tier 4 Villages Objectives	
VIO 1	To promote and facilitate development within the Tier 4 villages that is commensurate with the nature and extent of the existing settlement to support their role as local service centres.
VIO 2	To promote and facilitate residential development which is commensurate with the nature and scale of the village, utilising brownfield and infill opportunities in order to regenerate and consolidate the village in compliance with the Core Strategy, except where need has been demonstrated elsewhere to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.
VIO 3	To facilitate additional community facilities and services within the village envelope where no other suitable sites are available where possible and on the fringes of the village envelope where no other suitable sites are available.
VIO 4	To prepare Tier 4 village plans during the lifetime of this Plan, with a focus on housing, amenity, infrastructure, transport and the sustainable reuse and regeneration of existing derelict, vacant, or underutilised sites. At least one village plan will be prepared for a village in each of the three Municipal Districts per annum.

Chapter 10

Monaghan Town

Settlement Plan

2025-2031

Chapter 10

Monaghan Town Settlement Plan 2025-2031

Monaghan Town Settlement Plan Strategic Objective	
MTSO 1	To facilitate the development of Monaghan Town to maintain its position as the Principal/Key Town in the County at the top of the settlement hierarchy and to ensure that its expansion takes place in an orderly and sustainable fashion that will not detract from the vitality and viability of its town centre.
MTSO 2	<p>To ensure that the following priorities for the town are delivered within the lifetime of the development plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the implementation of the Dublin Street South Regeneration Plan, Dublin Street North Regeneration Plan, and Roosky Lands Master Plan • the preparation and implementation of a Master Plan for the Saint Louis Convent lands, • the development of the Industry, Enterprise and Employment lands at Annahagh and Tullyherim, • the implementation of the Town Centre First Plan for the town, • the preparation and implementation of a Local Transport Plan for the town, • the preparation of a feasibility study in respect of proposed road links within the town, • the implementation of the Monaghan Drainage Area Plan, • an annual increase in population by a minimum of 100 persons per annum in order to achieve the growth targets set out for the town within both the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Region.

10.0 Location and Context

Monaghan is the largest town in the County, with the County Hospital, County Court, Garda Headquarters and County Council offices all located within the town.

The Development Plan recognises that the strengthening of Monaghan Town as a major centre of population in the regional and cross border context is important in terms of attracting private sector investment in jobs and the economy. Monaghan Town performs important employment, retailing and administrative functions servicing the economic needs of a large rural hinterland. A number of key industries are located within the town, including Kingspan Century Homes, Irish Joinery Manufacturing (IJM), Arthur Mallon's and Combilift Ltd. Monaghan Town is strategically located at the intersection of the N2 Dublin-Derry/Letterkenny route and N12/N54 routes which link Belfast to Galway and the Midlands.

The town's role as the County town will continue to strengthen its function as a business and administrative centre. The town benefits from an extensive radiating regional road structure to compliment the national road infrastructure, linking the village network in North Monaghan and Counties Armagh and Tyrone with the town.

10.1 Historical Context

Monaghan is a historical town of notable architectural and civic character. The earliest references to Monaghan Town are from the fourteenth century, when the McMahon family established their primary residence on a crannog on Convent Lake. Monaghan Town developed many of its characteristics during the Ulster Plantation. The central Market Square or Diamond, with the principal

centres of administration, religious buildings and commerce were common in Mid-Ulster towns. The current streetscape of the centre of town, with long narrow streets (Glaslough Street, Park Street and Dublin Street) off the central Diamond and Church Square developed during this period.

The town and surrounding area developed throughout the 20th century, based upon the establishment of indigenous local industries such as food production, engineering and furniture making in the town and throughout the North Monaghan area. The expansion of construction and engineering-based industries over the last decade has contributed greatly to the local economy.

Monaghan Town today retains the Diamond and an enhanced open space at Church Square. Whilst the main arteries through the town remain busy, the completion of the town by-pass has diverted north/south bound traffic from the town centre. The landscaping and public realm improvements carried out in the town centre have enhanced its general appearance and added value to new and existing properties.

10.2 Strategy and Vision

The Northern and Western Regional Assembly, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (NWRA RSES) defines Monaghan Town as a 'Key Town'. Key Towns are regionally strategic employment centres of a significant scale that can act as regional drivers that complement and support the higher order urban areas within the settlement hierarchy. The NWRA RSES also notes that Monaghan Town has the potential to accommodate a significant level of growth in population and employment.

The purpose of this Development Plan is to set out a shared vision of how the sustainable and co-ordinated growth and development of Monaghan Town can be shaped in a planned manner which will also act as a catalyst for the economic, physical, cultural, and environmental development of the town. The Development Plan aims to give direction to the town's expansion while encouraging an inclusive, transparent and accountable approach to future development during the plan period 2025-2031 and beyond.

The 2022 Census indicates that the population of Monaghan Town is 7,894. This represents an increase of 216 from the 2016 Census, an increase of 2.8%. The Census results also indicated that of the total housing stock available in the town, 22.6% were vacant.

The main employment sectors in Monaghan Town in 2022 were in Commerce and Trade (22%), Professional Services (18%), and Manufacturing Industries (17%). Although the employment figures reinforce the standing of Monaghan Town as the County's main commercial, administrative and service centre, there is a deficiency in the number of jobs in IT-technology based industries and employment opportunities for graduates. It is hoped that with improved third level educational facilities and the provision of sufficient serviced industrial lands in the town, this form of industry may be attracted to the town.

The Core Strategy set out in Chapter 2 of this Development Plan projects that the population of Monaghan town will grow to 9,700 over this Plan period and a housing land requirement of almost 31 hectares is being provided within the settlement boundaries to accommodate this projected growth. In the Core Strategy Monaghan is identified as a Tier 1 Principal/Key Town. The town will be promoted as the primary growth centre for industrial development, as the primary retail and service centre and as a strong and attractive residential centre. Monaghan Town also aspires to be a third level education provider.

One of the main aims of the Development Plan is to consolidate the town centre as advocated in the

National Planning Framework (NPF) and the NWRA RSES. Strong population centres become self-generating in terms of employment, attracting inward investment in industry and commerce, and thus support a wider range and quality of infrastructure, services and facilities.

Table 10.1 Monaghan Town Population Projections

2022 Population	Population as a % of County Monaghan population	2031 Projected Population	Projected % of County Monaghan Population 2031
7,894	12.09%	9,700	13.6%

10.3 Education

Monaghan Town has five secondary schools and five national schools as well as Monaghan Institute, a further education college. The numbers attending each college are outlined in Table 10.2.

Table 10.2 Enrolment Figures for Schools in Monaghan Town 2023-2024

Name of School N=National / S= Secondary / FE= Further Education	No. of Students
(N) St. Mary's Boys National school	238
(N) St. Louis Girls National school	200
(N) Monaghan Model School	185
(N) Gaelscoil Ultain	386
(N) Nai Scoil St. Louis National school	250
(S) Beech Hill College	874
(S) St. Louis Convent	520
(S) St. Macartan's College	612
(S) Monaghan Collegiate School	255
(S) Coláiste Oiriall	391
(FE) Monaghan Institute	952

The multi-user education campus located at Knockaconny provides educational facilities for primary, post-primary and further education levels and is home to Gael Scoil Ultain, Coláiste Oiriall and Monaghan Institute. Additionally, the site houses the Garage Theatre and a sports hall which are shared by all education users on the campus.

Monaghan Institute offers a wide range of further education and training (FET) courses. Close links with local employers and the community ensure that the focus of FET course provision is reflective of local needs and current/future skills shortages. Monaghan Institute fosters positive working relationships with other providers at home and abroad and is currently developing constructive contacts with St. Angela's, Sligo, Dundalk Institute of Technology, Atlantic Technological University (ATU) Donegal and Wrexham University.

10.4 Town Centre

Monaghan Town centre consists of a mixture of land uses, many of which are interdependent. While retailing underpins the function of the town centre, it is also an employment and service centre for the town and the wider hinterland. Residential, retail and commercial developments in the town centre over the last two decades, particularly to the rear of Glaslough Street, have contributed to increasing the vitality and viability of the town centre.

The Dublin Street Regeneration scheme is a proactive and innovative regeneration project for the Dublin Street area of the town that will lead to the sustainable, coordinated and compact growth of Monaghan town centre. The project targets regeneration of the backland areas to the North and South

of Dublin Street, the opening of development lands, the assembly of suitable land parcels, and the provision of critical infrastructure and public realm facilities will serve as a catalyst for future town centre public and private investment. The project is currently being progressed in two phases South and North.

The Dublin Street Regeneration Plan (South) was adopted as part of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2013-2019 and was prepared to provide guidance and options for the future development of the Dublin Street back land area. The aim of the plan is:

- To realise the potential for growth and to improve the range and quality of retail and non-retail offers,
- To deliver a more attractive shopping and visitor environment,
- To develop the town as a service centre given its strategic location, and
- To increase the number of people visiting Monaghan for shopping and other purposes.

The Dublin Street North Regeneration Plan was adopted as part of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 and provides guidance on the regeneration options for the future development of the Dublin Street North Regeneration Plan area. The plan affords for a consolidated development form to create an identifiable urban quarter with a strong sense of place and identity and includes the reuse, adaptation and infill of existing structures and new perimeter urban blocks, new streets and spaces that integrate and connect with the existing street network.

The Roosky Lands Master Plan was adopted as part of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2019-2025 and provides guidance on the regeneration options for future development of the Roosky Lands Master Plan area. The plan provides a vision for a place making approach which makes use of town centre area to create a desirable and convenient place to live, work and thrive, in an area that has considerable development potential.

All proposed developments within the Dublin Street/Rosky Regeneration Areas will have regard to the plans detailed above.

The Monaghan Peace Campus, a 4-storey mixed use community building, located within the town centre, will act as a new landmark for the town and will encourage cross-community and cross border interaction. The Campus provides a shared space comprising, the town library, county museum, youth space, café, underground carpark, external civic space, external stage area and a mix of bookable multi-use rooms catering for between 2 to 200 people. The Campus was opened to the public in 2024.

The completion of enhancement works to the existing civic space in Church Square has resulted in the creation of an outdoor events space which has enhanced the streetscape at this town centre location.

Monaghan County Council is progressing the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) Call 3 for Monaghan Town and is actively engaging with property owners, where possible, to address the long-term vacancy and dereliction of properties. Funding has been approved by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) to allow for the acquisition of these properties compulsorily or by agreement and to place them on the open market for sale to bring the properties back into active use. The funding is committed to 2030. Additionally, the Council is in the process of engaging consultants to carry out a heritage led Regeneration Plan for the town centre.

A key element in the delivery of the Town Centre First Policy at local level is the preparation of Town Centre First Plans. These plans are non-statutory, community-level plans, underpinned by surveys and Town Centre Health Check data analysis and will be carried out by Town Teams. Town Centre First

Plans must be informed by the policies and objectives of the County Development Plan and vice versa. Subject to funding, a Town Centre First Plan will be prepared for Monaghan Town.

In line with national and regional policy, Monaghan County Council will continue to promote town centre living and encourage the redevelopment of brownfield and derelict sites to consolidate the town centre.

Notwithstanding the identified Community Services/Facilities zoning for the St Davnet's campus, some limited social/affordable housing may be permitted, where there is clear demonstrable need. Such proposals on these lands shall be considered consistent with the identified zoning.

Monaghan Town Centre Objectives	
MTO 1	To ensure that all development proposals within the Dublin Street North Regeneration Plan area have regard to the regeneration strategy and development objectives of the Dublin Street North Regeneration Plan.
MTO 2	To ensure that all development proposals within the Roosky Lands Master Plan area have regard to the master plan strategy and development objectives of the Roosky Lands Master Plan.
MTO 3	To ensure that all development proposals within the Dublin Street Regeneration Plan (South) area, have regard to the regeneration strategy and development objectives of the Dublin Street Regeneration Plan.
MTO 4	To encourage development proposals which seek to refurbish existing buildings and backland areas in order to eliminate dereliction and reinforce the town centre.
MTO 5	To encourage and promote a diverse range of retail services within the town centre.

10.5 Saint Louis Convent

The acquisition of part of the Saint Louis Convent Campus by Monaghan County Council, offers a unique opportunity to develop the site and enhance public access to it. The 11.5 hectare site includes a cluster of buildings, a formal green space, lake, native woodland surrounds and a conifer plantation and is located close to the town centre as well as the Monaghan Town Greenway. In recognition of the importance of this asset to the town, and to ensure the sensitive re-development of the site, it is an objective of Monaghan County Council to prepare a Masterplan and Development Framework for the Saint Louis Convent site in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders.

Saint Louis Convent Objective	
MTO 6	To prepare and implement a Masterplan and Development Framework for the Saint Louis Convent site which will act as a blueprint for its evolution and ensure that the development of the site takes place in a sustainable manner.

10.6 Retailing

Monaghan Town is identified as a Tier 1 town in the retail hierarchy as set out in the Monaghan County Retail Strategy 2016-2022. The Strategy indicates that a total of 32,522sq.m of retail floor space is provided in Monaghan Town with a 20% vacancy rate for retail premises in the town. The Monaghan County Retail 2016-2022 sets out the policy context for retail development within County Monaghan. New retail development within Monaghan Town shall be compliant with the objectives and policies contained within the strategy.

The Council recognises the long-term vacancy at Monaghan Retail Park which must be addressed. It is an objective of the Council to support new retail in the Park.

- The current retail park has a 45% vacancy and at present there are 5 unoccupied and vacant units in the Retail Park. This has been a consistent long-term problem since it opened 20 years ago.
- Job Creation and Vacancy are not mutually exclusive. Addressing vacancy in Monaghan town in general, will create jobs. Monaghan Retail Park has a majority of units in vacancy and a list of retailers that want to lease space in the centre.
- Convenience and comparison retail should be a fundamental part of a wider Retail Hierarchy, which is Monaghan Town (the main county town) should include Neighbourhood level, convenience retail with appropriate attending services.

Monaghan Retailing Objective	
MTO 7	To extend the retail base of Monaghan Town as the Principal/Key Town in the County and maintain its Tier 1 designation as identified in the County Retail Strategy 2016-2022 and any new or updated/subsequent versions.

10.7 Industry, Enterprise and Employment

Monaghan Town has many traditional industries which have provided constant employment, notably in the engineering, furniture and agri-food industries. Employers in the town include Combilift, Kingspan Century Homes and IJM Timber Engineering Ltd. These industries provide employment for a substantial proportion of the working population of Monaghan Town.

The Industrial Development Authority (IDA) has a serviced estate at Knockaconny, including small cluster units, which are occupied by a mix of tenants.

Knockaconny Business and Technology Park, a thirty-acre serviced industrial hub which contains M: Tek I and II, an Advanced Technology Unit and a Bioconnect Research and Innovation Centre, is located on the edge of Monaghan Town. The M:TEK I and M:TEK II facilities at Knockaconny provide high quality business working space on the edge of the town.

Recognising the strategically important parcel of zoned Industry, Enterprise and Employment lands at Tullygrimes and Cornecassa Demesne, Monaghan County Council will facilitate and promote the sustainable development of these lands to consolidate, expand and complement existing significant enterprise activities at this location. The Monaghan Land Use and Transportation Study (MLUTS) recommend the relocation of the 60kph speed Limit westwards on the N54. To facilitate this the following is required:

- the relocation of the 60kph speed Limit zone 440m west of its existing location, and
- a new gateway to the west of Monaghan Town.

In recognising the strategically important parcel of zoned Industry, Enterprise and Employment lands at Knockaconny, Monaghan County Council will facilitate and promote the sustainable development of the town as well as consolidating, expanding and complementing existing significant enterprise activities at this location.

Approximately 237 hectares of land has been zoned for Industry, Enterprise and Employment development in Monaghan Town as indicated on Map MTDP1 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031. The provision of sufficient zoned Industry, Enterprise and Employment lands will provide certainty and clarity for all potential developers and encourage the location of new industries in the town.

Monaghan Industry, Enterprise and Employment Objective	
MTO 8	To promote Monaghan Town as the key industrial and employment centre of the County in line with its 'Key Town' status as designated in the Northern and Western Regional Assembly Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (NWRA RSES).

10.8 Power and Telecommunications

Monaghan Town benefits from good communication infrastructure including Project Kelvin, an extensive submarine and terrestrial cable deployment which connects directly and securely to Canada, the US, UK and mainland Europe.

The Metropolitan Area Network (MAN) has also been provided in Monaghan Town. E-net are the wholesale company charged with maintenance of the MAN network, operating through a series of retail broadband providers. This infrastructure provides access to dedicated high speed and secure, broadband networks. This offers opportunities for the development of e-working centres throughout the region in line with the Smarter Travel policy of reducing the number of journeys to work by car. High speed broadband is also available in the town.

The M:Tek buildings located at Knockaconny are part of the Armagh Monaghan Digital Corridor with a broadband 1Gb link between the A Tek (Armagh) and M:Tek.

High speed fibre broadband is also available in the town. SIRO, a joint venture between ESB and Vodafone, has completed the build of their full fibre network which can deliver high speed broadband services to homes and business throughout the town. Eir/Openeir has completed the upgrade of their fibre broadband networks within the town area.

10.9 Roads, Traffic Management and Active Travel

Monaghan Town is located at the intersection of the N2 Dublin-Derry/Letterkenny and N12/N54 Belfast-Galway National Routes, linking Dublin to the North-West and Belfast to the Midlands, respectively. The town is also located along a key east-west corridor linking Dundalk and Newry to Sligo and South Donegal. Monaghan Town is linked by the improved national and regional road network to Cavan Town as well as Enniskillen, Omagh, Dungannon and Armagh in Northern Ireland. The M1 Dundalk-Dublin motorway, Carrickmacross by-pass, Castleblayney by-pass, and Monaghan by-pass have strengthened the town's strategic position and connectivity to the Belfast-Dublin Economic Corridor.

The Monaghan Town (N2) by-pass has removed most north-south through traffic from the town centre. However, national road traffic travelling between the N54 and N2/N12 continues to travel through the town centre, as well as traffic using key regional routes. This through traffic presents a challenge when balancing the carrying capacity of those strategic routes and meeting the needs of other road users, commercial activity and residential developments. While traffic management solutions have been implemented such as restrictions on the movement of Heavy Goods Vehicles on some urban streets, direct intervention may be needed to facilitate traffic and transportation, to achieve active travel and climate action targets, and to facilitate the development and growth ambitions of the town.

Government policies now encourage modal shift, where possible, away from private car use and towards more sustainable transport modes such as walking, wheeling or cycling, also known as active travel. Government investment in active travel has increased significantly in recent years. The provision of quality cycling, wheeling and walking facilities can provide an economical, non-polluting, and flexible form of transport which can deliver improvements to overall health and wellbeing and reduce congestion and carbon emissions. The provision of active travel and recreational walking and

cycling infrastructure, such as designated cycle paths, greenways, walking paths and trails, also supports recreation and tourism. The development of active travel and recreational walking and cycling routes in and around Monaghan Town will contribute toward Government objectives around active travel.

A land use and transportation study has been prepared for Monaghan Town. The Monaghan Land Use and Transportation Study (MLUTS) sets out the transport and land use options for the town to cover the period of this development plan and beyond 2031. This study was a response to resolving the competing demands for more housing and employment generating land uses with the provision of better transportation, environment and community facilities in the MLUTS Area.

In conjunction with the National Transport Authority (NTA), Monaghan County Council is currently developing a Local Transport Plan (LTP) to identify transport requirements and solutions for Monaghan Town and its environs. The LTP will set out the outcomes of an Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) with the overall aim of improving the current sustainable transport offering in Monaghan Town and its environs for all travel modes. Recommendations from the MLUTS and the LTP will be taken into account when considering road proposals.

New road and upgrade proposals for Monaghan Town are as follows:

- Monaghan Town Northern link road, connecting the N54 Clones Road to N2/N12 National Primary Routes.
- Extension of Oriel Way Southern link road to provide transport connectivity between the N54 Clones Road to R188 Cootehill Road.
- Development of a Southern link between the R162 Ballybay Road and the N2 Dublin Road.
- Development of a link road from N12 Armagh Road to provide a connection to the N2 Monaghan Town bypass.
- Widening of Annahagh Lane to facilitate development and active travel.
- Development of a link road from Roosky Vale to the rear of Dublin Street.
- Development of a mid-town transport connection between development lands at Annahagh Roundabout and Old Cross Square.
- Upgrade of Black Lane.

The potential routes of these new roads and upgrade proposals are identified by indicative lines on Map MTDP1 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031. As the potential new links will be subject to options selection and detailed design and will be taken through the relevant consent procedures, these indicative lines represent the centre line of a 100 metre wide preliminary corridor. Provision for active travel will be a key consideration in the delivery of all new and upgrade road proposals. To provide for such projects, new development that may prejudice the delivery of these projects will not be permitted, and development that impacts potential route options, preferred route corridors, or designed alignments for transport projects identified in national/regional policies will be resisted.

A key objective of this Development Plan is to relieve traffic congestion and divert through traffic, particularly commercial traffic and heavy goods vehicles, from residential areas and the town centre by providing alternative routes around the town.

A Walking and Cycling Strategy for Monaghan Town, adopted in 2012, sets out a vision to develop a network of safe and convenient walking and cycling routes that will improve the quality of living for everyone in the community.

Monaghan Roads and Traffic Management Objectives	
MTO 9	To prepare a Local Transport Plan for Monaghan Town using the Area Based Transport Assessment process by 2025.
MTO 10	To vary the Development Plan to incorporate the objectives and measures of the Local Transport Plan for Monaghan Town when finalised, and to implement its objectives and measures, during the lifetime of this plan.
MTO 11	To undertake feasibility and viability studies regarding the options for potential relief roads around Monaghan Town during the lifetime of this plan, subject to resources.
MTO 12	To protect, design and develop new road and road upgrade projects identified during the lifetime of this plan, subject to resources.

10.9.1 Public and Shared Transport

Monaghan County Council recognise that the current public and shared transport facilities in the town could be improved. It is an objective of this Plan to consider the development of infrastructure and supports which could increase public and shared transport use including the provisions of a public hub and taxi rank at the Lower Courthouse carpark.

Monaghan Public and Shared Transport Objectives	
MTO 13	To investigate the feasibility of creating a Monaghan Town Centre 'hub' that caters for public bus, park and ride facilities and taxi connections.
MTO 14	To plan for and develop infrastructure which will facilitate access to and encourage the increased use of public and shared transport.

10.10 Tourism

Monaghan Town needs to establish itself as a tourist destination by improving the visitor facilities and amenities on offer. This can be achieved by focusing on protecting the built environment, capitalising upon the vibrant shopping status the town holds as well as its growing reputation as a food destination.

There are a number of hotels in Monaghan Town, all of which provide high quality accommodation and service, notwithstanding this provision, there remains a shortage in bed nights for tourists at peak times.

The town centre should continue to be developed as an attractive place to visit, with the linking of the older parts of the town through a series of connecting walkways and newly built courtyards, creating a safe and pleasant environment for pedestrians. The redevelopment of the backland areas of Dublin Street and improvements to the existing amenities around Peter's Lake will contribute to an improved environment, which coupled with the conservation and restoration of buildings and monuments in the town, will add to the experience of the visitor.

The potential benefits of recent investment which has resulted in the provision of the Peace Campus and the Church Square town performance space should be maximised through the delivery of an Events Strategy for Monaghan Town which would animate these town centre sites for festivals and events as well as helping to support the night time economy.

Key festivals which take place in Monaghan Town include the Country Music Festival, Féile Oriel, and the Harvest Time Blues Festival. These events will continue to be supported by Monaghan County Council as they are significant generators of both visitor numbers and revenue.

The re-opening of the Ulster Canal would constitute a large engineering project which would provide significant direct and indirect benefits in the areas of tourism, heritage and economic development. A canal basin could be formed thus providing a vital source of recreation and economic spin-off to

the town, and generating new development opportunities in the town centre and an appropriate location for a marina type development within the settlement boundaries should be investigated.

While Monaghan Town Centre has a number of attractions of interest to the visitor, there are also many more located on its doorstep. Strategic planning is now required to ensure that links between these assets and the town are enhanced/improved for the visitor, whether they are travelling on foot, bicycle or public transport.

Monaghan Tourism Objectives	
MTO 15	To support sustainable and well-planned festivals and events and to encourage the delivery of increased bed nights in suitable locations in Monaghan Town.
MTO 16	To support the re-opening of the Ulster Canal in Monaghan Town and any complementary developments along its route, including the Ulster Canal Greenway network.
MTO 17	To develop an Events Strategy for Monaghan Town within the lifetime of the Plan, subject to available resources.
MTO 18	To support and encourage the development of appropriately scaled alternative forms of tourism accommodation on suitable sites within the town subject to Chapter 15 Development Management Standards.

10.11 Recreation and Amenity

Monaghan Town offers a range of cultural and civic facilities including the County Museum, the Library, the Garage Theatre and the Market House. There are two public exhibition spaces in the town, one in the Museum and one in the Market House. The Garage Theatre provides a home for drama and the arts, and a multi-screen Cinema is located on the edge of the town.

Coral Leisure Complex is the largest health and fitness centre in the area providing public swimming and gymnasium facilities. There are also two private leisure facilities, one at the Four Seasons Hotel and one at the Hillgrove Hotel as well as a number of private gyms along with facilities for GAA, rugby and soccer.

The recent purchase of part of the St Louis Convent Campus by Monaghan County Council, offers a unique opportunity for the Council to enhance public access to this unique asset and capitalise on its proximity to the Town Centre.

Outdoor recreational pursuits such as angling, walking and golf are related primarily to the natural amenities around the town. Rossmore Golf Club, an 18-hole golf course, is located on the outskirts of the town. Other facilities in Monaghan Town include an all-weather playing pitch, a skateboard park, and a picnic area located at Oriel Way.

10.11.1 Open Space

The Council will endeavour to protect and preserve areas of high amenity and open space value and restrict overdevelopment of urban land as well as seeking to develop further amenity areas in the town. The Council will seek to maintain existing rights of way and investigate the creation of additional public rights of way either, by agreement or by use of compulsory powers.

10.11.2 Ulster Canal Greenway

The first phase of the Ulster Canal Greenway project opened in 2013. The 4.5km route passes through Monaghan town along the disused towpath of the Ulster Canal. The greenway has proved very successful with walkers and cyclists. The facility is used by several walking groups and is utilised during

several recreational and charity events throughout the year including Darkness into Light and the Greenway Challenge.

Phase 2 of the Ulster Canal Greenway project will add a further 7.3km of new greenway to Phase 1 and extend it eastwards towards the border with Northern Ireland. Phase 2 is scheduled for completion in 2025. Phase 3 of the project will add a further 21.6km of new greenway to Phase 1 and extend it westwards towards Clones Town. Phase 3 is scheduled for completion in 2027.

10.11.3 Rossmore Forest Park

Rossmore Park (320 hectares in size) is a beautiful natural resource situated at the edge of Monaghan Town. The park was purchased by the Irish Forestry Division (now Coillte) from the barony of Rossmore in 1950. Most of the estate was replanted with broad-leaved and conifer species by Coillte. Within the park are a number of walks and trails along with a series of excellent coarse fishing lakes namely Priestfield Lake and Castle Lake. The park provides excellent views of the local countryside, and it is a sanctuary for a large number of birds, animals and plant life.

The park is a largely unspoiled recreational and natural amenity, which is convenient for both locals and visitors coming to Monaghan Town. The significance of the estate's history plays a central part in the protection of this amenity and the park has a number of significant megalithic tombs within its area.

Rossmore Park is not within the settlement envelope of Monaghan Town but is recognised as an important asset to the town. It is designated an Area of Secondary Amenity Value as identified on Map 6.1 Secondary Amenity Areas, Chapter 6 Heritage, Conservation and Landscape in this Plan.

Rossmore Forest Park boasts an adventure playpark which is suitable for children up to 12 years of age. There is a variety of play equipment in the park including swings, zip lines, climbing frames and see-saws and there are also other opportunities for exploration. The playpark contains natural play items which encourage initiative, creativity and self-confidence with log piles, willow tunnels, and beehive huts all waiting to be explored. Another key feature in the park is its resident giants and associated Giant Sculpture Trail. Recent developments to the park include, The Rossmore Family Cycle Trail and three new walks, Silver Lakes Trail, Lost Castle Trail and Wild Woodland Trail. Car parking facilities, picnic areas and a coffee dock providing on site refreshments are also available within the park and help to enhance the visitor experience.

Monaghan Recreation, Amenity and Open Space Objectives	
MPO 19	To protect Peter's Lake and its environs as a key amenity area within the town.
MPO 20	To provide sufficient open space and amenity areas within and adjacent to the town.
MPO 21	To encourage and facilitate the provision of appropriate and sensitive recreational development within Rossmore Forest Park and to enhance connections to Monaghan Town.
MPO 22	To support appropriate recreation and amenity developments within the Convent Lands site.

10.12 Natural Heritage

The setting of Monaghan Town is shaped by the natural topography which provides it with a unique natural environment. There are natural amenities such as Peter's Lake and a number of important deciduous woodlands scattered throughout the town. Rossmore Park and its environs is located on the outskirts of the town while Wright's Wood, a proposed Natural Heritage Area, and Tom Young's Wood are situated along the Clones Road. A number of important trees and woodlands in Monaghan Town are provided in Appendix 3(b).

10.13 Built Heritage

Monaghan Town has a wealth of buildings of architectural interest. The present layout of Monaghan Town is striking in its unconventional triangular branching from the centre. The town centre consists of a series of four urban spaces of quite different character, Market Square, Church Square, Old Cross Square and the Diamond. The open space of the Diamond, with the Rossmore Memorial at the centre provides the main focus of the town. The prevalence of softly rounded corners on buildings is one of the most striking and unique features of the town's architecture, a feature to be repeated in the redevelopment of corner sites. Another interesting architectural feature is the arch, a typical feature of the town's buildings. Both the open arch and the arch incorporated into the wall, the arch at first floor level and segmented arches at ground level are all worthy architectural features. The streetscape is characterised by a narrow plot width with buildings of two and three storeys forming narrow wedges along a uniform building line.

Monaghan Town Historic Towns Initiative Report was adopted by the Monaghan Municipal District Elected Members in November 2024 and is a positive road map for the successful heritage led regeneration of Monaghan, helping it to fulfil its potential as a historic town. This plan focusses on the historic core of Monaghan and aims to enhance the streets, buildings and monuments that make up the unique character of Monaghan town. The plan suggests a number of actions which draw on Monaghan town's heritage assets and offers guidance on its future growth. Where relevant, regard shall be given to the report, however in the event of any conflict or ambiguity between the documents, the objectives and policies contained within the Development Plan shall take precedence.

There are eleven Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) within Monaghan Town as indicated in Table 6.9 of Chapter 6 Heritage, Conservation and Landscape of this Plan. Within ACAs the repair and refurbishment of existing buildings will be favoured over demolition and new build. New development should be sympathetic in scale, massing and detailed design to the existing character of the area. Guidance in relation to new development/works situated within an ACA is provided in Chapter 15 Development Management Standards of this Plan.

A list of Protected Structures located within Monaghan Town is contained in Appendix 1.

10.14 Archaeology

Monaghan Town is a fine example of a seventeenth century plantation town and much of the street pattern of this time has survived. Dublin Street, the Diamond, Glaslough Street, Mill Street, Park Street and Market Street all appear to be of seventeenth century origin. The "Zone of Archaeological Potential" within the town, which comprises the area of the seventeenth century town together with the area around the site of Mullaghmonaghan Fort, is delineated on Map MTDP3 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031. Within this area there is a possibility of discovering archaeological deposits such as seventeenth century house foundations, refuse pits, industrial areas and workshops. Consequently, archaeological surveys maybe required before any development is commenced in these areas.

Developers should also refer to the County Monaghan Urban Archaeology Survey which details other known archaeological findings in the urban area. A list of protected monuments and places is contained in Appendix 4.

Monaghan Natural and Built Heritage Objective	
MTO 23	To protect natural amenities such as Peter's Lake, Rossmore Park, Tom Young's Wood, and Wright's Wood from intrusive development that would detrimentally impact upon them or their designation.

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Chapter 11

Carrickmacross Town

Settlement Plan

2025-2031

Chapter 11

Carrickmacross Town Settlement Plan 2025-2031

Carrickmacross Settlement Plan Strategic Objective	
CMSO 1	To promote Carrickmacross Town as a place of strategic potential at a regional level where the principles of environmental, economic and social sustainability including the protection of the town's heritage and natural and built environment are enshrined.
CMSO 2	<p>To ensure that the following priorities for the town are delivered within the lifetime of the development plan:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the implementation of the Town Centre First Plan for the town, • the preparation and implementation of a Local Transport Plan for the town, • the incorporation of the Backlands Local Area Action Plans and Convent Lands Master Plan within the County Development Plan by way of variation and the obtaining of all necessary consents for the progression of these plans, • the preparation of a feasibility study in respect of proposed road links within the town.

11.0 Location and Context

Carrickmacross is strategically located close to the M1 motorway link at Ardee approximately 80km north of Dublin, 35km south of Monaghan Town and 21km west of Dundalk and is the main town in the south of the County located along the Dublin to Derry (N2) National Route. The town serves the economic needs of a large rural hinterland, which extends into counties Cavan, Meath, Louth and Armagh. The town has a firm commercial and industrial base, and its strategic location has attracted significant inward investment resulting in a buoyant local economy, strong growth and demand for residential and retail development. The N2 Carrickmacross by-pass to the east of the town has relieved the town centre of the traffic congestion which was previously limiting its function and attractiveness as a retail and commercial centre.

The development of the Convent Lands south of the town centre by Monaghan County Council for residential purposes created new opportunities for growth and development in the town. This area now includes the civic office which houses the administrative headquarters for Carrickmacross-Castleblayney Municipal District as well as the town library. In recent years development to the south of the town has expanded to include C-Tek and C-Tek II, Aldi, Lidl as well as Carrickmacross Primary Care Centre. There are opportunities for further development located along Riverside Road.

11.1 Historical Context

A noted market town since the 16th century, Carrickmacross housed the principal pig and butter market for the region. The town was heavily affected by the Great Famine and the population dropped from 2,711 in 1841 to 1,779 in 1891. This period saw the construction of the Workhouse and the Fever Hospital on the Shercock Road. During the 19th Century the town established itself as a market town. The arrival of the Sisters of St. Louis established education for girls at primary and secondary levels. The sisters were associated with the revival of Carrickmacross Lace after its decline in the mid-19th Century. Throughout the 20th Century the town developed as a market town and industrial centre, with the establishment of new industries throughout the 1970's and 1980's offering stable employment. The town centre has a wide main street enclosed by the Courthouse to the north and St. Finbarr's Church at the top of Castle Street, to the south. There are a number of historical buildings in the town, which complement the range of bustling shops on Main Street.

11.2 Strategy and Vision

In recognition of its role in providing employment, housing and services for the south of the County, Carrickmacross is designated as a town with strategic potential on a regional scale in the Northern and Western Regional Assembly Area Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (NWRA RSES).

The town performs important retail, residential, service and amenity functions for its rural hinterland as well as its urban population. It is a town that acts as a driver for local economies in the south of the County with well-established economic, administrative and social functions and is strongly positioned to attract businesses that require access to the Belfast/Dublin corridor.

The 2022 Census indicates that the population of Carrickmacross is 5,745 representing an increase of 713 from the 2016 Census.

Census 2022 indicated that 13% of the housing stock was vacant. The main employment sectors in Carrickmacross are commerce and trade (21%), professional services (20.9%), manufacturing (20.4%) and other industry (17%).

The Core Strategy set out in Chapter 2 of this Plan projects that the population of Carrickmacross town will grow to 7,053 over this Plan period and a housing land requirement of over 22 hectares is being provided within the settlement boundary to accommodate this projected growth. In this settlement strategy Carrickmacross is identified as a Tier 2 Strategic Town that will be promoted in driving growth and economic development in the south of County Monaghan.

Table 11.1 Carrickmacross Town Population Projections

2022 Population	Population as a % of County Monaghan population	2031 Projected Population	Projected % of County Monaghan Population 2031
5,745	8.80%	7,053	9.9%

11.3 Education

Monaghan County Council will ensure that adequate provision is made for educational infrastructure within Carrickmacross during the plan period. Carrickmacross has four national schools and three secondary schools. The number of students attending each school is shown in the table below. Additionally, there are a number of crèches and pre-schools spread throughout the town.

Table 11.2 Enrolment Figures for Schools in Carrickmacross 2023-2024

School	No. of Students
St. Joseph's National School	248
Scoil Rois	252
Bunscoil Lughaidh Naofa	269
Patrician Brothers High School	397
St. Louis Convent Secondary	421
Inver College (C.M.E.T.B)	645

11.4 Town Centre

Carrickmacross prospers as a service and retail town, functioning as a district centre for South Monaghan. In terms of turnover and selling space, the town ranks second in the County. Due to the increased commercial significance of the town of Monaghan and the growing influence of Dundalk, there is a need for the retail sector to look at expanding the commercial base of the town to meet the needs of an increasing population. This can be achieved by redeveloping backland areas and

expanding the retail sector onto other streets, while protecting the built heritage of the town and adding value to the town's shopping image. By enhancing the experience of the shopper and improving the facilities on offer the town will undoubtedly retain its current standing as a quality shopping town within a high-class built environment.

A key element in the delivery of the Town Centre First Policy at local level is the preparation of Town Centre First Plans. These plans are non-statutory, community level plans, underpinned by surveys and Town Centre Health Check data analysis and are carried out by Town Teams. Town Centre First Plans must be informed by the policies and objectives of the County Development Plan and vice versa. Following the award of funding from the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD), the Carrickmacross Town Centre First Plan was launched on the 22nd March 2024. The Plan maps out a series of transformative projects specifically tailored for Carrickmacross, encompassing a spectrum of scales and ambitions. The Plan is a live document, and will remain responsive to ongoing input and feedback, ensuring its adaptability to the evolving needs and aspirations of Carrickmacross.

Additionally, it is an objective of this Development Plan to prepare Local Area Action Plans (LAAPs) for two identified backland areas within the town centre. The LAAPs will provide a framework for the delivery of residential developments and other town centre uses at these locations.

Carrickmacross Town Centre Objectives	
CMO 1	To support the existing town centre use along Main Street while facilitating the expansion of the town centre south of the town.
CMO 2	To prepare and implement Local Area Action Plans (LAAPs) for lands identified on Map CKDP1 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031, between Main Street and Castle Street, and to the rear and east of Main Street between O'Neill Street and Monaghan Street.
CMO 3	To support the implementation of the Carrickmacross Town Centre First Plan.
CMO 4	To resist the loss of retail, commercial and service uses at ground floor level, within the town centre.

Carrickmacross Town Centre Policies	
CMP 1	Notwithstanding the land use zoning provision set out in this plan, development which would prejudice the development and implementation of a Local Area Action Plan(s) will be resisted.
CMP 2	Planning permission will not be granted on a site within an area identified for a Local Area Action Plan in the absence of a LAAP. Permission will only be granted where development proposals set out an overall urban design framework for the development of the area and are prepared in consultation with the Planning Authority.

11.5 Retailing

The County Monaghan Retail Strategy 2016-2022 sets out the policy context for retail development within County Monaghan. Surveys conducted as part of the Retail Strategy show that in 2015 there was 10,190sqm of retail floor space in Carrickmacross and an overall vacancy rate of 11%, the lowest of all the towns in the County. The County Monaghan Retail Strategy 2016-2022 sets out the policy context for retail development within the County along with objectives and policies contained within Chapter 4 Economic Development and Chapter 15 Development Management Standards, of this Plan.

11.6 Industry, Enterprise and Employment

Carrickmacross has a number of industries operating from the town. The major employers in the town are Pilgrim Foods, Farney Foods, C&M Coldstores, Gernord Limited and Active8 Solar Energies. These

industries provide a substantial amount of work for the local population and the large number of people who come to live and work in the town.

Approximately 85 hectares of land has been zoned for Industry, Enterprise and Employment development in Carrickmacross as indicated on Map CKDP1 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031. These lands will provide sufficient capacity for the development of the town's industrial base during the plan period. The provision of sufficient zoned Industry, Enterprise and Employment lands will provide certainty for potential developers and encourage new industries to locate to the town.

Carrickmacross Industry, Enterprise and Employment Objective	
CMO 5	To promote Carrickmacross as the key industrial, enterprise and employment centre in the south of the County and as a place of strategic development potential of a regional scale.

11.7 Power and Telecommunications

The Carrickmacross Metropolitan Area Network (MAN) provides a fibre ring around Carrickmacross. E-net are the wholesale company charged with maintenance of the MAN network, operating through a series of retail broadband providers. This infrastructure provides access to dedicated high speed and secure, broadband networks.

High speed broadband is also available in the town. SIRO, a joint venture between ESB and Vodafone, has completed the build of their full fibre network which will deliver high speed broadband services to homes and business throughout the town. Eir/Openeir has also completed the upgrade of their fibre broadband networks within the Town.

Additionally, there are also extensive wireless and satellite broadband networks in and around Carrickmacross Town. Monaghan County Council will continue to co-operate with statutory and regulated bodies in the provision of power and communication facilities throughout the town.

11.8 Roads and Traffic Management

The Carrickmacross Town (N2) by-pass has significantly improved the quality of life within the town, by reducing congestion and improving amenity in the town centre. East-west traffic must continue to access the town centre, but a key objective of this plan is to relieve traffic congestion and divert through traffic, particularly commercial traffic and heavy goods vehicles, from residential areas and the town centre by providing alternative routes around the town.

Government policies now encourage modal shift, where possible, away from private car use and towards more sustainable transport modes such as walking, wheeling or cycling, also known as active travel. Government investment in active travel has increased significantly in recent years. The provision of quality cycling, wheeling and walking facilities can provide an economical, non-polluting, and flexible form of transport which can deliver improvements to overall health and wellbeing and reduce congestion and carbon emissions. The provision of active travel and recreational walking and cycling infrastructure, such as designated cycle paths, greenways, walking paths and trails, also supports recreation and tourism. The development of active travel and recreational walking and cycling routes in and around Carrickmacross Town will contribute towards Government objectives around active travel.

Carrickmacross Active Travel Town – A Walking and Cycling Strategy was adopted in 2017. This document identifies a strategy and actions for the improvement of walking and cycling infrastructure including improved routes/linkages, signage etc together with soft measures such as awareness, the

promotion of community involvement and actions that tie in with school and workplace plans.

In conjunction with the National Transport Authority (NTA), it is an objective of Monaghan County Council to develop a Local Transport Plan (LTP) to identify transport requirements and solutions for Carrickmacross Town and its environs. The LTP will set out the outcomes of an Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) with the overall aim of improving the current sustainable transport offering in Carrickmacross Town and its environs for all travel modes.

The following list of proposed roads will contribute towards improved traffic and pedestrian safety, provide greater and safer access to all parts of the town and open lands for development:

- Develop a western link road to provide connection between the R179 Kingscourt Road, R178 Shercock Road and R180 Lough Egish Road.
- Develop an inner link between the R178 Shercock Road and the R180 Ballybay Road/Castleblayney Road (N2)

These potential links are identified by indicative lines on Map CKDP1 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031. These new potential links will be subject to options selection, detailed design and will be taken through the relevant consent procedures, as such, these indicative lines represent the centre line of a 100-metre-wide preliminary corridor. To provide for such projects, new development that may prejudice the delivery of these projects will not be permitted, and development that impacts potential route options, preferred route corridors, or designed alignments for transport projects identified in national/regional policies will be resisted.

Public and private bus service operators travel from and through Carrickmacross Town offering services to surrounding towns and settlements, Dublin Airport, City and third level institutions. It is an objective of this Development Plan to encourage the provision of infrastructure and supports that could increase public and shared transport use, and it is acknowledged that the provision of a park and ride facility would afford commuters with an alternative to their current form of travel whilst also helping to reduce transport emissions.

Carrickmacross Roads and Traffic Management Objectives	
CMO 6	To prepare a Local Transport Plan for Carrickmacross Town using the Area Based Transport Assessment process commencing by 2026.
CMO 7	To undertake feasibility and viability studies regarding the options for potential relief roads around Carrickmacross Town, to include a review of the congestion at the junction of the Kingscourt Road and Dundalk Road, during the lifetime of this plan, subject to available resources.
CMO 8	To protect, design and develop new road and road upgrade projects identified during the lifetime of this plan, subject to resources. Road schemes and Park & Ride schemes proposed and identified for development locally will be developed complementary to safeguarding the strategic function of the national road network. Proposals impacting on the national road network should be developed in consultation with and subject to the agreement of TII.
CMO 9	To facilitate the provision of a Park and Ride facility at an appropriate location subject to relevant planning and environmental criteria, within the lifetime of the plan.
CMO 10	To plan and develop infrastructure which supports access to and encourages the use of public and shared transport.
CMO 11	To vary the Development Plan to incorporate the objectives and measures of the Local Transport Plan for Carrickmacross Town when finalised, and to implement its objectives and measures during the lifetime of this Plan.

11.9 Tourism

Carrickmacross is a recognised tourist destination with the Shirley Arms Hotel and a number of guesthouses located in and around the town. There are also a number of tourist attractions within close proximity to the town, including the Carrickmacross Lace Gallery, Collective at Market Square, Carrickmacross Workhouse as well as the Brehon Brewhouse and the Patrick Kavanagh Centre located in nearby Inniskeen. The town is also a suitable venue for anglers who avail of the good coarse angling lakes dotted around the local area.

Golf is an important recreational amenity, and Mannan Castle Golf Club and driving range is located close by in Donaghmoynce. There is also a pitch and putt course in Inniskeen. Carrickmacross Festival is an annual event which attracts both visitors and revenue to the town.

The refurbishment of the main building block of the Market House building along Main Street has been completed and houses the Carrickmacross Lace Gallery, arts studio and Collective at Market Square which sells locally made unique gifts.

Carrickmacross Workhouse has been restored and is now a community resource, training, heritage and tourist centre operated by Farney Community Development Group (FCDG). The visitor exhibition experience at Carrickmacross Workhouse has undergone an impressive refurbishment and now includes an audio-visual display as well as exhibits by local artists. The Workhouse also provides a genealogy service which is focused on families in South Monaghan.

Carrickmacross Tourism Objectives	
CMO 12	To promote and facilitate the development of Carrickmacross as a tourism centre in co-operation with the public and private sector.
CMO 13	To support and facilitate the continued redevelopment of the Carrickmacross Workhouse site.
CMO 14	To encourage and facilitate sensitive and appropriate development in conjunction with the Market House and Carrickmacross Workhouse.
CMO 15	To support and encourage the development of appropriately scaled alternative forms of tourism accommodation on suitable sites within the town subject to Chapter 15 Development Management Standards.

11.10 Recreation and Amenity

Recreational needs in Carrickmacross are well catered for throughout the town. Facilities within the town include the existing G.A.A grounds on the Ballybay Road and the soccer grounds on the Shercock Road. Carrick Fitness Centre and the Phoenix Sports Centre provide high quality indoor facilities. Carrick Aces running track and sports field is located at Drummond Otra and includes a basalt surfaced running track and a central sports field incorporating two long jump pits, a pole vault area, a shot putt and a high jump area.

A number of walking and cycling routes have been developed and are utilised by locals and tourists. There are 5 walking loops located within and around Carrickmacross:

- Town, Avenue and Lakeside Walk,
- Town and Country Ramble,
- The Lakes Walking Trail,
- Four Counties Walking Trail, and
- Pilgrims' Way Tin Church Trail

The Hilly Way, an on-road cycling route has been developed from Carrickmacross to Kingscourt and is 8.7km in length and there is a heritage trail of the town centre (guided option during summer season).

A linear park and associated car parking is located at Tullynaskeagh East. The park has a cycle link to the town and a new dog walking park was opened at Drummond Otra in June 2023.

Under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme, funding was obtained to complete a masterplan for the Gallows Hill amenity area of the town. The masterplan will provide a framework to deliver new, usable, high quality and accessible public green space which will include an amenity area to the northern end of town.

Additionally, work has commenced on the preparation of a Concept Landscape Masterplan for the Convent Lands/Convent Avenue area of the town which will investigate the potential for improved pedestrian and cycle linkages with the town centre.

Golf facilities are available at Mannan Castle Golf Club outside the town in Donaghmoyne. Coarse fishing is a popular activity in the area and is a recognised fishing destination for a large number of anglers.

Convent Avenue, a tree lined walkway through the Convent Lands, and the town park at Lisanisk Lake provide important passive recreational amenities close to the town centre. In addition, there are several lakes located within or close to the town including Lough Naglack with its wooded shoreline and Lough Fea, which is of natural scientific value. There may be potential to facilitate public access to Lough Fea, subject to agreement with relevant parties.

Monaghan County Council in partnership with FCDG, plan to restore the remainder of the Carrickmacross Workhouse site to include the re-development of the derelict buildings to the rear of the site and develop a new multi-purpose community hub to cement its future as a focal point and centre for social, community and arts services in Carrickmacross town and the south Monaghan area. The development of an overall plan to guide the complete restoration and redevelopment of the derelict buildings and 6-acre site for community use will transform the area and provide a sustainable template for development into the future.

The absence of a swimming pool has been a long-cited gap in leisure provision in Carrickmacross. Monaghan County Council has engaged consultants to evaluate the technical and economic feasibility of providing a swimming pool and leisure complex in the town which would serve the urban area and the wider south Monaghan community.

Carrickmacross Recreation and Amenity Objectives	
CMO 16	To further develop lands at the Ardee Road as the primary location for active recreational development in the town.
CMO 17	To investigate the potential to develop and expand facilities at Lisanisk Lake in a sensitive manner with appropriate planning and environmental considerations during the lifetime of this plan.
CMO 18	To protect Convent Avenue from intrusive development.
CMO 19	To support and facilitate the development of a swimming pool and leisure complex at a suitable location within the town.
CMO 20	To support the continued growth of the library facilities, which are operating at full capacity, to ensure that local community needs are adequately met.
CMO 21	To review the extent of existing green space within the town and investigate the potential to deliver additional green space areas which can be easily accessed across the town.

11.11 Natural Heritage

Lough Naglack (and its environs) and Lough Fea are both designated as Areas of Secondary Amenity in the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031. Convent Avenue, an attractive tree-lined walk to the south of the town, is an important recreational route for walking and cycling which links the town to the wider area and is an important part of the green infrastructure of Carrickmacross Town.

11.12 Built Heritage

Carrickmacross was a noted market town from the 16th century. Its broad Main Street facilitated the holding of various markets. Today, Main Street has a number of buildings of architectural merit including the Bank of Ireland, The Allied Irish Bank, The Ulster Bank, the Shirley Arms Hotel and the Garda Barracks, which date from the 19th Century. At the north end of Main Street, a considerable portion of the original Market House and Square remains, with its cast iron colonnade, pediment and cupola. The Courthouse is an excellent example of a fine, five bay Georgian building with entrance doors at either end. Other buildings of note throughout the town are the Fever Hospital and the Workhouse on the Shercock Road, the stone cottages with the Bath Crest in St. Joseph's Terrace, St. Joseph's Church, with its soaring slender spire, and the castellated Convent of St. Louis. A list of protected structures is contained within Appendix 1.

There are five Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) designated within Carrickmacross which are also listed in Table 6.10 of Chapter 6 Heritage, Conservation and Landscape of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031. Guidance in relation to carrying out works to a structure located within an ACA is also provided for in Chapter 6 Heritage, Conservation and Landscape and Chapter 15 Development Management Standards of this Plan.

11.13 Archaeology

From the earliest days of Christianity in Ireland a monastic establishment was sited in the town of Carrickmacross and was referred to as "Cell Rois". On the earliest known map of the area, Thomas Raven's survey of the Essex Estate 1634, Essex's Castle and bawn indicated a prominent mound at the southern end of the Main Street. Essex's Castle was destroyed in the Williamite Wars but was partially rebuilt as a lodge for Lord Bath's land agent. The St. Louis nuns acquired this in turn, and beneath the Convent and its immediate environs may lie the foundations of the extensive fortification that was the castle and bawn. The remains of 18th Century industries are to be found in various parts of the town. At one time the town had three distilleries, a brewery, a tanyard, tobacco manufacturers and bakeries.

On the perimeter of the town there are two features of historical importance. They are the fort on Lurgan Hill and the Crannog on Lisanisk Lake. The Lurgan's fort was the seat of the McMahan's of Farney, and on occasion the seat of the ruling chieftain of Monaghan. Towards the end of the 1500's the McMahan's moved their residence to the crannog on Lisanisk Lake, and it was there that the leaders of the 1641 rebellion planned the rising. The old famine graveyard called "Bully's Acre" is considered worthy of preservation.

All those undertaking development work should be aware of their obligation under the National Monuments Act to report the discovery of archaeological objects to the National Museum.

Carrickmacross Natural and Built Heritage Objectives	
CMO 22	To limit development in Areas of Secondary Amenity to those where it has been proven to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the proposed development would not threaten the integrity of these areas.
CMO 23	To protect and enhance the character of the Architectural Conservation Areas within

	the town.
CMO 24	To limit development within the environs of Lough Naglack, unless in exceptional circumstances, where it has been proven to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the integrity of the Lough and its surrounding landscape will not be threatened.

Chapter 12

Castleblayney Town

Settlement Plan

2025-2031

Chapter 12

Castleblayney Town Settlement Plan 2025-2031

Castleblayney Settlement Plan Strategic Objective	
CBSO 1	To promote Castleblayney as a prosperous and thriving town where the principles of environmental, economic, and social sustainability including the protection of the town's heritage and natural and built environment are enshrined.
CBSO 2	<p>To ensure that the following priorities for the town are delivered within the lifetime of the development plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the progression of the Masterplan and Development Framework for Lough Muckno and Environs, • the incorporation of the Town Centre Regeneration Plan within the County Development Plan by way of variation and the obtaining of all necessary consents for the progression of this plan, • the preparation and implementation of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for the town, • the preparation and implementation of a Town Centre First Plan for the town, • the preparation of a feasibility study in respect of proposed road links within the Town.

12.0 Location and Context

Castleblayney is the third largest town in County Monaghan. It is situated along the main national primary route from Dublin to Derry (N2) and is linked to Dundalk via the national secondary route (N53). The town benefits from its strategic location, with Monaghan Town, Carrickmacross, Dundalk and Armagh all located less than 30kms from Castleblayney. With the improvements in transport links, the town has significant potential for expansion and growth and has been identified as having potential to develop as a commuter town for the east coast areas north of Dublin.

The town has continued to function as a market/service centre and provides important local residential, retailing, social and leisure functions for both the urban area and its rural hinterland, which extends across the border into County Armagh.

12.1 Historical Context

Castleblayney's origins can be traced back to the period of Saint Maeldoid who founded a church near Lough Muckno in early times. In terms of its existing settlement form and built environment, the historical development of the town is closely associated with the plantation of Ulster and the succession of the Blayney family to land entitlement in the area from 1607. In particular, the emergence of Castleblayney is inextricably linked to the establishment of Blayney Castle (close to the site of the existing Hope Castle) and the management of the surrounding estate. From the period of the late 1700s, the Blayney's were responsible for cultivating local industry and establishing key buildings in the settlement including the Market House/Courthouse, the Church of Ireland Church and the Roman Catholic Church.

12.2 Strategy and Vision

The Castleblayney Settlement Plan is fundamentally concerned with promoting the growth and development of the town while protecting its natural and built environment. Over this plan period, emphasis will be placed on maintaining and supporting urban development by way of consolidating the town centre and expanding services to meet the needs of its locality.

The population of Castleblayney declined from 3,634 to 3,607 between 2011 and 2016, however, between the years 2016 and 2022, the population has risen by 8.8% to 3,926.

The Core Strategy set out in Chapter 2 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 further indicates that a housing land requirement of over 15 hectares should be provided for within the settlement boundaries in order to accommodate this projected growth and support the function of Castleblayney as a Tier 2 Strategic Town within the County Monaghan Settlement Hierarchy.

Recent development levels indicate that the town has recovered and is expanding its residential, retail, industrial and commercial base. It is the aim of this Development Plan to assist and direct development in the town over the plan period with an emphasis on developing the town's main assets, which include its strategic location, both nationally and in relation to Northern Ireland, and its potential for tourism based in and around Lough Muckno.

Table 12.1 Castleblayney Town Population Projections

2022 Population	Population as a % of County Monaghan population	2031 Projected Population	Projected % of County Monaghan Population 2031
3,926	6.01%	4,673	6.5%

12.3 Education

The important educational function performed by the town, for both the people of Castleblayney and its hinterland, is underlined by the fact that currently over 1,900 children attend school in Castleblayney. Catering for a large number of pupils has implications for a range of urban issues in Castleblayney, including, pedestrian safety, traffic management and recreational provision.

There are four national schools and two secondary colleges in Castleblayney. Details of these are set out in Table 12.2. A number of the town's schools are located close to the town centre, with the Convent Junior School at Laurel Hill, Our Lady's Secondary School at New Street and Scoil Mhuire na mBuachaillí on the Dublin Road. Both of the post-primary schools have extended their facilities to meet the needs of the area.

Table 12.2 Enrolment Figures for Schools in Castleblayney 2023-2024

Name of School	No of Pupils
Convent Junior School	191
Scoil Mhuire na mBuachaillí	183
Scoil na gCailini	152
Gaelscoil Lorgan	144
Castleblayney College	407
Our Lady's Secondary School	845

12.4 Town Centre

Castleblayney town is considered a service town where retailing underpins the function of the town core. It is also an employment and service centre for the wider rural hinterland. The principal axis that dissects the town is West Street (commonly referred to as Main Street). There are a number of key buildings in Castleblayney which act as important focal points at the entrances to the town. They strongly influence the perception of Castleblayney and are visual flagships for the quality of its built environment.

The Old Courthouse/Market House was once an impressive structure in the town and its visual prominence contributed greatly to the townscape character of Castleblayney. The apex setting of the Courthouse helps punctuate the enclosed linear expanse of West (Main) Street at the entrance into Lough Muckno Park. It is also identified closely with the core of the settlement and dominates the most important public space in the town. The two nearby gatehouses are also splendid buildings that perform a vital role in defining the square and in marking the entrance to the parkland.

Gate Lodge No. 1 was restored in 2017 and is available for use as a community space for meetings and events. Under the Castleblayney Market Square Regeneration Phase I project, a modern 21st century public library and cultural space have been provided within Gate Lodge No.2. This project also delivered enhanced public realm facilities in the surrounding area.

The Castleblayney Market Square Regeneration Phase II project comprises the refurbishment of the Market House, a protected structure, into a mixed-use community facility along with public realm enhancements to the surrounding Market Square area. Part VIII consent was secured in 2022, and funding of €11 million was received in 2024 through the Rural Regeneration Development Fund (RRDF) to progress the project to implementation/construction stage. The proposed refurbishment and public realm enhancements will sit contiguous with the recently completed Gate Lodge public library to create a pedestrian friendly public gathering space that supports the commercial activities and economic opportunities of the town. The transformation of the Market Square will allow for recreational and cultural opportunities on a regional scale.

Monaghan County Council has commenced the process to appoint an architect/urban design led consultant team to prepare a regeneration plan, for approximately 4.5 hectares of town centre zoned backlands. The area radiates from the Market House west along Main Street and north along Muckno Street with McGrath Road to the northwest and the Monaghan Road to the west. The provision of pedestrian linkages between the plan area and Main Street will be investigated as part of the regeneration plan. It is envisaged that this plan will be available for review in 2024.

The area to the east of Muckno Street, adjacent to Gas Lake, offers significant development potential. The lands comprise derelict properties and back gardens with limited access at present.

The construction of McGrath Road parallel to Main Street, linking Monaghan Street and Muckno Street with pedestrian links to Main Street has provided the opportunity for backlands to be opened up for development. Some construction has taken place on these properties to date.

Monaghan County Council produced the Castleblayney Historic Landscape Characterisation Plan in 2012. This Beautiful Town Initiative operated through the Rural Economic Development Zones (REDZ) programme and encouraged landowners of groups of terraces within the town to come together to develop a shared vision for the continued maintenance and improvement of their facades. In consultation with the local regeneration committee, guidance was provided on how to achieve a vision for the improvement and general maintenance of the character of the terraces. Some of these measures have been implemented, thereby improving the appearance of the streetscape.

Castleblayney was selected to take part in the Town Centre Living Initiative (TCLI) scheme where funding was made available to develop innovative proposals to encourage the reuse of vacant and underused buildings in town centres for living.

Castleblayney Town Centre Objective	
CBO 1	To encourage new developments which will facilitate the restoration and refurbishment of existing buildings in order to regenerate the town centre and eliminate dereliction.

12.5 Retailing

Castleblayney is designated as a Tier 2 town in the County Monaghan Retail Strategy (2016-2022). The County Monaghan Retail Strategy notes that the town has an overall retail floor space of 23,124sqm and a vacancy rate of 40%. The shopping centre on West Street has addressed some the leakage to other retail centres for retail goods, particularly for convenience goods, however the significant leakage of comparison spending has not yet been fully addressed. The continued promotion and enhancement of retail floorspaces and town centre functions will help to sustain competitiveness and reduce retail expenditure leakage from the town. Retailing proposals within Castleblayney shall have regard to the County Monaghan Retail Strategy (2016-2022) and the relevant objectives and policies of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

12.6 Industry, Enterprise and Employment

Castleblayney's location on main transport corridors offers significant potential for growth in the industrial sector. Two distinct industrial areas have developed over the past thirty years in Castleblayney. Bree Industrial Estate, which was developed for industry in 1975 by the Industrial Development Authority (IDA), remains home to a number of sizeable industries including Kingspan Insulation Ltd, Shabra Plastics and Recycling Ltd, and M.C. Chemicals Ltd. Direct access to the estate is provided from the N2 Castleblayney bypass.

In addition, a number of industries have developed along the Monaghan Road to the north of the town, including Americold Castleblayney, a cold storage facility and McCaughey Foods, a food manufacturing business. Castleblayney Community Enterprise has been successful in establishing new businesses in the town and operates from the Enterprise Centre on the Dublin Road. The Enterprise Centre provides workspaces and offices for new and expanding enterprises and businesses start-ups and is an invaluable launch pad for the creation of new businesses in the town.

In June 2023, The Ridge Business Enterprise and Technology Hub opened on McGrath Road. A joint initiative with Castleblayney Community Enterprise and Enterprising Monaghan, The Ridge is a modern 3 storey building offering high quality office space facilities in the centre of Castleblayney. There are 24 business units within The Ridge, all of which are currently occupied. Businesses currently operating from The Ridge include NRG Panel, Ashdale Care and Integrity Security Ltd.

A number of small and medium-sized manufacturing businesses are also located on the Monaghan Road, closer to the town centre and on Muckno Street and several serviced industrial sites are located on the Bog Road. Some industrial development has also been carried out on the Ballybay Road.

Approximately 93 hectares of land has been zoned for Industry, Enterprise and Employment development in Castleblayney. This is considered enough to accommodate the anticipated level of industrial development in the town during the life of the Plan. These areas are identified on Map CYDP1 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

All new industrial development within Castleblayney shall be required to comply with the objectives and policies contained within the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031. A specific objective for Industry, Enterprise and Employment in Castleblayney is as follows:

Castleblayney Industry, Enterprise and Employment Objective	
CBO 2	To promote Castleblayney as a key industrial, enterprise and employment centre.

12.7 Power and Telecommunications

Metropolitan Area Networks (MANs) have been provided in Castleblayney. MANs is a network that consists of telecom ducting and fibre optic cable, it allows licensed telecom providers to connect their equipment to commercial premises and buildings. MANs infrastructure provides opportunities for the development of e-working centres thereby reducing the number of journeys to work by car. In addition, broadband is available in Castleblayney Town. The Council will continue to co-operate with statutory and regulated bodies in the provision of power and communication facilities throughout the town.

Castleblayney also has access options to the fibre infrastructure which has been delivered through Project Kelvin. This offers opportunities for industry partners to develop redundant connections for their business networks.

High speed broadband is also available in the town. Eir/Openeir has completed the upgrade of their fibre broadband networks within the town.

12.8 Roads, Traffic Management and Active Travel

Castleblayney's location along the National Primary Dublin-Derry (N2) route and National Secondary (N53) link to Dundalk offers it direct connections to the M1 Dublin-Belfast motorway. The town is located less than 25kms from Dundalk Train Station and within easy reach of the airport and shipping ports on the eastern seaboard. The N2 Castleblayney-Clontibret realignment Route has provided a by-pass for the town, reduced traffic congestion in the town centre and improved the environment of Castleblayney.

Government policies now encourage modal shift, where possible, away from private car use and towards more sustainable transport modes such as walking, wheeling or cycling, also known as active travel. Government investment in active travel has increased significantly in recent years. The provision of quality cycling, wheeling and walking facilities can provide an economical, non-polluting, and flexible form of transport which can deliver improvements to overall health and wellbeing and reduce congestion and carbon emissions. The provision of active travel and recreational walking and cycling infrastructure, such as designated cycle paths, greenways, walking paths and trails, also supports recreation and tourism. The development of active travel and recreational walking and cycling routes in and around Castleblayney Town will contribute toward Government objectives around active travel.

Subject to funding and resources, it is an objective of Monaghan County Council to develop a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for the town. A key objective of this plan will be to promote active travel and public and shared transport.

The Development Plan proposes the construction of three new links north of the town centre. It is envisaged that the outer route, to be constructed in partnership with local landowners and developers, will by-pass the town centre and residential areas to the north of the town, linking the Monaghan Road and Keady/Armagh Road directly. The two inner roads will offer access to the Bog Road commercial/industrial area.

There are three regional roads linking Castleblayney to the neighbouring towns of Keady, Newtownhamilton, Ballybay, Lough Egish and Shercock. These routes are important in terms of providing direct linkages for a high volume of heavy goods and commercial vehicles. The development plan incorporates a proposed link between the re-aligned N2 and the N53 Dundalk Road.

With the removal of national and regional traffic from the town centre, the Development Plan envisages environmental improvements to the town centre and urban/local roads servicing the town's

residential areas. A number of proposed road upgrades are indicated on Map CYPD1 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

The Local Authority also proposes advancing the development of a number of new and upgraded urban roads subject to funding and resources. These road proposals will improve traffic movement in and around the town and facilitate development. The potential routes of these road proposals are identified by indicative lines on Map CYDP1 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031. These are as follows:

- Link Road between the R181 Keady Road and the R938 Monaghan Road.
- N2-N53 Link Road.
- Link Road between the Bog Road and the R938.
- Link from McGrath Road to Bog Road.
- Lower Bree Road.
- Upper Bree Road.

To provide for such projects, new development that may prejudice the delivery of these projects will not be permitted, and development that impacts potential route options, preferred route corridors, or designed alignments for transport projects identified in national/regional policies will be resisted.

Castleblayney Roads and Traffic Management Objectives	
CBO 3	To undertake feasibility and viability studies regarding the options for potential relief roads around Castleblayney Town during the lifetime of this plan, subject to available resources.
CBO 4	To protect, design and develop new road and road upgrade projects identified during the lifetime of this plan, subject to resources.
CBO 5	To prepare a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for Castleblayney Town, using the Area Based Transport Assessment process, commencing by 2026
CBO 6	To vary the Development Plan to incorporate the objectives and measures of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for Castleblayney Town when finalised, and to implement its objectives measures, during the lifetime of this Plan.

12.9 Tourism

Castleblayney has significant potential to capitalise on its assets for tourism related development. As well as being an environmental resource for Castleblayney, Lough Muckno, County Monaghan's largest lake, possesses enormous potential to become an economic asset for the town. However, development proposals submitted for this area will require sensitive management and careful appraisal and should have regard to the public's wider desire for sustainable development, preservation of the natural and built environment, and maintenance of public access. It is acknowledged that the proximity of Lough Muckno to the built environment will help to spread the benefits of increased tourism revenue throughout the town.

Lough Muckno Park comprises the lands of the former Hope Castle Estate and includes Lough Muckno. There are various lakeside and forest walks trails to follow in the park which can be accessed through Hope Castle gates. The park is open all year round and is home to Wilbur's Enchanted Garden and Castleblayney Outdoor Adventure Centre which offers a wide range of water and land-based activities. The playground was opened in 2013 and consists of an extensive playground facility consisting of equipment for a range of ages including a zip line, climbing frame, playhouse, slides, swings and picnic facilities at the park. Further ancillary facilities have been developed with the addition of car park and public toilet facilities and plans are currently being progressed to enhance the recreational offer on Black Island. These facilities have enhanced the recreational and tourist resource of Lough Muckno.

Lough Muckno is home to a number of annual festivals and events including Muckno Mania and the Castleblayney Show and is also a well-established angling centre of excellence.

The tourism prospects for Muckno Park are also linked to environmental improvements in the neighbouring public sector properties, most notably the Courthouse and the two renovated Gate Lodges. The continuing improvement and re-use of these buildings would greatly complement tourism enhancement efforts in Muckno Park.

Located within the significant and designated landscape of Lough Muckno, Hope Castle and the former Coach House, now the Annex Building are protected structures of architectural merit and are historically linked with the town. Recognising the importance of these structures to the town, Monaghan County Council anticipated that projects in relation to the restoration of Hope Castle and the Annex Building will be progressed during the lifetime of this Plan.

The Íontas Arts and Community Resource Centre provides an important space for the promotion of arts and cultural events in the town including the annual Castleblayney Drama Festival. These events bring visitors to the town as well as an economic benefit and will continue to be supported and promoted in the future by the Council.

The Glencarn Hotel and Leisure Centre is the largest provider of tourist accommodation in the town. This thirty-bedroom hotel contains an indoor swimming pool and performs a valuable social and entertainment function in the town. Further visitor accommodation is provided by a number of bed and breakfast establishments in and around Castleblayney.

A championship 18-hole golf course was opened in 2008 on the shores of the Lough at Concra Wood. Other tourist activities available include ten-pin bowling, horse riding, tennis and clay pigeon shooting and heritage trails.

Castleblayney is known for its country music heritage. The Music Wall of Fame is located near the Glencarn Hotel, the Paddy Cole mural located at Mindszenty Park, and the Big Tom Statue is located at Castleblayney Market House. The Castleblayney Music and Country Festival takes place in the grounds of St. Mary's Park GAA grounds.

Castleblayney Tourism Objectives	
CBO 7	To promote Lough Muckno and its environs as the premier tourist attraction in the town.
CBO 8	To accommodate sustainable and appropriate tourism related projects in and around Lough Muckno which are compatible with Chapter 4, Economic Development of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.
CBO 9	To support and encourage the development of appropriately scaled alternative forms of tourism accommodation on suitable sites within the town subject to Chapter 15 Development Management Standards of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

12.10 Recreation and Amenity

There is a strong interrelationship between recreational provision and the provision of public open space, given that public open space is commonly used for recreational purposes. This is especially relevant to Castleblayney and its efforts to accommodate recreational needs within the confines of Lough Muckno, which is the largest and by far the most important stretch of public open space within the town. Bearing this in mind, it is appropriate to consider the type of recreational activities found within Castleblayney and to examine what relationship, if any, they have with public open space.

12.10.1 Lough Muckno

The special character and serenity of Lough Muckno derives from its combination of tranquil lakes, drumlin topography, wooded parkland and integral location within Castleblayney. As testimony to these aesthetic attributes, locals affectionately refer to Lough Muckno as the 'Killarney of the North'.

Lough Muckno is one of two principal areas of outstanding landscape quality in the County which require protection from insensitive and inappropriate development and as a result has been designated as an Area of Primary Amenity Value. Development will only be permitted in this area in exceptional circumstances to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority where it has been demonstrated that the integrity of the landscape is not threatened.

The natural asset of Lough Muckno, with its attributes of Black Island Forest and Concra Wood is an ideal environment suitable for picnics and walks. In addition to its huge fishing appeal, Lough Muckno is sufficiently large to facilitate a range of water sports including windsurfing, sailing, boating and canoeing. Having regard to these fishing and water sport activities there is a clear need to minimise the potential for conflict between these two activities and to plan the usage of the Lough accordingly. It is also vital that existing rights of way and new rights of way are developed in sympathy with the park.

In recognition of the importance of Lough Muckno to the local economy and to ensure that the biodiversity of the area is protected and enhanced, it is an objective of Monaghan County Council to prepare a 10-year framework/masterplan for Lough Muckno in conjunction with all relevant stakeholders. It is anticipated that the framework will identify priority actions and specify targets and timeframes for their delivery.

Mindszenty Park provides a playing pitch and fishing and picnic facilities overlooking Lough Muckno. Carparking and a number of paths and trails have been developed around the park.

12.10.2 Active Indoor Recreation

The Íontas Arts and Community Resource Centre offers space to host a range of courses which benefit the individual both personally and socially. This centre incorporates a theatre, crèche and additional community rooms/meeting spaces.

12.10.3 Active Outdoor Recreation

The hub of Gaelic games in the town is St. Mary's Park, located along the Dublin Road and home, of the Castleblayney Faugh's Club. The GAA club expanded and modernised its facilities to include a covered spectator stand that seat 2,080 spectators, uncovered seating for 5,000 as well as an additional training pitch and a walking track around the pitch for community use. In addition, Black Hill GAA club and grounds is located on the outskirts of the town on the Shercock Road. Blayney Rovers Football Club has a soccer pitch facility at Drumillard, Castleblayney.

Concra Wood Golf and Country Club was designed by Christy O'Connor Junior and Christy O'Connor Senior. The 18 hole, 72 par championship Golf Course commands stunning views over Lough Muckno. The course is complemented by a clubhouse, pro-shop and The View Restaurant. It is an objective of this Development Plan to promote Concra Wood as a premium golf attraction and support the development of associated facilities to strengthen this recognised asset.

A playground and playing field is located in Drumillard and a publicly accessible Multi Use Games Area, grass area with goal facilities are available in the public space of a housing estate in Bree.

Monaghan County Council shall continue to support appropriate new and expansion proposals for existing recreational facilities.

12.10.4 Passive Recreation

With the exception of Lough Muckno there are few areas within the centre of Castleblayney of key open space value. Attention should be given to the enhancement of those parts of the town which impress themselves upon both the resident and the visitor. Monaghan County Council has commenced the process to deliver a recreational enhancement project on Black Island. The project will improve access to the woodlands and provide an enhanced visitor experience through the development of amenities such as viewing points, picnic benches, an outdoor classroom as well as improved signage.

The Council in partnership with the local Tidy Towns group, Castleblayney Town Regeneration Committee, resident's associations, and voluntary groups has the potential to greatly enhance the town and its environs through the carrying out of improvement works on the approaches to and from the open spaces within the town.

12.10.5 Community Facilities

The Íontas Arts and Community Resource Centre provides a range of services to all members of the local community. The Centre houses a theatre, café and a crèche. The theatre hosts high profile national acts and drama companies. In addition to this the centre offers community training schemes, fitness classes and music classes. GR8 located along the Dublin Roads provides a range of leisure facilities including 10 pin bowling, golf simulators, soft play area as well as cafe facilities.

Castleblayney Recreation and Amenity Objectives	
CBO 10	To prepare and implement a Masterplan and Development Framework for Lough Muckno and its environs which will act as a blueprint for its evolution as an exemplar recreational and amenity facility, having due regard to constraints and sensitivities associated with the area and relevant environmental protection requirements.
CBO 11	To support the implementation of the County Walking and Cycling Strategy 2021-2026 and any new or updated/subsequent versions.

12.11 Natural Heritage

Lough Muckno is a designated Area of Primary Amenity Value and is also a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA). It is an invaluable natural resource that has helped shape the development of Castleblayney and should be afforded the highest degree of protection.

12.12 Built Heritage

In terms of its built environment, Castleblayney has a rich legacy of buildings and structures symbolic of the different stages of its development and linked to its development as a market/service centre for the rural hinterland. The character and distinctiveness of the town is as much associated with the manmade environment as it is with the natural setting of the town. Conservation and renewal of the architectural and historic character has the added benefit of encouraging economic revival. Moreover, greater awareness of Castleblayney's heritage helps generate self-confidence and pride in the town and so helps to develop an attractive image to the inhabitants, visitors, tourists and potential investors alike. The built heritage is an invaluable and finite resource which requires effective stewardship to ensure its continued enjoyment by both present and future generations. Its retention helps to better inform future generations of the past and is critical to the reinforcement of the town's identity. A number of key features of the built environment in Castleblayney are discussed below:

Saint Medoid's Church of Ireland

This Church was built in 1808 on the site of the first church to be established in Castleblayney. The 36 metre tall spire was added to the structure in 1818. The cemetery of Saint Maeldoid's comprises the Blayney Vaults, which contain the remains of the 6th Lord Blayney.

Saint Mary's Church

A barn-style design inclusive of Gothic revival transepts, pinnacles, and buttresses. It has a smooth rendered, pale, blue-grey finish.

The Market House

This large building dates from the 1800s and occupies a prominent position in Market Square at the intersection of West Street, Muckno Street and Henry Street. The Market House was built in 1856 and the architectural differences between the bottom storey and upper part of the building indicate that the Market House was constructed on top of the old Market house, which dates from 1801. It still retains much of its wrought iron railings.

Hope Castle

Lord Andrew Thomas Blayney built this castle in the 1780s near the site of the original castle. It is one of Castleblayney's most imposing edifices and commands a spectacular view of the environs of Lake Muckno. Its name derives from Mr Henry Thomas Hope who purchased Blayney Castle and the adjoining Estate in 1853. Hope re-plastered and embellished this three-storey Georgian brick house and added the front entrance porch. He also built the nearby Coach House.

In addition to its landmark status and locational attributes, its associations over the years and various uses also set it apart for special consideration. Between 1900 and 1904, Hope Castle housed Queen Victoria's son, the Duke of Connaught. Since then, it has been used as a barracks (1919-1921), a temporary hospital (1932-1937) and more recently, from 1942-1974, as a guesthouse run by Franciscan sisters. In the 1980s, the Castle was acquired by Monaghan County Council. The building was later sub-let under a County Council lease and while under this lease in 2010 the Castle was extensively damaged in an arson attack.

Hope Castle Gates & Gate Lodges

These structures form the entrance to Muckno Park and help to define the break between the urban fabric of the town and its rural hinterland. Both Gate Lodges have recently been restored.

The Coach House/Annex next to Hope Castle

This was built in the 1860s by Henry Thomas Hope. Its special character owes much to its stonework and ironwork and its carriage archways.

First Presbyterian Church, Lakeview

The Presbyterian Church in Castleblayney was built in 1787 on land donated by Lord Blayney. Its barn style design has gothic influences.

The Hope Arms Hotel

Located on West (Main) Street directly opposite the entrance to Lough Muckno this former hotel is registered as being operational since 1824. The building's plain frontage belies its impressive interior and detailed fittings. It also has an attractive set of wrought-iron railings. Its most notable guest was Charles Stewart Parnell who resided in the hotel in 1883 during the Monaghan By-Election of that year.

Hope Temple

Located at Concra, this building was a resting/summer house for the Blayney and the Hope families. There is only one side of the structure remaining.

Convent of Mercy

The Sisters of Mercy arrived in Castleblayney in 1905 and opened a school on New Street. The Convent was built in 1910 on the former site of an old Brewery.

The Almshouses

Built in 1879 the Castleblayney Almshouses are prominently located at the entrance to the town from the Carrickmacross and Dundalk direction. Their redbrick appearance, symmetrical form and extensive lawn have a prominent setting on the rising ground of Connabury Hill. Their design attributes include five towering chimney stacks and arched doorways. The caretaker's lodge at the front of the site is designed in sympathy with the Almshouses. This building has been refurbished and the residential use has been re-established.

The Rounded Corner at Market Square

The unusual, rounded configuration of this road and its ascent from Muckno Street into West (Main) Street has resulted in an unusual, curved frontage which characterises this part of the town.

The Corner House at the junction of Market Square and Henry Street

This building is unusual in Castleblayney in that its form curves with the street. This feature is more commonly found in Monaghan Town.

Building adjoining Bank of Ireland, West Street

This building with a vertical emphasis, massing and regular window pattern complements the adjoining Bank of Ireland property. Its interior also retains much of the dimensional character of the late nineteenth century.

Church Street Cottages

This row of stone landlord cottages was built in 1877 for the labourers of the Hope Estate. Their exteriors are in good condition, and they constitute one of the most attractive streetscapes found within the town.

Church Street Gate Lodge and Pillars to Hope Castle

This Gate Lodge and Pillars, which date from 1877, were the Church Street entrance to Hope Castle. This structure has been refurbished for residential use.

The Caretakers Residence at Saint Maeldoid's

Built in the style of the landlord cottages, its brickwork and gothic finishing complement the building line of the landlord cottages.

The Seven Houses

Located on Keady Road, these have now been consolidated into four houses, consisting of a terraced row of three cottages and a detached two storey building known as "Forest View", which has distinctive window shutters, barge boards and dormer windows.

McGuigan's Boutique, Muckno Street

The traditional pilaster, stall riser and entablature of this shop front set it apart from the adjoining frontage on this side of Muckno Street.

Bank of Ireland, West Street

The cut stone/brick façade is enhanced by intricate fenestration and door detailing, with the windows varying in size and shape in each storey. The bank is built in a style quite similar to the Muckno Gate Lodges whereby a cut stone pattern forms the base of the ground floor and the red-bricked frontage on the upper floors is adorned with quoin stones.

Row of Five Houses in Market Square at Muckno Gates

Wrought ironwork forms part of the property railings and window frames. The White House guesthouse is one of the finer properties found in the square. The nearby oriel window above the archway also contributes to the special character of this area.

Former Castleblayney Town Council Offices and Property on Opposite Side of Archway, West Street.

These early nineteenth century buildings are located at either side of a pedestrian archway accessible to the largest backland public car park in Castleblayney. While both buildings have good door cases and wrought iron railings, the former Town Council building also has a fine bay window.

Post Office, West Street

Good traditional proportions.

Mallon Solicitor's Office, Main Street

Pleasing red-brick façade with good roof detailing and single bay window.

Market Square Architectural Conservation Area

The group of buildings at Market Square adjacent to the entrance to Lough Muckno are designated as a proposed Architectural Conservation Area.

12.13 Archaeology

There will be a presumption against development that would adversely affect sites of archaeological importance and their settings, unless there are exceptional circumstances to indicate otherwise. The uncovering of archaeological objects will be closely linked to explorations and investigations in the Muckno area.

Castleblayney Natural and Built Heritage Objectives	
CBO 12	To encourage and facilitate the sensitive restoration and refurbishment of Hope Castle and its annex buildings during the Plan period.
CBO 13	To limit development within the environs of Lough Muckno, unless in exceptional circumstances, where it has been proven to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the integrity of the Lough and its surrounding landscape will not be threatened or where the development complies with any subsequently adopted Masterplan.
CBO 14	To protect and conserve the River Fane and Gas Lake and their environs from inappropriate development.
CBO 15	To encourage and facilitate the sensitive restoration and refurbishment of the Courthouse during the plan period subject to resources being available.

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Chapter 13

Clones Town

Settlement Plan

2025-2031

Chapter 13

Clones Town Settlement Plan 2025-2031

Clones Settlement Plan Strategic Objective	
CLSO 1	To promote and develop Clones as a service town to create a self-sufficient sustainable and vibrant community which will act as a local economic and service centre for the Border and the West Monaghan catchment hinterlands whilst protecting the significant built and archaeological heritage of the town
CLSO 2	To ensure that the following priorities for the town are delivered within the lifetime of the development plan:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the preparation and implementation of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for the town. • the preparation and implementation of a Town Centre First Plan for the town. • the preparation of a feasibility study in respect of proposed road links within the town.

13.0 Location and Context

Clones Town serves the economic needs of a large rural hinterland, which extends into County Fermanagh. The overall character of Clones is typified by a contrast of the grandiose formal buildings fronting onto The Diamond and the small scale residential and retail properties adjacent to this. Due to the topography of the town, the surrounding landscape is often visible, and this provides a rich contrast to the developed town and built form. The streets vary in character from a built-up urban form such as with Fermanagh Street, to the rural nature of Ball Alley, typified by the high dry-stone wall which surrounds the abbey ruins set against views into the adjacent landscape. An interesting feature throughout the historic town of Clones are the number of arches and archways that link the backland areas of the main streets with interesting and appealing spaces, once vibrant and full of residential activity. The town has retained the feel of a principal town, typified by the dominance of the two churches and the scale of the public space at its heart. The planned nature of its layout, and the scale of its civic buildings, particularly in The Diamond, harks to a more prosperous past than most towns.

Clones, located along the N54 midway between the towns of Cavan and Monaghan, and 35km from Enniskillen, must increase its population and develop its weak urban structure, to sustain its role as a service and employment centre. The development of the town as a vibrant, residential centre is critical to its future. In addition, Clones must provide social, recreational and economic facilities that encourage residential development in and around the town.

13.1 Historical Context

Clones is associated with the monastic settlement of its patron, Saint Tiarnach, who established a Church and monastery named Cluain Eois in the sixth Century. However, the ring fort located on the hill overlooking these ruins indicates a much earlier pre-Christian settlement on this site. The Abbey (of Saints Peter and Paul) was established by Saint Augustine's canons in the early twelfth century and the ruins of this Abbey are still to be found at the junction of Abbey Street and Mac Curtain Street. A Norman Motte and Bailey located to the west of The Diamond exists from this era and a Planter's castle erected and garrisoned by English settlers in the 17th century overlooks O'Duffy's Street.

In recent centuries much of the development of the modern town and surrounding abbey can be traced to the efforts of the agents who represented its absentee landlords, the Barrett-Lennards. Linen production was successfully introduced to the town and its environs, and Clones assumed its position as the market centre for a wide hinterland in both counties Monaghan and Fermanagh.

During the first half of the nineteenth century St. Tiarnach's Church of Ireland was built in a commanding position at the top of The Diamond. The completion of the courthouse and a new and more substantial market house provides evidence of affluence and confidence. Such confidence was encouraged by the opening of the Ulster Canal in 1841 and by the immediate arrival of the railway. As it entered the twentieth century, Clones was comfortably situated, with its by then well-established market and rail communications with Belfast and Dublin. This was the situation until the partition of Ireland changed the relative geographical location and importance of Clones when it became a border town with its commercial hinterland almost sliced into two halves.

13.2 Regeneration of Clones

Clones Regeneration Partnership (CRP) was formed in December 1999 and with support from Clones Town Council sought to break the cycle of decline and contribute to good quality of life by generating and retaining the confidence of those living and willing to invest in the town, as well as those willing to provide services and facilities. CRP produced the Regeneration Strategy Report for the town which outlined a way forward for the continued regeneration of the economy of the town and its hinterland.

The years since the establishment of CRP have seen positive advancements in infrastructure and property developments in Clones arising out of the vision of the Strategy including the Clones Business Technology Park, which focused upon attracting technology-based industries into the town, the provision of broadband, the development of the Peace Link facility and the redevelopment of the Canal Stores. The principal achievement of the CRP was to revive hope and vision within the community of Clones. The Clones Regeneration Partnership was replaced with the Clones Town Team in October 2017, who in turn developed a Town Plan for Clones.

The Ballybay-Clones Erne East Partnership (BCEEP) was established in June 2014 and involves collaboration between Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Monaghan County Council. The primary objective of the Partnership is to provide a mechanism to work together on issues of commonality to achieve more effective solutions on a cross-border basis and in order to try collectively to impact on the social and economic improvement of the area.

The Clones Renewal Scheme, an award-winning project, has reinvigorated Clones Town by transforming derelict sites and providing social housing in the centre of the town. Various sites were acquired by Monaghan County Council through negotiated purchase and the provisions of the Derelict Sites Act 1990 to resolve the derelict nature of properties in the town centre. The scheme resulted in the renewal or replacement of eleven derelict buildings across six sites and the construction of twenty four housing units of varying tenures, with each building configured to address the unique urban pattern and challenging topography of Clones. The scheme has delivered multiple positive impacts, and has helped to sustain the town population, improve the vibrancy and vitality of the town and help to stimulate development opportunities on adjoining sites.

Clones Regeneration Objective	
CLO 1	To support Clones Town Team and encourage development which will reverse the economic and social decline of the town and provide an improved quality of life for the people of Clones and its hinterland population.

13.3 Strategy and Vision

The purpose of the Clones Settlement Plan is to support the regeneration of Clones Town Centre and facilitate the development of the town by supporting the expansion of services to meet the needs of its locality.

Census 2022 recorded a population of 1,885 for the settlement of Clones, an increase of 205 persons

from the previous census recording in 2016 and representing a significant population increase of 12%.

Of the total housing stock for Clones Town, Census 2022 recorded a vacancy rate of 18%, a decrease in vacancy rates of 2% from the previous Census results. It is an objective of this plan to address vacancy rates by encouraging residential development within the settlement including the regeneration of brownfield sites and derelict properties.

Table 2.4 in Chapter 2 Core Strategy of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 projects that the population of Clones will grow to 2,259 persons over the plan period. A housing land requirement of almost 8 hectares is provided for within the settlement boundaries in order to accommodate this projected growth. In the Core Strategy Clones is identified as a Tier 3 service town where the regeneration and renewal of the town centre is being promoted to enable it to continue its function in providing local services.

Table 13.1 Clones Town Population Projections

2022 Population	Population as a % of County Monaghan Population 2022	2031 Projected Population	Projected Population as a % of County Monaghan Population 2031
1,885	2.88%	2,259	3.2 %

13.4 Education

Clones has two national schools and one secondary school.

Table 13.2 Enrolment Figures for Schools in Clones 2023-2024

School	No. of Students
St Tiarnach's Primary School	265
Gaelscoil Eois	129
Largy College	488

13.5 Town Centre

There is a high level of vacancy and dereliction in the retail core of Clones including along Fermanagh Street. Dereliction is also present in a number of other areas such as the backlands between Fermanagh Street and '98 Avenue, and the rear of The Diamond and Mac Curtain Street. The closure of Ulster Bank in 2016 after 120 years of occupation in the town represented the loss of financial services in the town, however there is scope to promote a new use for this building which occupies a prominent position between Monaghan Street and The Diamond.

Monaghan County Council will continue to encourage development and use its statutory powers to tackle dereliction in the centre of the town and to regenerate the commercial centre of the town. The Council has previously used its statutory powers to purchase a number of derelict properties in Clones town as part of the successful Clones Renewal Scheme.

There are opportunities to provide new uses for vacant buildings within the town centre. An encouraging example of this is the redevelopment of the former post office building in The Diamond into a centre for the Arts. The centre offers modern studios and a large exhibition/theatre space while still maintaining the integrity of the building. The studios are available to artists and community groups engaging in the Arts and is also used in conjunction with the annual Clones Film Festival.

The town centre contains numerous opportunities for urban housing developments. Derelict and vacant properties to the rear of Fermanagh Street, '98 Avenue, Mac Curtain Street and Cara Street

provide ideal locations for town housing, apartments over business premises and infill developments.

The Clones Courthouse was adapted to allow the building to function as a multi-purpose community resource and as a venue for social and cultural events. The Courthouse is used for screenings during the annual Clones Film Festival and for similar cultural events throughout the year. This innovative adaptation provides for the sustainable future use of a formerly underutilised public building.

Monaghan County Council recently received funding under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund to redevelop the former Lennard Arms Hotel into a museum and visitor centre and to construct a new business hub on a derelict site on Fermanagh Street. The funding will afford for the regeneration of two interlinked and strategic sites within the Town Centre and will also further improve the tourism offerings of the town.

Clones Town Centre Objectives	
CLO 2	To prioritise and encourage development on brownfield lands and derelict sites.
CLO 3	To regenerate the town centre as a residential, retail and service centre, with particular emphasis on Fermanagh Street and The Diamond and encourage the refurbishment, renewal and re-use of existing buildings and derelict sites.

13.6 Retailing

Clones Town trading consists of one supermarket on Fermanagh Street and a limited number of comparison shops in the town. There are two filling stations on the eastern side of the town with ancillary retail and deli facilities. There is currently one hotel and one B&B in the town centre.

The variety and range of shops and offices in Clones needs to be broadened and expanded. The viability of local businesses does however depend on achieving and maintaining a sustainable population and catchment area. Whilst dereliction and passing trade are issues that need to be addressed, the town has the potential to develop its function as a vibrant residential centre to sustain its retail and service sectors.

The Council will continue to encourage the location of town centre retail and service businesses within the zoned area and will through the development management process, restrict non-town centre business from locating within the town centre. The Council will in collaboration with the business sector and local traders, improve and develop the town centre shopping facilities as resources become available.

The County Monaghan Retail Strategy 2016-2022 identified specific actions to address the issues in Clones such as the preparation of a co-ordinated marketing strategy to build on the town's key attractions, the need to tackle vacancy and dereliction, and to provide enhanced parking in the vicinity of Fermanagh Street.

13.7 Industry, Enterprise and Employment

Clones has a number of core industries which have provided constant employment, notably in the food processing and engineering/steel industries. The largest employers are Allied Beef Producers (ABP) and Feldhues GmbH. The John Matthews Enterprise Centre in the centre of Clones provides small incubator work units to a number of small family operated businesses in the town.

The Clones Business Technology Park was funded by the International Fund for Ireland, Border Action, Clones Town Council and Monaghan Enterprise Fund, and was facilitated by the Clones Regeneration Partnership. The 750 sqm modern business park provides attractive, modern office accommodation divided into nine units varying with flexibility to combine some of the units into larger work areas. The

Technology Park aims to attract technology-based service industries to locate in Clones particularly since there is a keen information technology expertise available locally. According to the 2022 Census the principal occupations of the workforce in Clones are employed in manufacturing (42.6%), Professional Services (21.6%) and Commerce and Trade (15.2%).

Approximately 39 hectares of land has been zoned for Industry, Enterprise and Employment (Refer to Map CDP1 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031). These areas include existing industrial sites within the town, with the remaining areas provided to accommodate all proposed industry in the town during the plan period 2025-2031. Most of this land is adjacent to the N54, within the 60kph speed limit.

Clones Industry, Enterprise and Employment Objective	
CLO 4	To promote the development of start-up enterprises within Clones Town.

13.8 Power and Telecommunications

Metropolitan Area Networks (MANs) have been provided in Clones. MANs is a network that consists of telecom ducting and fibre optic cable that allows licensed telecom providers to connect their equipment to commercial premises and buildings. MANs infrastructure provides opportunities for the development of e-working centres throughout the region thereby reducing the number of journeys to work by car. Clones is included as part of Eir/Openeir's IFN fibre rollout programme which delivers high speed fibre broadband services to industry, consumers and to business owners within the town. In addition, there are also extensive wireless broadband networks in and around Clones Town. Monaghan County Council will review the options for telecommunications infrastructure within the town and continue to co-operate with statutory and regulated bodies in the provision of power and communication facilities throughout the town.

13.9 Roads and Traffic Management

Clones is located along the N54 National Secondary Route linking Belfast to Galway. It is also linked to its hinterland, both north and south by four regional roads (to Enniskillen, Roslea, Scotshouse and Newbliss) and a local road (to Magheraveeley). As the N54 route passes through the town centre, it can lead to high volumes of commercial vehicles and through traffic in the town.

Government policies now encourage modal shift, where possible, away from private car use and towards more sustainable transport modes such as walking, wheeling or cycling, also known as Active Travel. Government investment in active travel has increased significantly in recent years. The provision of quality cycling, wheeling and walking facilities can provide an economical, non-polluting, and flexible form of transport which can deliver improvements to overall health and wellbeing and reduce congestion and carbon emissions. The provision of active travel and recreational walking and cycling infrastructure, such as designated cycle paths, greenways, walking paths and trails, also supports recreation and tourism. The development of active travel and recreational walking and cycling routes in and around Clones Town will contribute toward Government objectives around active travel.

Public and shared transport also has the potential to enhance sustainability and reduce carbon emissions. Access to and facilities for public and shared transport may need to be improved to support the increased use of public and shared transport.

Subject to funding and resources, the Local Authority plans to develop a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for the town. A key objective of this plan will be to promote active travel and public and shared transport. Implementing the Sustainable Mobility Plan may require other interventions, such as traffic management and traffic calming, the re-allocation of road space and changes to traffic priority.

Throughout the year, Clones attracts large volumes of visitors to the town attending G.A.A. matches in St. Tiarnach's Park. The development of a new road access to the ground and enhancement of the approaches to St. Tiarnach's Park, is a key priority for the further development of Clones Town. The improvements to these roads, will ensure that visitors attending matches particularly on Ulster Final day, can enter and access St. Tiarnach's Park with ease. Details of the proposed link road is provided below:

- **Link Road from the Monaghan Road (N54) to the Roslea Road (LP2110), and the extension of the Monaghan Road (N54) – Roslea Road Link Road (around St. Tiarnach's Park).** This potential link to the north of the N54 Clones-Monaghan Road, east of the existing Feldhues plant, would open up a substantial parcel of land for industrial and residential use and has the potential in future to link directly with the Roslea Road, with a possible further link to Millbrook and the Magheravee Road. Such a route would also ease access to St. Tiarnach's Park GAA ground.

Recognising the strategically important parcel of zoned industry, enterprise and employment lands to the northeast of Clones adjoining the N54 national road where an 80km/h speed limit currently exists, Monaghan County Council will facilitate and promote the sustainable development of these lands to consolidate, expand and complement existing significant enterprise activities at this location. To facilitate this, the following will be considered and appropriate measures put in place:

- The N54 will be traffic calmed in accordance with TII Standards, including Design Report requirements in accordance with TII publications DN-GEO-03030. This will include a review of speed limits and provision of infrastructure to complement any traffic calming proposals. Any speed limit review will be undertaken in adherence to 'The Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits in Ireland'.
- Any work regarding traffic calming shall be in accordance with TII Standards and Safety Audit requirements.
- Any proposals for traffic calming retrofitted onto existing pavements shall not compromise the structural integrity of the existing pavement. The installation of coloured surfaces that are trafficked shall comply with the requirements of TII Publication DN-PAV-03023 and CC-SPW00900. All pavement works on the national road network shall comply with TII Specification for Roadworks CC-SPW-00900.
- The costs of implementation works, including any subsequent relocation of the speed limit and traffic calming, shall be a matter for the Council and/or applicant/developer as TII will not be responsible for funding or undertaking works for the benefit of private development interests.
- The phasing and delivery of the above requirements shall be agreed between the Council and TII in advance of any planning permission.

Clones Roads and Traffic Management Objectives	
CLO 5	To undertake feasibility and viability studies regarding the options for potential relief roads around Clones Town during the lifetime of this plan, subject to resources.
CLO 6	To undertake a feasibility study of the indicative link road from the Monaghan Road (N54) to the Roslea Road (LP2110), and the extension of the Monaghan Road (N54)-Roslea Road Link Road around St. Tiarnach's Park, during the lifetime of this plan, subject to available resources.
CLO 7	To prepare a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for Clones Town using the Area Based Transport Assessment process, completed by 2025.
CLO 8	To vary the Development Plan to incorporate the objectives and measures of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for Clones Town when finalised, and to implement its objectives and measures during the lifetime of this Plan.

13.10 Tourism

The town's important archaeological and historic sites, together with its heritage features, such as the Ulster Canal, have the potential to be developed as significant tourist attractions.

The reopening of the Ulster Canal to connect the Shannon-Erne Waterway and Lough Neagh will offer significant opportunities to develop tourism related facilities throughout the town. Clones Marina and an associated 1km of restored canal towpath, looped walk and amenity area, opened in June 2024. The marina provides a water-based asset along the Ulster Canal which is being restored and rediscovered on a phased basis. The new marina is located adjacent to the Ulster Canal Stores Visitor Centre and will help to boost the economic development of Clones and attract tourists to the area. The provision of greater connectivity between the new marina and the wider waterway and greenway network into the heart of Clones will be supported. The provision of tourism accommodation such as glamping, motorhome parking provision and the promotion of other recreational businesses associated with these tourism assets will be pivotal in the development of Clones Town as a tourism destination as The Creighton Hotel is currently the only Failte Ireland accredited accommodation in the town.

The Ulster Canal Stores Visitor Centre was restored in recent years by Clones Development Society, supported by Monaghan County Council, and includes the Clones Lace Museum, bistro/restaurant, coffee shop and craft shop.

The Clones Peace Link facility was opened in October 2014 on a 14-acre site at Liseggerton. Funding for the facility was provided by the EU Peace III programme, delivered by the Clones Erne East Sports Partnership and supported by Monaghan County Council. One of the core objectives of the project is to increase the levels of cross-community and cross-border integration through the creation of a shared space, the provision of modern facilities for all sporting traditions and improving the links between Clones and Fermanagh which were hampered during the troubles.

Other sports related attractions around the town include angling and golf, which provide huge potential to attract visitors to the town. Other visitor activities include the Clones loop of the Kingfisher Cycle Trail, and a heritage trail in the town centre.

13.10.1 Ulster Canal

The Ulster Canal is 74 kilometres in length and stretches from the River Blackwater at Charlemont/Moy in the centre of Northern Ireland to the River Finn on the Erne System, thus linking the Shannon-Erne Waterway and the inland waterway network with Lough Neagh and onward to Belfast via the Lagan Canal. Along its route, the Ulster Canal passes through several towns including Monaghan and Clones. The canal is an invaluable heritage and cultural resource.

Monaghan County Council recognises the economic and tourism benefits the re-opening of the Ulster Canal would have for Clones. Complementary developments along the Ulster Canal which would benefit Clones include enhancing the amenity of the Ulster Canal where feasible and the development of a strategic network of greenways centred on the Ulster Canal and linking into other strategic greenway routes. The proposed Ulster Canal Greenway Network would see the town connected to the main urban centres throughout central Ulster.

The restored Ulster Canal Stores Visitor Centre situated on Cara Street is located in the refurbished original Ulster Canal buildings that were used when the canal opened in 1891. The buildings date from 1840 and were extensively refurbished. The centre provides a focal point for the development of tourism in the area and acts as a cultural, tourist, heritage and community hub and signals the potential for regeneration that reopening the Canal would offer.

13.10.2 St. Tiarnach's Park

Clones attracts large volumes of visitors to the town attending G.A.A. matches in St. Tiarnach's Park each summer. The town has traditionally been closely associated with the Ulster Final and other major G.A.A. matches. Part 8 consent has been obtained to upgrade the existing pedestrian facilities and alter the carriageway along Churchill and Millbrook Upper opposite St Tiarnach's Park to facilitate the creation of an open pedestrian plaza on match days and an improved pedestrian link to the Peace Link sports complex from both the town centre and the G.A.A pitch.

The Council will continue to support and encourage further development of St. Tiarnach's Park including a Museum for Ulster G.A.A and further car parking. These facilities will ensure the long-term viability of St. Tiarnach's Park as the home of Ulster G.A.A. The development of a new road access to the ground and enhancement of the approaches to St. Tiarnach's Park will also assist in the accessibility of patrons to and from the grounds.

Clones Tourism Objectives	
CLO 9	To encourage the provision of tourist accommodation such as glamping facilities on appropriate sites, particularly were proposed in conjunction with the Ulster Canal and associated marina facilities.
CLO 10	To promote appropriate recreational and economic development and any associated ancillary facilities proposed in relation with the Marina facilities.
CLO 11	To upgrade and develop angling facilities in Clones and the Erne East Area in co-operation with Inland Fisheries Ireland and other relevant water bodies.
CLO 12	To encourage and accommodate the reopening of the Ulster Canal and complementary developments along the route of the Ulster Canal including the development of the proposed Ulster Canal Greenway Network, as a vehicle for regeneration.
CLO 13	To promote and support the further development of St. Tiarnach's Park.
CLO 14	To develop a new image for the town through the promotion of its heritage assets such as the Round Tower, High Cross, Clones Castle, the Ulster Canal and its sporting tradition as the home of Ulster G.A.A.
CLO 15	To identify a site for the provision of motorhome parking facilities for use in conjunction with Clones Marina, and which provides good connectivity to Clones Town Centre.
CLO 16	To support and encourage the development of appropriately scaled alternative forms of tourism accommodation on suitable sites within the town subject to Chapter 15 Development Management Standards of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

13.11 Recreation and Amenity

Vibrant, well-resourced sporting clubs with modern facilities are vital to the health of the community and add significantly to the quality of life of citizens and the attractiveness of the town as a residential centre. A number of recreational and amenity facilities have been provided in Clones in recent years. Clones golf course is located in close proximity to the town and is considered an important recreational facility.

The Peace Link is an award-winning state of the art sporting facility which includes a 400m tartan running track, a soccer pitch, a 3G multi-purpose playing pitch, indoor sports facilities for badminton and basketball as well as a fully equipped gymnasium. The facility has been designed to host major sporting competitions and therefore has the potential to improve the economy of the local area.

The playground at Cara Street has been redeveloped to complement the refurbishment of the Ulster

Canal Stores Visitor Centre. There are two other public recreation parks located within the town, the Seamus McCabe Park and the Barry McGuigan Park in addition to the open space and playgrounds located in various housing estates.

Clones has a number of important public spaces which contribute to the character and amenity of the town. The Diamond area is the most important public space in the town, and it is imperative that this space is preserved in a dignified and appropriate manner. In addition, the town also has a number of important historical and heritage sites within close proximity to The Diamond area. These sites must be maintained and visitor access to them improved with due recognition given to the status of these amenities and their role in the development of Clones.

The Clones loop of the long-distance Kingfisher Cycle Trail goes through the villages of Scotshouse, Killeevan and Newbliss before returning to Clones.

13.12 Natural Heritage

Kilroosky Lough Cluster Special Area of Conservation (SAC), located north of Clones, is a cross-border site designated under the EU Habitats Directive due to the nature of water quality and the life forms supported within this cluster of lakes. Ramages Lough is the closest of these lakes to the town with Kilroosky Lough and Dummy's Lough located in close proximity to the town also. This cluster of loughs is also a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA).

It is vital that these sensitive habitats are protected from inappropriate development which may impact upon their integrity. Specific objectives and policies for European Designated Sites and pNHAs are set out in Chapter 6 Heritage, Conservation and Landscape of this Plan.

13.13 Built Heritage

Clones is located in a pivotal position in South Ulster and has a long history of being at the centre of cultural, religious, social and commercial life since pre-Christian times, as evidenced by the Round Tower and Abbey, the High Cross, and the Ring Fort. The town has a large number of important archaeological and historic sites of notable importance within Ireland. The town has also retained its industrial heritage with the Ulster Canal, the restored Ulster Canal Stores Visitor Centre and the railway turntable building.

Clones as a town is characterised by The Diamond, a public open space located in a central prominent position within the town. Formal buildings, several of townscape merit, help define The Diamond. This public space is dominated by the Church of Ireland to the north-west and the graded approaches to it heighten the civic importance of The Diamond as a public space and the sense of enclosure is strong throughout the narrow streets, which lead up to The Diamond.

In later years a number of important buildings were developed including a large selection of Georgian and Victorian houses. The Market House was built in 1844 and the Courthouse on Mac Curtain Street was also built during this period. The beautiful Cassandra Hand Centre adjacent to the Round Tower graveyard was built in 1859. Other buildings around the town which are worthy of note are the late 19th Century Chapel of the Sacred Heart, the Masonic Hall, the Orange Hall, the Protestant Hall, the High School and the Canal Stores.

All views into The Diamond are terminated by views of buildings on the opposite side, creating a feeling of formal space. Each of the roads that feed The Diamond vary in character and townscape terms. The most notable are:

Fermanagh Street – This is the main retail street for the town comprising two and three storey properties in terraced formation. The buildings are mainly finished in painted render with little embellishment, and the fenestration is generally of Georgian proportion. The streetscape is enhanced by several ornate/well-proportioned shop frontages, which include The Tower at the lower end and a terraced series of shop fronts on entrance to The Diamond. The height to width ratio of the street creates enclosure, which provides a rich contrast to the openness of The Diamond ahead. The street gently curves and rises steeply into the square. The view into The Diamond is terminated by the grandeur of the Market House.

Cara Street – This is principally a domestic street of residential scale. The small-scale buildings provide a link between the formal scale of The Diamond and the rural landscape beyond. The street rises into The Diamond and the ornate shop frontages at the head of Fermanagh Street terminate the view into The Diamond. At the other end of the street (leaving town), the row of small, terraced cottages completes the transition from town to countryside. The buildings within this street are characterised by a number of modest two storey dwellings finished in coloured rendered finishes with brick detailing to window surrounds, brick chimneys and slate roofs.

Mac Curtain Street – The detailing along this street shows the character and variety of buildings commonly found in many Irish towns. Shops are of various sizes, with dwelling houses and public houses inter-linked. Each maintains a generally cohesive building line and has continuity in the colour and type of roof materials. Individual design details highlight individual properties, but visual unity is maintained through parity of scale, colour and materials used. Mac Curtain Street has been noted by An Taisce as having special architectural merit.

There are three Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) in Clones Town, The Diamond, Mac Curtain Street from The Diamond to Ball Alley, and the Ball Alley itself.

13.14 Archaeology

The historical development of Clones is reflected in its urban archaeology and built environment to an extent not seen in any other south Ulster town. The earliest monuments in the town are the Round Tower and the Celtic High Cross. Situated adjacent to the Round Tower is a stone Sarcophagus carved in the shape of an early Irish Church.

As part of the renovation works proposed to the Lennard Arms, the High Cross, which is located within The Diamond, is proposed to be relocated to the Lennard Arms. The relocation of the structure would ensure its preservation and facilitate a more appropriate environment within which it could be showcased. A replica High Cross would be positioned in its place in The Diamond to maintain its historical presence.

The Augustinians built Clones Abbey dedicated to Saint Peter and Saint Paul, in the 12th Century whilst the Church of Saint Tiarnach on The Diamond appears to occupy a site in use from early Christian times. On the same hill is a well-preserved Motte and Bailey, constructed by the Normans in 1212.

General objectives and policies for the protection of natural and built heritage in Clones Town are provided in Chapter 6 Heritage, Conservation and Landscape and Chapter 8 Environment, Energy and Climate Change of this Plan.

Clones Natural and Built Heritage Objectives	
CLO 17	To protect and preserve the protected monuments and structures located within Clones Town in particular Clones Fort, the Round Tower and Abbey and the High Cross on The Diamond, in accordance with the Council's statutory duties.

CLO 18	To protect and conserve the streetscape character, architectural quality, and heritage of The Diamond, Mac Curtain Street, Cara Street and Fermanagh Street.
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Chapter 14

Ballybay Town

Settlement Plan

2025-2031

Chapter 14

Ballybay Town Settlement Plan 2025-2031

Ballybay Settlement Plan Strategic Objectives	
BBSO 1	To promote and develop Ballybay Town to create a self-sufficient, sustainable and vibrant community which will act as a local employment and service centre for the Mid Monaghan hinterland.
BBSO 2	To ensure that the following priorities for the town are delivered within the lifetime of the Development Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the preparation and implementation of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for the town, • the preparation and implementation of a Town Centre First Plan for the town, and • the preparation of a feasibility study in respect of proposed road links within the town.

14.0 Location and Context

Ballybay is strategically located in the centre of County Monaghan and is less than twenty kilometres from the towns within the County. The town is dominated by Lough Major located to the east of the town centre. The Dromore River also forms an important part of the town's physical structure, and it is these water features and local drumlins that have helped to dictate how the town has developed and evolved over the years. Traditionally the town was a market town which served a large rural hinterland and subsequently the town developed an increasing dependence on the agricultural sector with the town's mart being the central focal feature bringing farmers and rural dwellers into the town.

Ballybay Regeneration Committee was established in 2015 and was restructured to run as a town team format in May 2022. The Committee is made up of Municipal District Staff, Elected Members, Ballybay Chamber of Commerce, Ballybay Development Association, Ballybay Credit Union, Ballybay Community Crèche and Ballybay GAA Club, and the purpose of the group is to bring all groups together to discuss plans and projects to help regenerate the town with the support of the Municipal District.

14.1 Historical Context

Ballybay developed due to its location, at the crossing over the Dromore River at Corrybrannan where the outflow from the adjoining Lough Major narrows and makes its way down stream, through a clump of Birch Trees, to the lake lands of Derrynaloobinagh, Annaneese and Derryvally. The road from Carrickmacross to Monaghan and the road from Clones to Castleblayney intersect at this point.

Historically the town developed as a rest point for travellers and their animals and as a place to carry out maintenance of carts, carriages and wagons. Tradesmen such as blacksmiths, saddlers and carpenters were the occupations of its first inhabitants, and it became the natural centre for markets, fairs, public meetings, conventions, parades and processions for all types of organisations and societies.

In the 1820's the Leslie family took up permanent residence on the Ballybay Estate and they built the present Market House in 1848 to help promote local trade and business. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the various religious congregations built new churches and schools. In 1850, the population of the town was approximately 1500. At that time, it did not have its own water supply, town drainage, disposal services, street lighting or proper footpaths. This changed with the construction of the railway line from Dundalk to Enniskillen via Ballybay and Clones in 1854 and the

conveyance of livestock, timber, coal, merchandise and passengers promoted trade and industry within the town.

14.2 Strategy and Vision

This Development Plan sets out to support the development of Ballybay by supporting the expansion of services to meet the needs of its locality, as well as developing the potential for tourism based on the recreational facilities on offer.

The 2016 Census recorded that the population of Ballybay declined by 15% in the period 2011-2016, from 1461 to 1241 persons. Census 2022 however, recorded a 1.2% increase in the population of Ballybay for the period 2016-2022 from 1,241 persons to 1,329 persons. The Census also revealed that almost 39% of the total housing stock in the settlement is vacant. It is an objective of this Plan to redress this trend by encouraging residential development within the settlement as well as the regeneration of brownfield sites and derelict properties.

The Core Strategy set out in Chapter 2 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031, projects that the population of Ballybay will grow to 1,578 over this plan period and a housing land requirement of approximately 6.5 hectares is being provided within the settlement envelope to accommodate this projected growth.

Table 14.1: Ballybay Town Population Projections

2022 Population	Population as a % of County Monaghan population 2016	2031 Projected Population	Projected % of County Monaghan Population 2025
1,329	2.04%	1,578	2.2%

In the Core Strategy, Ballybay is identified as a Tier 3 town which provides a range of retail and educational services. In accordance with this Strategy, it is proposed that Ballybay is developed as a residential centre as well as a service centre for the surrounding hinterland. Monaghan County Council aims to address the future sustainable development of the town through:

- The establishment of a viable and growing population, sufficient to support a wide variety of employment and services,
- The development of infrastructure where necessary to accommodate growth within the town,
- Improved transport links both within the county and to destinations outside it,
- The encouragement of re-development of backlands and derelict sites throughout the town,
- The provision of sufficient parking within the town centre, and
- The facilitation of the development of Lough Major and the Dromore River System as tourist assets along with the provision of further amenity areas.

14.3 Education

Ballybay has three national schools and one secondary school. The number of students attending each school is shown in Table 14.2.

Table 14.2: Enrolment Figures for Schools in Ballybay 2023-2024

School	No. of Students
Ballybay Community College	363
Scoil Eanna	211
Ballybay Central National School	59
Monaghan Waldorf School	15

14.4 Town Centre

Ballybay offers considerable potential for regeneration by developing projects which are sensitive to the character of the town. The Main Street is an attractive streetscape with continuous building frontages and a pleasant mix of building heights, materials and colours which define the town. In recent years funding was secured under the Rural Economic Development Zones Scheme (REDZ), to improve the appearance of properties on Main Street.

Under the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, funding has been secured to restore and refurbish Ballybay Market House, a protected structure, and bring it back into use as a community hub and town library. Additional funding has also been received under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme to carry out public realm works which will further enhance the streetscape and surrounds of the building which is prominently located within the Town Centre.

Ballybay maintains a strong community network with a large number of community groups active in the area.

A Masterplan was prepared for the backlands of Main Street in 2005 and, whilst a number of planning permissions were granted for development in this area, the redevelopment of the area was not completed. In recent years however, Monaghan County Council has completed construction works on a new car park as well as a seven unit residential development in this area. Additionally, construction works have also commenced on the Ballybay Primary Care Centre. Together these developments will provide a significant boost for the town in terms of service provision and economic benefit.

Ballybay Town Centre Objectives	
BBO 1	To encourage and support the refurbishment, renewal and re-use of brownfield lands, existing buildings and derelict sites within the town centre.
BBO 2	To encourage and facilitate the sensitive restoration, refurbishment and reuse of Ballybay Market House during the plan period.
BBO 3	To support enhanced connectivity links between An Clós Main Street, the Medical Centre and the Town Park along the Castleblayney Road.

14.5 Retailing

The type of retailing available in the town includes clothing and footwear, newsagents, pharmacists and a florist. Main Street is the traditional commercial centre of the town although a number of businesses also operate from the streets off Main Street. Whilst the viability of local businesses depends on a sustainable population and catchment area, there is potential for the variety of shops and offices to be expanded. Monaghan County Council will continue to encourage the location of retail and service businesses within the town centre area and in collaboration with the business sector and local traders will aim to improve and develop the town centre shopping facilities.

Ballybay Retailing Objective	
BBO 4	To support the retention and provision of a wide range of retail and employment services in Ballybay Town Centre.

14.6 Industry, Enterprise and Employment

Classified by socio-economic groups, the predominant employment sectors in Ballybay according to Census 2022 were professional services (24%), manufacturing and industry (21%) and commerce and trade (18%).

Ballybay has a small number of core industries which have provided consistent employment in the food processing and engineering/steel industries. The major employers are Kepak Foods (located on the Monaghan Road) and Leonard Engineering (located close to the town centre). The Ballybay Enterprise Park developed by the Monaghan Community Enterprise Fund is a state-of-the-art food production and education facility which offers the ideal environment for startup and expanding food businesses in the area. Larger businesses can avail of the facility for new product development, diversification and research and development. In addition to this training-based agencies and businesses can avail of the workspace to cater for food training programmes and as a venue for events and a function facility for caterers. Monaghan County has a strong tradition of agri-food and food processing businesses, and this development complements this tradition.

Approximately 26 hectares of land has been zoned for Industrial, Enterprise and Employment development in Ballybay, as indicated on the attached Map BBDP1 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031. This is considered sufficient to accommodate the anticipated level of industrial development in the town during the life of the Plan.

It is acknowledged that Lough Egish which is a short distance from the settlement of Ballybay, makes a significant contribution to employment and the economy within the area. Lough Egish is specifically referred to in Chapter 4 Economic Development of this Development Plan.

Ballybay Industry, Enterprise and Employment Objective	
BBO 5	To support and encourage the development of research facilities and start-up operators within the food business sector at Ballybay Enterprise Park.

14.7 Power and Telecommunications

Ballybay is included as part of Eir/Openair's IFN fibre rollout programme which delivers high speed fibre broadband services to industry, consumers and to business owners within the town. There are also extensive wireless broadband networks in and around Ballybay. Monaghan County Council will review the options for telecommunications infrastructure within the town and continue to co-operate with statutory and regulated bodies in the provision of power and communication facilities throughout the town.

14.8 Roads and Traffic Management

Ballybay is strategically located in the centre of County Monaghan and has direct road links to Monaghan, Castleblayney, Carrickmacross, Shercock and Cootehill towns via the Regional Road Network. It has become much more accessible with the improvements of transport links through the opening of Castleblayney by-pass, which provides a convenient connection to the N2 Dublin-Derry National Primary Road.

Government policies now encourage modal shift where possible, away from private car use and towards more sustainable transport modes such as walking, wheeling or cycling, also known as active travel. Government investment in active travel has increased significantly in recent years. The provision of quality cycling, wheeling and walking facilities can provide an economical, non-polluting, and flexible form of transport which can deliver improvements to overall health and wellbeing and reduce congestion and carbon emissions. The provision of active travel and recreational walking and cycling infrastructure, such as designated cycle paths, greenways, walking paths and trails, also supports recreation and tourism. The development of active travel and recreational walking and cycling routes in and around Ballybay Town will contribute towards Government objectives around active travel.

Public and shared transport also has the potential to enhance sustainability and reduce carbon

emissions. Access to and facilities for public and shared transport may need to be improved to support the increased use of public and shared transport.

Subject to funding and resources, the Local Authority plans to develop a Sustainable Mobility Plan for the town. A key objective of this plan will be to promote active travel and public and shared transport. Implementing the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan may require other interventions, such as traffic management and traffic calming, the re-allocation of road space and changes to traffic priority.

Ballybay Roads and Traffic Management Objectives	
BBO 6	To undertake a feasibility and viability study regarding traffic movements within Ballybay Town and to support any upgrades of the existing road network which facilitates traffic moving through the town.
BBO 7	To prepare a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for Ballybay Town, using the Area Based Transport Assessment process, commencing by 2026.
BBO 8	To vary the Development Plan to incorporate the objectives and measures of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for Ballybay Town when finalised, and to implement its objectives during the lifetime of this Plan.

14.9 Tourism

The town's important archaeological and historic sites, together with its natural and built heritage features, such as the Dromore River, could be developed as significant tourist attractions.

Given its pivotal position as a tributary of the Erne System, the enhancement of the facilities on the Dromore River system, including for example, the development of a Blueway and the promotion of the Ballybay Wetland Site, which can be accessed on foot and used in conjunction with walking and cycling activities, offer significant opportunities to develop tourism facilities throughout the town. Located close to the town centre, these types of tourism assets could be a catalyst for regeneration.

Ballybay Tourism Objectives	
BBO 9	To promote Lough Major and the Dromore River System as the premier tourist attractions in the area.
BBO 10	To accommodate sustainable tourism related projects in and around Lough Major and the Dromore River System which are compatible with objectives and policies for the protection of natural heritage set out in Chapter 6 Heritage, Conservation and Landscape of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.
BBO 11	To upgrade and develop angling facilities in Ballybay in co-operation with Inland Fisheries Ireland and all other relevant water bodies.
BBO 12	To develop a new image for the town through the promotion of its heritage assets such as Lough Major and the wetland site located along the Dromore River.
BBO 13	To support and encourage the development of appropriately scaled alternative forms of tourism accommodation on suitable sites within the town subject to Chapter 15 Development Management Standards of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

14.10 Recreation and Amenity

There are a number of voluntary and community groups in Ballybay. Facilities to hold community meetings are available at Birch Court, the Church of Ireland Hall, and the Presbyterian Hall.

The Town Park located to the east of the town, between Lough Major and the Castleblayney Road provides an excellent area of open space for passive recreation and active recreation for young

children which includes walkways, a playground, multi-use games area, angling facilities, a man-made beach and swimming area complete with changing facilities.

The Ballybay to Castleblayney Greenway project is a proposed 15km walking and cycling facility based along the route of the Great Northern Railway which will connect the towns of Ballybay and Castleblayney as well as improving accessibility to nearby rural communities, such as Doohamlet, the surrounding countryside and ultimately helping to enhance the tourism appeal of the area. The primary objective of the Ballybay to Castleblayney Greenway is to offer a high-quality, safe recreational experience for people of all ages and abilities. This initiative is designed to serve the local community's transportation needs, promote active travel, and attract tourism to the region. It aligns with national policies and objectives, such as Project Ireland 2040 and the National Cycle Policy Framework, to enhance sustainable transportation options and expand the network of greenways in Ireland. To date a preferred route has been developed and public consultation with respect to this route has been completed. As this proposed section of the Greenway forms part of the National Cycle Network, details of the preferred route will be issued to both Transport Infrastructure Ireland and the National Transport Authority to determine how to further progress this project. This Greenway may form part of the National Cycle Network and has the potential to provide onward connection to Clones town, Armagh and Dundalk if other spurs of the Great Northern Railway are developed as greenways.

Additionally, Monaghan County Council is seeking to develop a Blueway along the Dromore River, from Lough Major to Lisnalong.

Ballybay Wetlands, situated on the Dromore River to the west of Ballybay Town, is a wetland site of regional importance for wintering migratory birdlife including Whooper Swan and Siberian Widgeon.

Other recreation facilities in the town include:

- Pearse Brothers GFC which is located to the east of the town,
- A school playing field located on the Cootehill Road,
- Ballybay Scouts camping area along Lough Major, and
- Ballybay/Derryvalley Outdoor Bowls Club all weather bowling green.

Many of these amenity facilities are linked by the Dromore Waterway. As such, there is significant potential to capitalise on the town's green infrastructure to promote tourism and improve the quality of life for the residents of Ballybay.

Ballybay Recreation and Amenity Objectives	
BBO 14	To support the development of social, recreational, sporting and community facilities in Ballybay in appropriate locations.
BBO 15	To maintain existing rights of way and investigate the creation of additional public rights of way either, by agreement or by use of compulsory powers to create and enhance walkways around the town, with particular emphasis on the lands around Lough Major.
BBO 16	To support the further development of the Ballybay-Castleblayney Greenway, and the Dromore River Blueway, connecting Lough Major to the Dromore River.

14.11 Natural Heritage

Lough Major and the Dromore River System are designated as proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) and Areas of Secondary Amenity Value. They are an important natural resource that have helped shape the development of Ballybay and should be protected. Lough Major is the venue for International Course Angling competitions and is well used by visiting German and English anglers. It is also utilised by the Scout Association of Ireland for canoeing and sailing during camp sessions, as

well as by individuals for more passive recreation.

14.12 Built Heritage

Ballybay is characterised by attractive and continuous building frontages with a pleasant mix of building heights, materials and colours. The scale of buildings in the town are in the main, typical of eighteenth and nineteenth century Irish market towns where three storey commercial/residential premises line the street on both sides, with single and two-storey returns behind. The Ballybay Historic Landscape Characterisation Plan 2006-2010 (HLCP) was produced to document the built heritage of the town. Any development proposals should have regard to the Ballybay HLCP.

The main streets in Ballybay are as follows:

Main Street

Main Street is a mix of two and three storey buildings of different styles. The Square contains some elegant buildings such as the former offices of the Department of Agriculture, which was formerly the Bank of Ireland, built in 1880 by James Harvey & Co., Enniskillen, Ardmore Guest House which was formerly a branch of the Royal Bank of Ireland and originally a Jackson property and The Tavern which was destroyed by fire in 1910 and was subsequently completely restored.

Church Street

Church Street is off Main Street and contains a selection of two and three storey dwellings, some of recent construction. The entrance to the Court House is here. Church Street was once the location of the flax and pork markets. On the summit of the hill on this street is Christ Church, built in 1798 by Henry Leslie DD. The Church of Ireland National School located adjacent, endowed by the Leslie family is now a community centre. The Methodist Church or Evangelical Hall was another notable building in this street. It was opened for worship in 1876.

Hall Street

Hall Street contains a variety of two and three storey buildings and was previously the location of the cattle fair. The Fair Green occupied the grassy area on which now stands the Garda Barracks. The Temperance Hall and National School were located close to Second Ballybay Presbyterian Meeting House. The church was founded in 1834 and the school in 1885. Buildings of note along Hall Street include the Convent of Our Lady, St Joseph's Nursing Home, St Anne's Convalescing Home and the Parochial House.

St. Patrick Street

St. Patrick's Catholic Church is located on an elevated site originally occupied by the original town chapel. It was dedicated in 1865 during the pastorate of Rev. Fr. Andrew Carney PP. That site also contained the residence of the parish priest and his curates. St. Patrick's was designed by William Hague of Cavan and the supervisor of construction was George Burnett. The design is early Gothic. Patrick Street was formerly known as 'Albert Street' and was the location of the Horse Fair. The dwellings are a mix of two and three storeys. The Irish National Foresters built St Patrick's Hall in 1936. The main railway line from Ballybay to Clones passed over a metal bridge at the junction of Saint Patrick Street and the Main Street. It was demolished some years after the railway closed in 1957.

Barrack Street

Also known as 'Castleblayney Road', Barrack Street includes a mixture of two and three storey dwellings. The old Great Northern Railway passenger station was located off this street. The street was so named because of the presence of the Royal Irish Constabulary station. In 1921, it became the local Garda station. Pearse Place is a nice terrace of nine dwellings, in three lots of three. They

were built in the early 1930's. Beyond is the entrance to the Town Park, which has its original entrance and gatekeeper's residence. The local boys and girl's national schools are located here.

The Meeting House Lane

This was once a densely populated area. There were thirty five two-storey houses of two up and two down style, lining both sides of this narrow roadway. It was originally the main entrance to the Main Street from the Clones Road. Its steep incline made it impossible for carts and carriages to negotiate and the present entrance to the Main Street from Hall Street was made when two derelict houses on the Main Street were demolished and a new road and bridge were erected to connect with the Clones Road at the original entrance to Meeting House Lane, in the early 1800's.

The Ballybay Gas Company had its works in this area. The stand for the old gasometer was evident until recently. The Manager's residence was on the Clones Road, opposite the Second Ballybay Presbyterian Church. The stone-built bridge on Meeting House Lane was erected c.1785.

Lake View Terrace

This scheme of ten terraced dwellings was designed and built in 1936. It was designed to provide housing for those living in poor conditions in Meeting House Lane. The site overlooks Lough Major and consists of two storey houses with garden attached.

14.13 Archaeology

There are a number of features of archaeological interest in close proximity to Ballybay and there are remains of old crannogs or lake dwellings and ring forts visible in many areas near the town. Features of significant interest can be found at the following locations:

- Dunmaurice - a Megalithic Tomb, locally known as 'the Giant's Grave' which is a court tomb chamber, dating to 3000 BC.
- Lennan - a Dolmen, dated to 4000/5000 BC.
- Drumguillew - a court tomb.

Ballybay Natural and Built Heritage Objectives	
BBO 17	To protect and conserve the streetscape character and heritage of the town with a particular emphasis on Main Street and The Square.
BBO 18	To support and encourage the restoration of Ballybay Courthouse during the lifetime of this Plan.
BBO 19	To protect Lough Major, the Dromore River System and their environs, by only permitting development in exceptional circumstances, where it has been proven to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that any such development will have no adverse effect on the integrity of the lough, river system, and their environs.

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Chapter 15

Development Management Standards

Chapter 15

Development Management Standards

15.0 Introduction

Development Management is the process which ensures that development takes place in an orderly and sustainable manner. It is a statutory process that outlines specific controls to ensure that new development relates to the character, scale, layout and form of the wider area. This process is also informed and directed by established best practice and guidance, and in particular guidelines issued to the Planning Authority by the Minister regarding its functions under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) (the Act).

This Chapter sets out the planning standards and design criteria that are applicable to ensure development takes place in accordance with the strategic vision for the County and to an acceptable standard. Furthermore, the Council is obliged to ensure that permissions granted under the Act are consistent with the policies and objectives set out in the County Development Plan. The guidance set out in this Chapter is not exhaustive, but it seeks to set out general principles for guiding potential applicants.

All development proposals shall be considered against the relevant policies, objectives, standards, technical criteria, guidance and maps contained elsewhere within this Development Plan as well as those set out in this Chapter.

15.1 Pre-Planning Consultation

In accordance with Section 247 of the Act, any person interested in applying for planning permission can engage in discussions with the Planning Authority prior to lodging an application. Such consultations will not pre-determine any subsequent decision made by Monaghan County Council.

15.1.2 Enforcement Functions

Planning legislation also provides the Council with enforcement functions to ensure that the integrity of the planning system is maintained and that it operates for the benefit of the wider community. In accordance with the Act, any development which is not specifically exempt development requires planning permission. If a development has not been granted planning permission or indeed if a development has been or is being carried out in breach of conditions specified in a planning permission, it is an unauthorised development. The Council may issue Warning Letters and/or Enforcement Notices or take injunctive proceedings pursuant to Section 160 of the Act to have the matter remedied.

15.1.3 Assessments Required

An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) will be required in relation to development proposals that exceed the mandatory thresholds which are set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). A sub-threshold EIAR may be required where it is determined by the Planning Authority that the type and scale of development proposed would require an EIAR to ascertain its impact upon the environment.

An Appropriate Assessment (AA) will be required when a development proposal has the potential to impact upon the qualifying interest of a European Site (Natura 2000 Site). A proposed development will only be approved where it can be determined by the competent authority (the Planning Authority) that, based on best scientific evidence, the development proposal will not give rise to significant

adverse direct, indirect or secondary effects on the integrity of any Natura 2000 Site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects. If after screening for AA, it cannot be determined that the proposed development will not have a significant adverse impact upon the qualifying interest of the European Site, a Natura Impact Statement (Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment) prepared by a suitably qualified competent technical professional, will be required.

For certain developments, additional assessments may be required as part of the planning proposal, which may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Flood Risk Assessment
- Traffic and Transport Assessment, Quality Audit, Road Safety Audit
- Architectural Impact Assessment
- Archaeological Impact Assessment
- Visual Impact Assessment
- Ecological/Biodiversity Impact Assessment
- Infrastructural Assessment
- Hydro-geological Assessment

15.1.4 Uisce Éireann Infrastructure

In most instances public water supply and public wastewater infrastructure is located under the public road, however, some of this infrastructure is located in private lands. It is the applicant's responsibility to identify the presence of any Uisce Éireann assets within or adjacent to any proposed development. In order to assist the applicant in determining the location of Uisce Éireann assets, it is best practice for agents/developers/prospective applicants to contact Uisce Éireann in advance of designing the proposal. Where development proposals are permitted in these instances, the permission will often contain a planning condition requiring the applicant to liaise with Uisce Éireann prior to commencement of development works.

Development in the vicinity of Uisce Éireann assets must be in accordance with their Standard Details and Codes of Practice. Diversion/ Build-over Agreements will be required where an Uisce Éireann asset needs to be diverted or altered. With regard to connecting to Uisce Éireann infrastructure, Developers shall engage with Uisce Éireann through the submission of a pre-connection enquiry to Uisce Éireann, to assess the feasibility of connecting to the network. Further information on this process is available at: <https://www.water.ie/connections/developer-services/>. Developers will be required to provide evidence of consultation with Uisce Éireann when applying for planning permission. An executed Connection Agreement with Uisce Éireann is required to ensure a connection can be made and capacity is available for a particular development. New connections to Uisce Éireann networks are subject to their Connections Charging Policy.

15.2 New Development in Towns and Villages

Strategic objectives and policies for new development in towns and villages are set out in Chapters 9-14 of this Plan. In addition to these objectives and policies, the following principles shall be considered when assessing applications for new developments in towns and villages.

15.2.1 Settlement Identity

A settlement's identity can be defined by its setting within the surrounding countryside as well as the quality of buildings and streetscape within it. Landscapes around settlements have a special role to play in maintaining the distinction between towns and the countryside, in preventing coalescence between adjacent built-up areas, and in providing a rural setting to the built-up area. Proposals for development in the countryside in the immediate vicinity of any defined settlement envelope, or on

a site, which clearly mars the distinction between the open countryside and the built-up edge of the settlement will consequently be resisted.

The development of new buildings can be an opportunity to enhance an area, a streetscape, a town or a village through high quality innovative design which will improve the character and function of the settlement overall. Contemporary design will be acceptable where it is of high quality and makes a positive contribution to the setting of the town or village within which it is located.

15.2.2 Compact Urban Centres

The Planning Authority will endeavour to create compact urban centres and establish strong definition for the County's towns and villages by:

- a) encouraging development to locate within the existing built-up urban area,
- b) promoting the redevelopment of brownfield sites,
- c) actively progressing regeneration schemes within the existing inner urban areas, and
- d) discouraging ribbon development on the approaches to the urban areas and unnecessary development on the urban fringe.

15.2.3 Infill Sites

Development within infill sites must consider the context of the surrounding area and where possible, retain existing features such as building line, height, railings, trees and gateways. Development proposals on sites along streetscapes shall normally provide an active frontage and should continue the established building line. On larger infill sites, new development can have the potential to establish a new pattern of development. Matters such as streetscape, layout, pedestrian permeability, location of car parking and service bays, as well as the amenity of any adjoining buildings must also be considered.

15.2.4 Brownfield Sites

Brownfield sites are classified as any land which has been subjected to building, engineering or other operations excluding temporary uses or urban green spaces. These sites generally comprise of redundant lands and/or buildings. The redevelopment of these sites has the potential to revitalise areas by utilising the capacity of existing social and physical infrastructure and thus shall be encouraged.

15.2.5 Backland Sites

Backland sites are parcels of land located to the rear of existing buildings which may or may not contain outbuildings or undeveloped gardens. Development proposals on these lands should be prepared using the principles of master planning to ensure that large areas of land, often in multi-ownership, are appropriately planned and developed in a sustainable manner. Masterplans provide a plan-led approach and may include provisions for phasing, infrastructure provision, community facilities, density, layout, open spaces, landscaping and development design briefs and statements. Piecemeal development of individual plots will generally not be permitted unless it is satisfactorily demonstrated that any proposed development shall not compromise the comprehensive redevelopment of adjoining lands in a sustainable manner.

15.2.6 Scale and Mass

The size and scale of a building should relate to its surroundings and should be a key element in the design consideration for new buildings. If the design of a new building is incongruous or excessively large when compared to adjoining buildings within the streetscape, the proposal will be resisted. Exceptions may be considered in the following situations:

- The building is one of major public significance or contributes to the regeneration and/or redevelopment of an urban area,
- The nature of the use demands such a building, and the site is suitable for its scale, or
- The significance of the building contributes significantly to the social and economic vitality of the town centre.

15.2.7 Key/Landmark Buildings

Key/landmark buildings will usually contribute to the identity of a settlement and will have the potential to be a significant feature in the settlement. Suitable locations for these buildings include important corner or junction sites, centre sites or at the edge of public squares. At these locations, it may be acceptable to increase building heights, but a high architectural design quality will be required in these instances. Buildings located on corner sites shall be designed with appropriate fenestration and façades and, where possible, with entrance features onto both streets.

15.2.8 Building Lines

Within towns and villages of County Monaghan building lines are generally continuous but can be staggered at intervals, which add to the character of the streetscape. Generally, established, and existing building lines should be maintained and should minimise visual and physical disruption of the streetscape. Exceptions to this may be where a site-specific design demonstrates how it can positively enhance the streetscape.

15.2.9 Roofline

The older and more traditional buildings within a streetscape generally have slated pitched roofs which contain features such as chimneys that add to the visual interest and character of the building. In more contemporary designs, roofs may be flat or mono pitch. Roof design should have regard to the scale and roof form of the street frontage and use materials which are chosen to complement the existing roofs within the streetscape.

15.2.10 Building Heights and Overshadowing

The height of new or extended developments shall not be determined solely by the height of adjoining properties. In general, heights should respect the local streetscape, but buildings of different heights may be appropriate to reinforce the established urban form. This may be particularly appropriate when buildings are designed as key/landmark structures.

All development proposals must minimise overlooking, overbearing, and overshadowing to ensure no significant adverse impact on the occupiers of adjoining properties. Proposals which impact negatively on the residential amenity of the occupiers of adjoining properties by reason of overlooking, overbearing or overshadowing will be resisted.

A Daylight and Sunlight Shadow Projection Assessment, guided by the principles of Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight, A Guide to Good Practice (Building Research Establishment Report 2022) or 'BS EN 17037: 2018 Daylight in Buildings' may be required to appropriately assess the impacts of the development proposed and detail any mitigation proposed.

15.2.11 Materials

The use of renewably sourced hardwood for windows and doors in all new structures is encouraged as well as the use of local materials which contribute to the character of the area. Existing stone facades should be retained, and the plastering of stone facades will generally not be permitted. The choice of colours for external finishes should complement surrounding buildings. Within Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs), the use of blue/black roof slates is desirable, and the use of uPVC

windowing and guttering will not normally be permitted. Where appropriate, contemporary finishes may be acceptable where they positively contribute to the design of the building and its setting.

15.2.12 Fenestration

Fenestration should normally have vertical emphasis to reflect the pattern of the area, and to respect traditional proportions of the building and the streetscape. Existing door and window openings should be retained where possible. Replacement windows should be of similar style, design and material of the original design.

15.2.13 Access for All

The refurbishment of existing buildings or proposals for new development, particularly those intended for public use, must be designed in accordance with the standards outlined in the National Disability Authority – Building for Everyone; A Universal Design Approach (2012) (or any new or updated/subsequent versions) and in compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations.

15.2.14 Alterations and Extensions

Any refurbishment, alteration or extension to an existing building should respect the scale, form, detailing and materials of the original building. The degree of sensitivity required will vary according to the quality and visual significance of the building within the wider urban area.

15.2.15 Public Realm

The public realm of a town or village includes all the outside spaces that are used and are visible to the public. A high-quality public realm is a place that is pleasant to use and easy to access. All new developments will be required to enhance and complement the public realm comprising building facades, shop fronts, signage, lighting fixtures on buildings, lamp posts, bollards, footpaths, squares, parks, etc. Measures for improving public realm include reducing visual clutter, harmonising signage, and adopting a consistent approach in terms of street furniture, lighting and paving. A public realm plan should be prepared for any urban area where significant environmental improvements are being proposed.

New Development in Towns and Villages Policy	
DTVP 1	Proposals for development works in towns and villages shall comply with Section 15.2 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.3 Built and Archaeological Heritage

15.3.1 Protected Structures

Monaghan County Council shall ensure the conservation, management, protection and enhancement of the architectural heritage of the County by:

- Carefully considering any development which is likely to impact on the special interest and/or any views of protected structures and their setting,
- Facilitating the retention and sympathetic re-use of protected structures and their settings in circumstances where the proposal is compatible with their character and special interest, and
- Relaxing land use zoning restrictions and site development standards, in certain instances, to secure the conservation and reuse of a protected structure and to provide a viable use for any protected structure which is at risk by virtue of being derelict or vacant.

Planning permission for the demolition of any protected structure shall not be granted except in exceptional circumstances and in accordance with Section 57(10)(b) of the Act.

Proposals for development works to protected structures or within the vicinity of a protected structure shall:

- a) Comply with the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines 2011 (and any new or updated/subsequent versions),
- b) Include the submission of drawings, photographs and surveys of the existing building together with a method statement for the proposed works,
- c) Include an Architectural Impact Assessment and/or a Conservation Plan, carried out by a suitably qualified, competent, technical professional with conservation expertise, and,
- d) Complement and be sympathetic to the structure and its setting in terms of its design, scale, height, massing and use of materials.

Protected Structure Policy	
PSP 1	Proposals for development works to protected structures or within the vicinity of a protected structure shall comply with Section 15.3.1 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.3.2 Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

Any proposed development within an ACA shall have regard to the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011), or any new or updated/subsequent versions.

Development proposals within an ACA shall consider the special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest of the ACA and its setting.

New development or alterations to existing building(s) in an ACA shall reflect the historic architecture in terms of scale, design and materials used, and have regard to any completed character appraisal.

Any alterations proposed to a building adjoining or adjacent to an ACA shall be sensitive to its setting. Any proposed development that would adversely affect the character and appearance of the ACA will be resisted.

Table 15.1 Guidelines for development within or adjoining Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

Detail	Guidelines for development within or adjoining Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)
Plot Widths	Traditional plot width should generally be retained. Where plot amalgamation is considered necessary, the existing narrow plot frontage should be reflected in the streetscape design.
Building Height	The range of building height and number of storeys which are evident within a streetscape should be retained. The roofline should reflect the rhythm, harmony and scale of the existing street frontage. Roof extensions will not be acceptable where it interferes with the architectural integrity, proportions or uniformity of a building or a group of buildings, or the streetscape.
Proportions	Roof to wall ratio should reflect that of neighbouring buildings. The design shall have good roof to wall proportion, and a high solid to void relationship with greater wall surface area than window or door openings.
Roofing Materials	Original roofing materials including ridge tiles, chimneys, bargeboards, eaves detail, cast iron gutters and down pipes should be retained, repaired and reused. Where required, replacement of materials with historically correct materials shall be encouraged.
Chimney Stacks	Removal of chimney stacks shall not be permitted except in exceptional circumstances. Chimneys should normally be placed centrally on the ridge of the

Detail	Guidelines for development within or adjoining Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)
	roof. Chimneys at gable ends should normally be flush with the face of the gable wall. Chimneys of any original structure should be replicated in any new build scheme.
Dormer Windows and Roof Lights	Dormer windows can alter the special character of the streetscape and are normally only acceptable on hidden roof pitches or where they are an original feature of the building or the area. The installation of roof lights will normally only be accepted on hidden roof pitches or where they are an original feature of the building or the area.
Eaves, Soffits and Bargeboards	Projecting eaves or verges should be avoided except in buildings where this was an historical detail. UPVC fascias or bargeboards will not be permitted.
Rainwater Goods	Historic gutters, downpipes and associated details generally of cast iron enrich an ACA and all intact rainwater goods should be retained and should only be replaced with high quality replicas of the same material when they are beyond repair. White rainwater goods will not be permitted.
Wall Materials	Where traditional renders are being repaired the material, style and detailing should match that of the original in as far as is possible. In general, the stripping of render to expose brickwork in ACAs will not be acceptable. Traditional finishes including lime-based renders, natural cement renders, wet dash, smooth or coursed painted renders, random coursed stone and cut stone should be used in new or redeveloped buildings.
Cills and Doors	Cills are usually a minimum 100mm deep stone with bull nosed profile, but concrete may be considered acceptable in some instances. All doors fronting into the street should be hardwood in traditional form and dimension. Fan lights, where appropriate, should be above the door and not part of the door design.
Street Railings, Gates and boundary features	Widening an entrance or altering flanking walls or railings will alter the visual impact of the streetscape and should be given careful consideration as such alterations can have a detrimental impact on the character of an ACA. Where the repair of historic ironwork is proposed, as much of the original material as is possible should be retained.
Special Features	Elements and details which are becomingly increasingly rare should be identified for special protection in any redevelopment/refurbishment scheme. These include railings, plinths, cisterns, stone stairs, external fabric of basement areas, iron handrails, stone paving and drainage channels.

Architectural Conservation Areas Policy	
ACAP 1	Proposals for development within or adjoining Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs) shall comply with Section 15.3.2 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.3.3 Record of Monuments and Places

All entries on the Record of Monuments and Places (and any new archaeological discoveries) are protected under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act, 1994.

The main threat to archaeological sites in recent years has been the growth in large scale developments such as road building, quarrying, industrial development, agriculture and afforestation. Development proposals adjacent to a protected monument or place, or any archaeological site discovered, will only be considered acceptable where it can be carried out in a manner which

minimises the impact on the monument or archaeological site, and will not have an adverse impact upon its setting.

Record of Monuments and Places Policy	
RMP 1	Proposals for development adjacent to protected monuments and places or archaeological sites shall comply with Section 15.3.3 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.3.4 Historic Houses, Demesnes and Designated Landscapes

County Monaghan has several fine examples of historic houses, demesnes, and designated landscapes, which are listed in Chapter 6.19 of this Development Plan.

Conservation Plans to guide appropriate development will be required where deemed necessary by the Planning Authority for complex sites such as demesnes where there is a mix of cultural and natural features across a large area.

Proposals for development within the vicinity of historic houses, demesnes or designated landscapes shall generally be considered acceptable where:

- a) Any new development will not adversely affect the site, setting or views to and from historic houses, demesnes and designed landscapes,
- b) They are accompanied by an assessment and evaluation of the impact of the development on the landscape, designed views and vistas to/from such a site.

Historic Houses, Demesnes and Designed Landscapes Policy	
HHDLDP 1	Proposals for development within the vicinity of historic houses, demesnes and designated landscapes shall comply with Section 15.3.4 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.4 Shopfronts

Well maintained shopfronts add character to a street, and they have an important role in defining the character of the streetscape. Equally, the quality of townscapes can be diminished by shopfronts in poor condition or of poor design. The retention and refurbishment of historic shopfronts in lieu of their removal and replacement with a modern shopfront will be required, unless demonstrated otherwise to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.

Proposals for shopfronts shall generally:

- a) Relate to the architecture of the building to which it forms part of, including the upper floors in terms of proportion, scale and alignment.
- b) Respect the scale and proportions of the streetscape by maintaining existing fenestration and plot width, including any vertical division or features breaking up horizontal facades.
- c) Include the design elements of a traditional Irish shopfront, such as the fascia, pilasters, consoles, cornice, architrave and stallriser, with details of fascia signage included as part of any planning application.

Proposals for shopfront signage shall generally:

- a) Be contained within the fascia.
- b) Not be permitted above the ground floor or across pillars or columns.
- c) Include lettering which is either hand painted on the fascia or consist of individually mounted solid letters mounted on the fascia, with materials and colours appropriate to the streetscape.

- d) Include lettering, the size and dimensions of which, are in proportion to the depth of the fascia board.
- e) Avoid the use of plastic, vinyl or neon signs and only use high-quality materials.
- f) Only include corporate signs, logos and commercial branding where they are compatible with the character of the building, its material and colour scheme and those of adjoining buildings
- g) Encourage the use of Irish Language.
- h) Not include projecting signs, unless they are sympathetic to the building on which they are to be displayed and respect any existing or proposed fascia signage.
- i) Include back lighting of individual letters as opposed to spotlighting. Internal illumination shall be resisted.
- j) Only include illumination of fascia signage, shopfronts or distinctive architectural features which is discreet and is preferably limited to spotlighting, uplighting or disguised minimal strip lighting.
- k) Only include external lighting which is cowled and directed away from the public roadway.

Where proposals for shopfronts include:

- a) Roller shutters - they shall be perforated, in a colour to complement the façade. Shutter boxes shall be contained within the shop front behind the fascia. External steel roller shutters will not normally be permitted.
- b) Screens - the use of perforated external back lit screens or translucent internal screens shall be required.
- c) Canopies or awnings – these will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where they do not have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the shop front or its setting and are incorporated within the shop front.

Shopfronts Policy	
SFP 1	Proposals for shopfronts shall comply with Section 15.4 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.5 Advertisement Structures and Displays

Advertising can impact upon the appearance of the building, structure or place where they are displayed. Therefore, all advertising must be appropriate in terms of the building, settlement or setting in which they are located. The display of advertisements at inappropriate locations can result in a loss of visual amenity and can also constitute a danger to public safety or traffic safety.

Proposals for advertisement structures and displays shall:

- a) Generally be located on the same site to which the advertisement relates to or in close proximity to that site.
- b) Not adversely impact on the general characteristics of the area including any special features of historic, archaeological, architectural, landscape, cultural or special interest.
- c) Not be permitted on or near protected structures, within Architectural Conservation Areas, in parks, residential areas, in Areas of Primary and Secondary Amenity or where it is considered they would detract from the visual amenity of the area.
- d) Be sympathetic to the size, scale, siting, design and materials of the building and street in which it is to be located.
- e) Not interfere with windows or other facade features at any level.
- f) Not add to the concentration of existing advertising structures and displays in the area resulting in visual clutter.
- g) Not be permitted at roundabouts, at traffic signalised junctions, at locations where they obstruct sight lines or compete with other traffic signs or would endanger traffic safety.
- h) Encourage the use of Irish language on shop front signage.

- i) Restrict sandwich board advertisements by the number, location, dimension and design, ensuring that they do not undermine the use and amenity of the streetscape in which they are located.
- j) Comprise one principal advertisement structure or display at industrial/commercial/retail parks, incorporating a number of uniform individual advertisements at the entrance to the development.
- k) Not be permitted where they may interfere with the safety of pedestrians, the accessibility of the public footpath or roadway, the safety and free flow of traffic.
- l) Only be permitted on a temporary basis for advertising hoarding, where they are replacing an authorised sign of similar type, such as billboards, tri-vision and three-dimensional signs, or where they are utilised to screen a building site.
- m) Be resisted along the road network particularly on approaches to towns and villages.

Advertisement Structures and Displays Policy	
ASDP 1	Proposals for advertisement structures and displays shall comply with Section 15.5 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.6 Public Art and Murals

Monaghan County Council has adopted a Monaghan Culture and Creativity Strategy 2023-2027. Where planning permission is required, the placement of murals on external walls must be carefully considered. Murals shall not comprise an advertisement or product placement and shall not detrimentally affect the visual appearance of the building or its setting and surrounding area.

Public art and murals shall normally be resisted in sensitive areas, for example on or adjacent to protected structures, within or adjoining Architectural Conservation Areas and areas of Primary or Secondary Amenity Value.

Public Art and Murals Policy	
PAMP 1	Proposals for public art and murals shall comply with Section 15.6 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.7 Retail Development

Recent trends nationally have seen a decline in the number of small, independent retailers and the emergence of larger franchise-based stores, as well as greater levels of online shopping. These trends increasingly influence shopping patterns and have created a demand for large shopping locations where extensive car parking facilities are available. However, supporting the vitality and viability of the traditional town and village centres is of critical importance, and the overriding aim is to promote healthy competitive retail environments commensurate to the settlement size and function. The assessment of retail development proposals will focus on the qualitative aspects of the proposal including urban design, integration with the built fabric of the town centre and their contribution to the vitality and viability of the town centre.

Large out of town retail centres located adjacent or close to existing, new or planned national roads shall be resisted. Out of town centre locations will only be considered in accordance with the Sequential Test, as required under the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012 (or any new or updated/subsequent versions).

Proposals for retail development shall comply with the County Monaghan Retail Development Strategy 2016-2022, and the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012 (and the accompanying Retail Design Manual), or any new or updated/subsequent versions.

Retail Development Policy	
RDP 1	Proposals for retail development shall comply with Section 15.7 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.8 Multi-Unit Residential Developments

Multi-unit residential developments comprise of two or more residential units which have shared services. The location, design and integration of new multi-unit residential developments can significantly impact on established communities. All stakeholders concerned with multi-unit residential developments including developers, the Planning Authority and the community, should share a common goal to create high quality living environments.

Multi-unit residential developments will not normally be permitted outside of the designated settlements of County Monaghan.

Proposed multi-unit residential developments serviced by developer provided infrastructure such as wastewater treatment systems will be resisted until such times as Uisce Éireann takes in charge this type of infrastructure.

Residential developments within the settlements will be assessed against and shall comply with the following Ministerial Guidelines and publications (and any new or updated/subsequent versions)

- Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024)
- Sustainable Urban Design Guidelines – Standards for New Apartments (DHLGH, 2022)
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities- Best Practice Guidelines for Delivering Homes and Sustaining Communities, (2015)
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2022)
- Urban Design Manual- A Best Practice Guide (2009)
- Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities (DEHLG, 2007)
- Delivering Homes Sustaining Communities, Statement on Housing Policy (DEHLG, 2007)
- Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas (1998)
- Monaghan County Council Taking in Charge Procedures (2010)
- The Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (2005)
- TII Specifications for Road Works (2013) (as amended)

15.8.1 Layout

The layout of a residential scheme and how it relates to its surroundings is an essential component to creating a quality environment for a community.

New multi-unit residential development shall generally have regard to the following:

- a) The existing character, street pattern, streetscape and building lines of the area,
- b) The compatibility of the proposed development with the adjoining buildings, particularly with respect to infill sites,
- c) The interconnectivity of roads/streets and pedestrian routes so that they are permeable and easy to navigate,
- d) A layout where roads do not dominate the proposed development,
- e) A movement pattern that supports walking, cycling, and convenient access to public transport, and includes traffic calming,
- f) A layout that is well connected and integrated with the surrounding urban area and, where necessary, can provide connecting footpaths and public lighting to existing provision,

- g) The provision of appropriate buffers along existing and proposed roads to protect the residential amenity of the dwellings, and to protect the visual amenity of the setting of the settlement. The design, scale, form and detailing of the buffer shall be dependent on the likely impact of the road or the development on amenity,
- h) The creation of active frontage, with corner sites providing dual frontage,
- i) The avoidance of extensive fencing fronting on to streets and public roads,
- j) The natural and built heritage features of the site and surrounding area,
- k) The presence of watercourses particularly when determining the location and design of public open space and/or linear parks,
- l) The provision of passive surveillance through design to ensure housing overlooks streets, car parks, open space areas,
- m) The creation of different urban forms to provide a more varied building line to reduce appearance of suburban layouts, and
- n) Respect established building lines, particularly on infill development sites.

Planning applications for residential and mixed-use developments within the settlements shall be accompanied by a Design Concept Statement demonstrating how the proposed development complies with a – n above, and with the twelve criteria set out in the Urban Design Manual (2009).

The Design Concept Statement shall outline the overall design concept and objectives for the site and include a conceptual site layout plan detailing the characteristics of the site, information on any special designations, infrastructural needs (including community facilities) and an explanation of the rationale behind the final design. The level of detail required will depend on the nature, scale and location of the proposed development.

15.8.2 Orientation and Separation of Dwellings

Houses should overlook streets, footpaths, pedestrian paths, cycle routes and open spaces. Layouts should consider orientation according to the sun path in order to maximise amenity, daylight and the benefits of passive solar gain. Houses should be designed to ensure that overlooking and overshadowing of adjoining properties is minimised. Individual pedestrian access to rear garden areas should generally be provided for every property.

15.8.3 Shared Spaces/Home Zones

The concept of shared spaces within residential areas is where the road space is shared between drivers and other users and where the needs of residents, including pedestrians, cyclists and children are emphasised in the design. The DEHLG Urban Design Manual advocates the creation of shared spaces and provides for very low traffic speeds that create a sense of place which is prioritised over movement. The road layout shall have regard to the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS). Shared space characteristics include the incorporation of a wide variety of housing design and development layout, including variations in building lines, building heights, deviations in the width and alignment of vehicle paths, variety of surface treatments and extensive use of street furniture and planting.

15.8.4 Dwelling Mix

For a residential development to be considered inclusive, it should make provision for housing of different types, sizes and tenures. This provides choice and helps to create a balanced, sustainable community. The provision of a variety of different house types will create visual variety and social dynamic, thereby preventing residential development being homogenous in character. In accordance with the principles of Housing Options for Our Ageing Population – Policy Statement 2019, the Council will promote an age-friendly approach by ensuring that both existing and proposed residential

developments are future proofed for an ageing population. In particular, developers will be encouraged to provide single storey dwellings for the elderly, those with impaired mobility, and to facilitate downsizing in all developments. Where the Planning Authority deems appropriate, applicants for residential development should consider the incorporation of units suitable for elderly persons within proposed schemes and consideration should be given to accompanying facilities and materials in line with the age friendly principles taken from the Ten Universal Design Features to include in a Lifetime Adaptable and Age Friendly Home – June 2021, published by Age Friendly Ireland. In private housing schemes, normally a minimum of 10% of housing units shall be 2-bedroom units. The design of new dwellings shall have a high degree of flexibility to allow for adaptability for lifetime housing needs and for those with impaired mobility.

15.8.5 Layout and Design of Apartments

The Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments (DHPLG 2022), identify minimum standards for floor areas of apartments including storage space and individual room areas. Apartment design should aim to achieve higher standards than those prescribed for in the Ministerial Guidelines.

15.8.6 Part V

Under the provisions of Part V of the Act 20% of all private residential developments on land zoned for residential or mixed uses (where residential development is included) shall be provided for social housing (or as otherwise amended by legislation).

Multi-Unit Residential Development Policy	
MURP 1	Proposals for multi-unit residential development shall comply with Section 15.8 to 15.8.6 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.8.7 Housing Density

The Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2024, set out national planning policy and guidance in relation to the planning and development of urban and rural settlements, with a focus on sustainable residential development and the creation of compact settlements. The Guidelines are accompanied by a non-statutory Design Manual that illustrates best practice examples of how the policies and objectives of the Guidelines can be applied. These Guidelines build on and update previous guidance to take account of current Government policy and economic, social and environmental considerations. There is a renewed focus in the Guidelines on the renewal of existing settlements and on the interaction between residential density, housing standards and quality urban design and placemaking to support sustainable and compact growth.

Development proposals for residential development shall demonstrate that the housing density proposed is appropriate to its context, provides for a sustainable pattern of development, whilst ensuring a high-quality living environment and having regard to the zoning objective pertaining to the site.

Housing Density Policy	
HDP 1	To require a density of units within multi-unit residential schemes, in accordance with the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2024 and any new or updated/subsequent versions.

15.8.8 Low Density Residential Development on lands zoned as ‘Proposed Residential B’

An application for low density residential development, including serviced sites, at a maximum density of 15 units per hectare (unless where site-specific circumstances can justify otherwise), will be permitted by the Planning Authority on lands zoned as ‘Proposed Residential B’.

Where it is proposed to develop serviced sites, the developer shall be required to submit a Design Concept Statement for the development of the entirety of the zoned lands in the immediate vicinity of the site, in a sequential manner. The Design Concept Statement shall specify details in relation to a maximum house to plot ratio, the design of dwellings, finishes, materials and boundary treatments, to ensure a quality residential environment. The Design Concept Statement should also confirm the sequencing arrangements for the release of sites to ensure that the development takes place in a suitable and co-ordinated manner. A condition shall be attached to any subsequent grant of permission ensuring that all dwellings within the development comply with this Statement.

Proposals to develop only part of a zoned Proposed Residential B land bank shall be accompanied by a Concept Master Plan for the entirety of the land bank, demonstrating that its overall development will not be prejudiced by the proposal.

Low Density Residential Development on lands zoned as ‘Proposed Residential B’ Policy	
LDRP 1	Proposals for low density residential development shall comply with Section 15.8.8 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.8.9 Single Dwellings on lands zoned as Proposed Residential (A and B) and Strategic Residential Reserve

Proposals for single dwellings on lands zoned as Proposed Residential (A and B) and Strategic Residential Reserve shall comply with the following criteria:

- It is satisfactorily demonstrated, through the submission of a Concept Master Plan, that the proposed development of one site within a larger land bank can be carried out without affecting the comprehensive development of the entire land bank,
- The development will represent the sustainable and efficient use of existing infrastructure and services, or proposed infrastructure and services for which funding has already been secured, and
- It is demonstrated that the required infrastructure can be provided for at the developer’s expense.
- In respect of proposed single dwellings on lands zoned as strategic residential reserve, that a satisfactory justification has been provided in accordance with the requirements of Table 9.1, Chapter 9, LUO 5, Strategic Residential Reserve, Land Use Zoning Objective.

Single Dwellings on Lands Zoned as Proposed Residential (A and B) and Strategic Residential Reserve Policy	
SDPRP 1	Proposals for single dwellings on lands zoned as Proposed Residential A and B and Strategic Residential Reserve, shall comply with Section 15.8.9 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.8.10 Residential Development in Tier 4 Settlements

Residential development and serviced sites on suitable lands located within any of the defined Tier 4 settlements which have capacity within existing public foul drainage and public/group water systems, will be considered subject to compliance with the following:

- The submission of evidence to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that there is demand for the proposed residential development taking account of the extent, nature and status of

extant permissions for residential development, and vacant residential properties in the settlement.

- b) The proposal contributes to the sequential development of land from the centre of the settlement outwards and/or represents an infilling of the existing settlement envelope.
- c) The scale and density of the development accords with the character of the village.

Notwithstanding the requirements of criteria a-c above for Tier 4 settlements and Section 15.8 'Multi Unit Residential Developments' of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031, and taking into account the objectives of the 'Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland' to address the shortage of housing, the Planning Authority may favourably consider proposals for social housing developments which are outside the defined Tier 4 settlement limit where a clear demonstrable need is proven to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, and where the lands are contiguous to the settlement limit and can be adequately serviced.

Residential Development in Tier 4 Settlements Policy	
RDSP 1	Proposals for residential developments within Tier 4 settlements shall comply with Section 15.8.10 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.8.11 Residential Development in Tier 5 and 6 Settlements

Small scale residential development and serviced sites on suitable lands located within any of the Tier 5 and 6 settlements which have capacity within existing Uisce Éireann drainage and public/ group water systems, will be considered subject to compliance with the following:

- a) The submission of evidence to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that there is demand for the proposed residential development taking account of the extent, nature and status of extant permissions for residential development, and vacant residential properties in the settlement.
- b) The development represents a sustainable expansion of the settlement avoiding the loss of areas of amenity, important biodiversity areas, community facilities or playing fields.
- c) The development reflects the nature, scale and form of existing residential development in the settlement.
- d) The development will represent sustainable and efficient use of existing infrastructure and services.
- e) The arrangement of the development would not adversely affect the setting and character of the settlement.
- f) Where it is proposed to develop serviced sites, the developer shall be required to submit a Design Concept Statement for the entirety of the development. The Design Concept Statement shall specify details in relation to a maximum house to plot ratio, the design of dwellings, finishes, materials and boundary treatments, ensuring a quality residential environment. The Design Concept Statement should also confirm the sequencing arrangements for the release of sites to ensure that the development takes place in a suitable and co-ordinated manner. A condition shall be attached to any subsequent grant of permission ensuring that all dwellings within the development comply with this Statement.
- g) It is demonstrated that the required infrastructure can be provided for at the developer's expense.

Residential Development in Tier 5 and 6 Settlements Policy	
RDSP 2	Proposals for small scale residential developments within Tier 5 and 6 settlements shall comply with Section 15.8.11 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.8.12 Recreational Facilities and Public Open Space

The provision of recreational facilities such as open spaces, formal play areas, playing pitches, all weather surfaces, changing facilities, etc is essential in all areas of multi-unit residential development. The need for these facilities will be assessed by the Planning Authority having regards to the scale of the development proposed and the existing provision of facilities in the area. They should be integrated into the overall design of the scheme, easily accessed, well designed, and should not significantly impact on the established standard of amenity of adjoining residents. Where a number of residential developments are proposed adjacent to each other, developers are encouraged to provide a design solution that integrates recreational facilities into the overall development of the wider area.

A key requirement within residential developments is the quality of open space provision. Open space should provide for both active and passive recreation, as well as contributing to the character and attractiveness of a development. It should be safe, convenient, usable and accessible for all sectors, but in particular for children, the elderly and those with disabilities. Furthermore, open space should provide linkages to adjoining residential areas and community facilities.

The provision of public open space within new developments should facilitate the retention of existing landscape features such as mature trees, hedgerows, biodiversity rich areas, streams, watercourses and archaeological features. The landscaping of the open space areas should include semi-mature trees. Peripheral areas, narrow tracks, backland areas, steeply sloping and poorly proportioned areas will not be considered acceptable.

The loss or reduction of an area of public open space within a residential development will only be permitted where:

- the open space provision can be enhanced through the redevelopment of the site, or,
- an alternative provision of equivalent benefit is provided elsewhere, or,
- where there would be an overall community gain from the development, and,
- the loss of the open space will have no significant adverse impact on the amenity of the area.

Public open space shall be provided in accordance with the standards set out in the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024), specifically Policy and Objective 5.1 – Public Open Space. In addition to these standards, Table 15.2 outlines the minimum required open space and/or recreational facilities for multi-unit residential developments, according to unit numbers.

Table 15.2 Recreational Facilities and Public Open Space Standards

Number of Dwelling Units	Formal Play Area	Playing Pitch	Recreational Changing Facilities
Brownfield			
0-40			
41-150	Yes		
151-200	Yes	Yes	
>200	Yes	Yes	Yes

The Recreational Facilities and Public Open Space requirements are a higher standard than those prescribed in the Ministerial Guidelines and are applicable having regard to the pattern of development of County Monaghan's settlements.

The Planning Authority may require the provision of open space and recreational facilities where the number of dwellings proposed in a development falls marginally below the thresholds set out in Table 15.2 or when taken cumulatively with other existing developments, where deemed appropriate by the Planning Authority.

Generally, the recreational facilities should be provided directly by the developer. The Council may require the payment of a special development contribution for the improvement of existing recreational facilities and/or the provision of alternative recreational facilities, in lieu of direct provision where:

- The open space/facilities are already available for residents, or,
- The proposed development is so small in area that the provision of these facilities would not be reasonable or useful.

Where a developer has previously or proposes in the near future to carry out separate developments in the vicinity of the proposed development, the Planning Authority shall determine the need for recreational facilities based on the total number of units in all the developments combined. This shall also apply where the developer is working in concert with others.

15.8.13 Private Open Space

The provision of outdoor private amenity space attached to residential properties is important for the quality of the residential environment for the occupiers. All new residential units should have access to an area of private amenity space. Within town centres and/or apartment developments innovative layouts will be required to ensure the provision of acceptable private amenity space. This can be in the form of shared private areas, courtyards, terraces, patios, balconies and roof gardens.

Private Open Space requirements for all new residential development shall be in accordance with the standards set out in the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024), and the Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines (2022).

15.8.14 Relaxation of Public and Private Open Space Standards

A relaxation of the provision of public and private open space may be permitted where development is proposed:

- within vacant and/or derelict town centre sites, or,
- to protected structures, or,
- within Architectural Conservation Areas, or,
- is in close proximity to public parks or other natural amenities, or,
- alternative amenities and facilities are available within the neighbourhood and privacy is not compromised.

Recreational Facilities, Public and Private Open Space Policies	
ROSP 1	Proposals for recreational facilities and public open space in multi-unit residential developments shall comply with Section 15.8.12 and Table 15.2 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031, unless a relaxation of standards is acceptable in accordance with Section 15.8.14 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.
ROSP 2	Proposals for private open space in multi-unit residential developments shall comply with Section 15.8.13 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031, unless a relaxation of standards is acceptable in accordance with Section 15.8.14 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.8.15 Childcare Facilities (Standalone and within Multi-Unit Residential Developments)

Proposals for standalone or multi-unit residential developments, of 75 units or more, shall provide one childcare facility (with a minimum capacity for 20 child places) in accordance with the Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2001, or any new or updated/subsequent versions, which satisfactorily demonstrates the following:

- a) The suitability of the site, including proximity to the residential development proposed,
- b) The type and size of facility is sufficient for the residential development proposed,
- c) The availability of an appropriate external play area,
- d) The provision of safe access, adequate car parking, drop off and circulation area for parents and staff,
- e) The traffic flow and general road safety in the area will not be adversely affected,
- f) The accessibility of the proposed development, particularly in relation to pedestrian access from residential areas, places of work and existing educational facilities, and
- g) The proposed operating hours of the facility will not adversely impact upon the amenities of the surrounding area.

In respect of proposed multi-unit residential development of less than 75 units, the Planning Authority shall determine the need for the developer to provide a childcare facility based on the total number of units proposed. This determination shall also have regard to other multi-unit residential developments of less than 75 units which have been previously permitted and commenced in the vicinity in the last three years.

In these circumstances, the developer may be required to submit an evidence based supporting statement which clearly demonstrates that there are sufficient existing childcare facilities available in the surrounding area. The applicant should consult with Monaghan County Childcare Committee prior to the preparation of the statement, if one is required.

Childcare Facilities (Standalone and within Multi-Unit Residential Developments) Policy	
CFRDP 1	Proposals for childcare facilities within Multi-Unit Residential Development shall comply with Section 15.8.15 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.8.16 Taking in Charge of Multi-Unit Residential Developments

Under the provisions of Section 180 of the Act, the Council is required to initiate procedures under Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993, to commence the taking in charge process of a development (housing developments of 2 or more houses) where requested to do so by the developer or by a majority of the owners of the houses involved. The Council's policies and procedures in relation to 'Taking in Charge' are set out in the document 'Taking in Charge Procedures for Private Housing Developments (2010)' or any new or updated/subsequent versions.

15.8.17 Bonds for Multi-Unit Residential Developments

To ensure the satisfactory completion of housing developments a guarantee in the form of a cash deposit of €7,000 per residential unit (updated in accordance with the wholesale price index) will be required to be lodged with the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. This guarantee shall remain in place until the development is completed to the satisfaction of the Council, and is taken in charge, in accordance with the provisions of Section 180 of the Act 2000.

As an exception to the above, the Planning Authority may accept at its discretion, a guarantee in the form of a bank bond, insurance company bond or other suitable surety in respect of larger developments.

In exceptional circumstances the Planning Authority may accept a phased bond payment where the development is designed and carried out on a phased basis and is taken in charge in the same phased manner.

Completion of Multi-Unit Residential Developments Policies	
CRDP 1	Proposals for Taking in Charge of multi-unit residential development shall comply with the 'Taking in Charge procedures for Private Housing Developments (2010)' or any new or updated/subsequent versions.
CRDP 2	Proposals for multi-unit residential development shall comply with the requirements of Section 15.8.17 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.8.18 Naming of Multi-Unit Residential Developments

All planning applications for housing developments shall include proposals for the naming of the development upon completion. The proposed name should be in bi-lingual format and should reflect local place names, townlands and/or cultural features in the area in accordance with the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government Circular - Naming of Streets and Roads, Numbering of Houses and the Use of Irish. The use of non-traditional or non-local names should be avoided. The names for all new housing developments are subject to the agreement of the Council's Placenames Committee, An Coiste Logainmneacha.

Naming of Multi-Unit Residential Development Policy	
NRDP 1	Proposals for naming of multi-unit residential development shall comply with Section 15.8.18 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.9 Housing in the Rural Area

The drumlin landscape of County Monaghan creates a unique and intimate rural environment that is different from the rest of the Country. It is a sensitive landscape, and whilst buildings generally form only a small part of this rural environment, their effect can be disproportionate to their size. The quality of development in the countryside requires specific policies to properly manage it.

15.9.1 Rural Character

The pace of development and change occurring within the countryside is now more rapid than ever. It is acknowledged that a carefully sited and well-designed dwelling can add to the amenity of the rural environment. However, the cumulative impact of a number of buildings on both the visual amenity of the countryside and the rural environment can be significant. Parts of the County have already experienced a significant erosion of the rural character as a result of intensive development. It is therefore vital that any new dwellings being proposed within the rural area do not further erode the rural character of the area. The Planning Authority shall continue to resist intensive development in under serviced areas where it would cause a detrimental change to the character of the rural landscape.

Each planning application will be considered on its own merits. The threshold of the number of buildings that can be accommodated without a detrimental impact on the rural character will depend on a number of factors including:

- the existing number of buildings in the area and how they visually relate to each other,
- the number of extant planning permissions,
- the sensitivity of the landscape, and
- the nature, scale and design of the proposed development.

The assessment of the impact of new dwellings in the rural area will be considered from critical views along public roads, laneways, public rights of way and other areas of the public domain.

Proposals for a dwelling and ancillary development in the rural area shall:

- a) Not cause a detrimental impact on or further erode the rural character of the area,
- b) Not be unduly prominent in the landscape,
- c) Not result in build-up of development when viewed with existing and/or approved buildings,
- d) Respect the traditional pattern of settlement within the area,
- e) Not create or add to a ribbon of development, except where it is considered infill or a replacement building,
- f) Not damage the rural character of the area as a result of ancillary works including the creation of visibility splays and entrance structures, and
- g) Not mar the distinction between the open countryside and the built-up edge of designated urban areas.

Rural Character Policy	
RCP 1	Proposals for a dwelling and ancillary development in the rural area shall comply with Section 15.9.1 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.9.2 Site Selection and Design Guidelines

Housing in the rural area of County Monaghan requires careful consideration to ensure that it integrates successfully into the landscape. This requires specific focus on the design, siting, scale and form of the proposed dwelling. The most successful designs are those that integrate best into the countryside, and use simple shapes, forms and materials which are reflective of the vernacular. For example, the traditional dwelling in County Monaghan usually had a linear plan form, with returns located to the rear. The roof was constructed with full gables and chimneys were located along the ridge line. The elevations had a greater proportion of solid than void, and windows had a vertical emphasis. This design when combined with the use of simple materials, ensured that the dwelling integrated successfully into the countryside. New rural housing, including contemporary designs, should reflect the traditional vernacular.

Table 15.3 Guidelines for Siting and Designing a Rural House in the Vernacular Style

Features	Guidelines for Siting and Designing a Rural House in the Vernacular Style
Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site and/or the location of dwelling within the site should be selected to maximise the benefits of shelter, topography and any existing buildings. The site should use clearly identifiable and established boundaries, such as trees, slopes or other natural features, which separate the site from the surrounding countryside, and offer a suitable degree of enclosure. In addition to the roadside boundary, the site should have a minimum of one natural existing boundary to soften the impact of the development in the landscape. The building should not be located on a site where it would break any ridgeline or shoreline. The site should make use of natural contours of the landscape and be set into the landscape. Sites requiring excessive excavation, filling and/or removal of natural vegetation should be avoided. The site should be set back from the road and aim to retain frontage. Suburban type layouts and gardens should be avoided.
Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dwelling should be orientated to maximise daylight and solar gain.

Features	Guidelines for Siting and Designing a Rural House in the Vernacular Style
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where appropriate, windows on south facing elevations should be arranged to capture the sun's energy and glazing on north facing elevations should be limited to aid heat conservation.
Scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The size, scale and mass of the building must be appropriate to its setting. A large house should only be located on a well screened site to enable effective integration into its surroundings. Larger houses should be sub-divided into smaller elements of traditional form to avoid bulky structures. The dwelling should have regard to the scale of surrounding buildings.
Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dwelling should be of simple plan form, of modest scale and traditional pitched gables should be used. The external gable depth should generally not exceed 9m or 6.5m for narrow plan form. The roof pitch should normally be 35 to 40-degree pitch except where the gable depth is below 7.5m, then 45 degrees is acceptable. Two storey dwellings should generally not exceed 9m in height above ground level. Any projections or returns should be of simple form and roof pitch.
Proportions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The design should have a good roof to wall proportion and a high solid to void relationship with greater wall surface area than window or door openings. Windows and doors should be simple and of vertical emphasis. A simple, symmetrical arrangement of openings should be employed. Large horizontal windows, picture/feature windows shall be located on elevations not visible from the public domain.
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials and finishes should be traditional to the area and in keeping with the character of the landscape unless the material proposed is matching that of the locality. The use of combinations of materials, excessive ornamentation and non-traditional materials should be avoided. Plastered, render or natural stone finishes are suitable in all rural areas. Brick, cladded stone and pebble dash are not traditional finishes and should be avoided. Natural roof slate which is dark blue/black in colour, is preferable.
Detailing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chimneys should be centrally located on the ridge with vernacular proportions. Chimneys at the gable end should be flush with the gable. Decorative fascias should be avoided. Porches and conservatories should be of simple design and in proportion to the dwelling.
Boundary Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New frontage boundaries should be reflective of existing roadside boundaries using compatible hedgerow planting, walls, timber fencing and/or dry stonework. Existing roadside hedgerows and ditches should be retained as much as possible. The location of the site entrance should be positioned to achieve the required sight distance with the removal of a minimum extent of existing hedgerow. Unsympathetic fencing, walls and planting should be avoided.

Features	Guidelines for Siting and Designing a Rural House in the Vernacular Style
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All post and rail fencing proposed should be back planted with native hedgerow planting.

Rural Housing Siting and Design Policy	
RSDP 1	Proposals for rural housing shall generally comply with Section 15.9.2 and Table 15.3 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.9.3 Restoration of Vernacular Buildings and Dwellings

With carefully designed extensions and sensitive restoration, vernacular buildings and dwellings within the rural area can be brought up to standard capable of meeting modern day demands. Former schoolhouses, churches, traditional farm buildings and outbuildings can be capable of reuse as dwellings. The Council will encourage restoration or adaption over the demolition of vernacular buildings.

Proposals for the restoration of vernacular buildings and dwellings shall generally comply with the following:

- a) Be architecturally sensitive and reflective of the existing building.
- b) Retain existing vegetation defining the curtilage, where possible.
- c) Where determined necessary by the Planning Authority, existing access arrangements shall be improved in the interests of road safety.
- d) Where a new access is proposed, access arrangements shall comply with Section 15.23 of this Development Plan.
- e) Where no wastewater treatment facilities exist, or the existing wastewater treatment facilities are not adequate to facilitate the development proposed, the applicant will be required to provide an onsite wastewater treatment system to comply with the requirements of the EPA Code of Practice– Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (PE≤10) (2021), or any new or updated/subsequent versions.
- f) Where the building to be restored is located more than 100m from an agricultural building and the restoration involves a residential extension which will be within 100m of the agricultural building, written consent from the owner of the agricultural building is required. Written consent must be signed by both parties and witnessed by a Solicitor or a Peace Commissioner. Where written consent has been provided, a condition restricting the first occupancy of the dwelling to the applicant or members of their immediate family or heirs for a 7-year period shall be included in any grant of permission.
- g) Where the restoration comprises a change of use to residential, and is within 100m of an agricultural building, written consent from the owner of the agricultural building is required. Written consent must be signed by both parties and witnessed by a Solicitor or a Peace Commissioner. Where written consent has been provided, a condition restricting the first occupancy of the dwelling to the applicant or members of their immediate family or heirs for a 7-year period shall be included in any grant of permission.

15.9.4 Replacement of Vernacular and Non-Vernacular Buildings and Dwellings

Traditional vernacular buildings/dwellings are an important element of our built heritage and make a valuable contribution to the character and appearance of our local rural landscapes. The replacement of vernacular buildings/dwellings with modern buildings within the rural area often result in the loss of traditional vernacular structures. The Council therefore encourages restoration or adaption over the demolition of vernacular dwellings and buildings. With carefully designed extensions and sensitive restoration, these buildings can be brought up to a standard capable of meeting modern day demands. Where a new building is necessary, the original building should be retained for ancillary uses.

Proposals for replacement of existing vernacular buildings/dwellings shall generally comply with the following:

- a) The replacement of traditional vernacular buildings and dwellings will only be considered where it has been clearly demonstrated by way of an appropriately detailed structural/condition survey from a suitably qualified competent technical professional, that the existing building or dwelling is not reasonably capable of being made structurally sound and adapted to modern standards.
- b) A replacement building or dwelling shall normally be located within the curtilage of the building or dwelling to be replaced, except where it is demonstrated that the siting of the replacement building or dwelling outside the curtilage is necessary for amenity, heritage, landscape or access requirements.
- c) The existing vegetation defining the curtilage shall be retained where possible.
- d) Where determined necessary by the Planning Authority, existing access arrangements shall be improved in the interests of road safety.
- e) Where a new access is proposed, access arrangements shall comply with Section 15.23 of Chapter 15 of this Development Plan.
- f) Where no wastewater treatment facilities exist, or the existing wastewater treatment facilities are not adequate to facilitate the development proposed, the applicant will be required to provide an onsite wastewater treatment system to comply with the requirements of the EPA Code of Practice— Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (PE≤10) (2021), or any new or updated/subsequent versions.
- g) Where a dwelling to be replaced is located more than 100m from an agricultural building and the replacement dwelling is to be within 100m of the agricultural building, written consent from the owner of the agricultural building is required. Written consent must be signed by both parties and witnessed by a Solicitor or a Peace Commissioner. Where written consent has been provided, a condition restricting the first occupancy of the dwelling to the applicant or members of their immediate family or heirs for a 7-year period shall be included in any grant of permission.
- h) Where a replacement non-residential building comprises a change of use to residential, and is within 100m of an agricultural building, written consent from the owner of the agricultural building is required. Written consent must be signed by both parties and witnessed by a Solicitor or a Peace Commissioner. Where written consent has been provided, a condition restricting the first occupancy of the dwelling to the applicant or members of their immediate family or heirs for a 7-year period shall be included in any grant of permission.

Proposals for the replacement of non-vernacular buildings/dwellings, where the building/dwelling to be replaced is not considered to be a vernacular building or does not make an important contribution to the local heritage, shall generally comply with criteria b-h above.

In 'Rural Areas Under Strong Urban Influence', proposals for replacement of existing buildings and dwellings shall also fulfil the replacement dwelling criterion in Policy RSP7(f) in Chapter 2 Core Strategy of this Development Plan, where:

- i. The dwelling is to replace an existing dwelling,
- ii. Where the dwelling to be replaced:
 - was in use or last used as a dwelling,
 - has not been changed to a dwelling from another use without planning permission,
 - exhibits all the essential characteristics of a dwelling house and is reasonably intact.

Restoration and Replacement of Vernacular and Non-Vernacular Buildings and Dwellings Policy	
RRDP 1	Proposals for restoration or replacement of vernacular/non-vernacular buildings and dwellings in the rural area shall comply with Section 15.9.3 and Section 15.9.4 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.9.5 Residential Dwellings and Agricultural Buildings

County Monaghan has a significant agricultural base with many agricultural enterprises located throughout the rural area. It is considered necessary to protect the current operations of a working farm from development that could prejudice its expansion.

Where it is proposed to site a dwelling within 100 metres of an existing agricultural building in the rural area, the applicant shall submit a written agreement from the owner of the agricultural building, consenting to the construction of the dwelling. The written agreement must be signed by both parties and witnessed by a Solicitor or a Peace Commissioner. Where written consent has been provided, a condition restricting the first occupancy of the dwelling to the applicant or members of their immediate family or heirs for a 7-year period shall be included in any grant of permission.

This policy shall not apply in the following instances:

- The proposed dwelling is located within a designated settlement.
- Refurbishment and/or extension of vacant dwellings or any ancillary domestic outbuilding.
- Refurbishment of protected structures which are in residential use.

Where the agricultural use of the building has clearly been abandoned, the onus to prove that the agricultural use has been abandoned shall rest with the applicant.

For the purposes of this Policy, an agricultural building is a building used or last used for agricultural purposes or activity including the keeping of livestock, the storage of farm equipment, or any slurry or agricultural waste but excluding any field-based holding pens, cattle crushes, sheep dips etc or other similar structures.

Dwellings within 100m of Agricultural Buildings Policy	
DABP 1	Proposals for dwellings within 100m of agricultural buildings in the rural area shall comply with Section 15.9.5 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.9.6 Ribbon Development and Infill Development

The Council, in accordance with the guidance given in the DEHLG Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines for Planning Authorities, will resist ribbon development, primarily on grounds of visual amenity, reinforced on occasions by road safety reasons. Where a proposed development would create or extend ribbon development, planning permission will be refused. The Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines define ribbon development as five or more houses on any one side of a given 250 metres of road frontage. The ribbon may not have a uniform building line, and buildings set back from the road, staggered or an angle to the road will also be considered as ribbon development, where they are visually linked.

Any dwelling that fulfils the replacement dwelling criterion in Policy RSP7(f) in Chapter 2 Core Strategy of this Development Plan shall be considered as a 'house' in the definition of ribbon development as laid out in the Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines.

The Planning Authority will resist development that would create or extend ribbon development. However, a relaxation of ribbon development policy on regional and local roads will be considered where:

- a) Planning permission is sought on the grounds of meeting the housing needs of a landowner* or a member of his/her immediate family** where no other suitable site is available on the entire landholding***. The Planning Authority will apply an occupancy condition for a period of seven years in such cases.
- b) Four or more houses plus a derelict dwelling or a derelict non-domestic building (for example, mushroom, poultry and agricultural buildings) exist within a 250m frontage on one side of the public road and have done so for a period of at least 10 years, a dwelling house on the site of the derelict building will be permitted, subject to the entire derelict building being demolished. The Planning Authority will apply an occupancy condition for a period of seven years in such cases.
- c) The infilling of gaps between houses will not normally be permitted, except where there is a small gap, enough to accommodate a single dwelling only, in an otherwise substantially and continuously built-up frontage.

* A landowner is defined as an individual with a minimum landholding in the local rural area of 4 hectares which he or she has owned for a minimum period of 5 years prior to the date of submission of the planning application. In circumstances where less than 4 hectares is owned a relaxation shall be permitted where the landowner or an immediate family member has owned the lands in excess of 20 years. This relaxation on the minimum landholding size shall apply for one instance only.

** Immediate family is considered to be a grandparent, sibling, son or daughter or adopted child of a landowner. Where the landowner(s) child(ren) have resided outside the state or Northern Ireland for a minimum continuous period of 10 years, or where the landowner has no children, a niece/nephew maybe considered a landowner's family member.

*** The Planning Authority will consider all lands within the landowners ownership, as verified by a Solicitor. A dwelling will only be granted where there are no alternatives available.

Ribbon Development and Infill Development Policy	
RIDP 1	Proposals for ribbon development and infill development in the rural area shall comply with Section 15.9.6 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.10 Other Residential Development

15.10.1 Alterations and Extensions to Dwellings

Alterations and extensions to existing dwellings, is, in principle, an acceptable form of development. Proposals to alter or extend a dwelling will be considered on their individual merits, with the main considerations being that of design and the degree of impact on existing and adjoining properties.

Proposals for alterations and extensions to existing dwellings shall generally comply with the following:

- a) The extension shall be ancillary/subordinate to the main dwelling and be located to the rear and/or side. An exception to this may be where the existing dwelling is so small that any extension will not meet the needs of the occupants or where the entire house is being remodelled as part of a comprehensive re-design.
- b) The form, proportion, heights, fenestration, design and materials shall be in keeping with those of the main dwelling.

- c) Contemporary designed extensions shall not detract from the visual amenities of the main dwelling.
- d) The extension shall not have a material negative impact upon the residential amenities of adjoining dwellings or their private open space, in terms of overbearing or overlooking of adjoining properties.
- e) The extension shall not overshadow adjacent dwellings to the degree that there is significant decrease in daylight or sunlight entering the house. Where new extensions are located close to adjoining buildings in towns and villages, a daylight and sunlight shadow projection assessment, where requested, shall be carried out in accordance with the principles of Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight, A Guide to Good Practice (Building Research Establishment Report 2022).
- f) The extension shall not result in an unacceptable loss of existing private open space area.
- g) Side extensions shall be designed to ensure, where possible, access to the rear of the property for refuse collection, utility access, or similar is maintained.
- h) Where a dwelling is served by an existing on-site wastewater treatment system, and where the proposed extension results in the provision of additional occupants and bathrooms, the adequacy of the on-site wastewater treatment and disposal facilities shall be demonstrated. Where the existing wastewater treatment facilities are not adequate to facilitate the development proposed, the applicant will be required to upgrade the existing onsite wastewater treatment system to comply with the requirements of the EPA Code of Practice– Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (PE≤10) (2021), or any new or updated/subsequent versions.
- i) Existing surface water drainage is maintained or relocated satisfactorily.

Alterations and Extensions to Dwellings Policy	
AEDP 1	Proposals for alterations and extensions to existing dwelling shall comply with Section 15.10.1 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.10.2 Residential Development on Corner/Side Garden Sites

Corner/side garden site development refers to the subdivision of an existing house curtilage to provide an additional dwelling in towns and villages. The subdivision of a suitably large site for the development of a dwelling in a corner/side garden can be an efficient use of land within settlements. The development of a house on a restricted corner/side garden site may however be resisted if it creates a poor-quality residential environment and/or compromises the residential amenity of the occupants of the principal dwelling.

Proposals for residential development on corner/side garden sites shall generally comply with the following:

- a) The size, design, layout, front and side building line, height, parapet levels, external finishes/materials shall be in keeping with the principal dwelling and adjacent properties.
- b) There shall be no negative impact upon or loss of residential amenity to the principal, dwelling or adjoining property, as a result of overdevelopment, overshadowing and overlooking.
- c) Adequate provision for wastewater treatment and disposal facilities shall be provided.
- d) Where a new access is proposed, access arrangements shall comply with Section 15.23 of Chapter 15 of this Development Plan.
- e) The relevant car parking is provided as set out in Table 15.5 in Section 15.23 of this Development Plan.
- f) Relevant private open space standards set out in Section 15.8.13 of this Development Plan.
- g) Side/gable and rear access for maintenance provision and refuse storage areas shall be maintained where possible.

- h) Landscaping and boundary treatments are provided which are in keeping with other properties in the area.
- i) A separate vehicular access shall be provided.

Residential Development on Corner/Side Garden Sites Policy	
CSGP 1	Proposals for residential development on corner/side garden sites shall comply with Section 15.10.2 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.10.3 Independent living accommodation for a family member

A development proposal will only be acceptable where it provides a modest scale of accommodation (for example, an immediate relative who may need to live in close proximity to their family). This usually involves a proposal to convert and/or extend an existing house, or the conversion and/or extension of an existing garage/outbuilding within the curtilage of a dwelling. The Planning Authority shall require that the accommodation shall remain in the same ownership as the main dwelling on the site and shall not be sold or otherwise legally transferred, other than as part of the overall property.

Proposals for independent living accommodation by way of a proposal to convert and/or extend an existing house, or the conversion and/or extension of an existing garage/outbuilding within the curtilage of the main dwelling, shall generally comply with the following:

- a) Documentary evidence is submitted which supports the need for the accommodation and details the relationship between the occupant(s) of the main dwelling house and the proposed occupant(s) of the independent living accommodation.
- b) The accommodation shall not exceed a gross floor area of 70sqm and shall be subordinate in size and scale to that of the main dwelling.
- c) It shall be attached and linked internally to the main dwelling, (except where the conversion of a garage/outbuilding is proposed).
- d) The existing dwelling shall retain the appearance of a single dwelling unit.
- e) A separate doorway access shall not be provided on the front elevation of the main dwelling.
- f) The proposal does not impact adversely upon either the residential amenities of the main dwelling or neighbouring properties.
- g) The existing garden and curtilage of the main dwelling shall not be subdivided.
- h) Adequate provision for wastewater treatment and disposal facilities shall be provided.
- i) A separate vehicular access shall not be provided.

Independent Living Accommodation for a Family Member Policy	
ILAP 1	Proposals for independent living accommodation for a family member shall comply with Section 15.10.3 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.10.4 Domestic Garages, Sheds, Ancillary Outbuildings and Car Ports

Domestic garages, sheds and ancillary outbuildings are generally an acceptable form of development within domestic curtilages. These buildings should be visually subservient in terms of size, scale and bulk to the main dwelling served and will only be permitted for uses which are ancillary to the main dwelling.

Car ports will only be considered where they do not unduly add to the bulk and form of the dwelling and where they are not visible from the public domain.

Proposals for domestic garages, sheds, ancillary outbuildings and carports shall generally comply with the following:

- a) The design, size, scale and form of the building/structure and finishes/materials should normally be consistent with the design of the main dwelling on site.
- b) The building/structure is normally detached and sited to the side or rear of the house to minimise visual impact from the public road or surrounding landscape.
- c) The building/structure is used for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling and not for any commercial, manufacturing, industrial use or as habitable accommodation.
- d) Where the total floor area of the building/structure is in excess of 80m², satisfactory justification shall be provided for its size.
- e) Car ports shall only be permitted where they are incorporated into the design of the dwelling, do not constitute a visual intrusion, and where they are not visible from the public domain.
- f) The residential amenity in the vicinity of the proposed development will not be compromised.
- g) Only one domestic garage shall be permitted for any single dwelling unless the need for a second garage is satisfactorily demonstrated.
- h) Existing surface water drainage is maintained or relocated satisfactorily.

Domestic Garages, Sheds, Ancillary Outbuildings and Car Ports Policy	
DGP 1	Proposals for domestic garages, sheds, ancillary outbuildings and car ports shall comply with Section 15.10.4 in Chapter 15 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.10.5 Temporary Residential Accommodation

It may be necessary to provide temporary residential accommodation to facilitate site specific, exceptional and/or personal circumstances, and in these instances, the Planning Authority may consider granting temporary permission for the installation of temporary residential accommodation. Examples of this are where a permanent dwelling is being constructed on the same site, or a site-specific need, as referenced above, has been clearly demonstrated. Planning permission shall not be granted for the permanent retention of this accommodation type.

For reasons of amenity, planning permission shall not normally be granted for this form of development on greenfield sites or within housing developments.

Proposals for temporary residential accommodation shall be granted for a maximum period of 5 years in accordance with the following:

- a) Where a permanent dwelling is being constructed on the same site or where site-specific, compelling domestic or personal circumstances have been demonstrated, and, where genuine hardship would result if planning permission for the temporary accommodation were refused.
- b) A wastewater treatment and disposal system which complies with the requirements of the EPA Code of Practice – Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (PE≤10) (2021), or any new or updated/subsequent versions.
- c) The vehicular access for the permanent dwelling on the same site shall be completed in accordance with the conditions of the planning permission prior to the occupation of the temporary residential accommodation.
- d) The development would not detrimentally impact on residential or visual amenity.

Temporary Residential Accommodation Policy	
TRAP 1	Proposals for temporary residential accommodation shall comply with Section 15.10.5 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.10.6 Home Based Work Units

Home based work activities which are secondary to the use of the dwelling can be appropriate where the amenity of surrounding residences is not adversely affected. Over-the-counter services and associated developments such as business signage, advertising, security gates and excessive security lighting will not be appropriate in these instances. In some instances, planning permission for a home based work activity may be granted for a temporary period to allow for monitoring of the impact of the activity.

Proposals for home based work units, shall only be permitted in the following cases:

- a) The business use is subordinate to the main use of the dwelling as residential accommodation.
- b) It shall be restricted to use by the residential occupier.
- c) The business activity is of a limited scale (normally maximum 1 or 2 workers).
- d) It shall be demonstrated that the nature and extent of the proposal has no adverse impact on the residential amenities of adjoining occupiers, the visual amenities of the area, traffic safety or traffic movements in the area, and,
- e) It shall be demonstrated that there is no increase in refuse and waste collection operations.

Home Based Work Units Policy	
HBUP 1	Proposals for home based work units shall comply with Section 15.10.6 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.10.7 Nursing Homes, Retirement Homes, and Care Facilities

The demand for nursing homes, retirement homes, care facilities and associated services has grown as life expectancy has increased. In assessing planning applications for this type of development, the Planning Authority will refer to the following for guidance:

- National Standards for Residential Care Settings for Older People in Ireland (2016).
- Thinking Ahead: Independent and Supported Housing Models for an Ageing Population (2018).
- Ministerial and Departmental Guidelines including Housing Options for Our Ageing Population Policy Statement (2019).
- National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022-2027.

There is a presumption against permitting nursing homes, retirement homes and care facilities in the rural area. The Planning Authority considers that these services should be located within the designated Tier 1-3 settlements of the County where public utilities are available and opportunities for greater social integration and inclusion to the community exist. Proposals for nursing homes, retirement homes and care facilities in or adjacent to Tier 4, 5 and 6 settlements, may be considered acceptable where there is a clearly identified need for the accommodation and a strong justification for the proposed location having regard to available services.

Proposals for nursing homes, retirement homes and care facilities shall comply with the following:

- a) The use shall not be incompatible with other uses in the area.
- b) Access details, parking provision and pedestrian linkages are provided in accordance with the relevant development standards set out in Chapter 15 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.
- c) It is of a high-quality design and layout which respects the characteristics of the site and adjoining properties.
- d) Sufficient amenity space and landscaped areas should be provided to meet the needs of the residents and provide an attractive setting.

Nursing Homes, Retirement Homes, and Care Facilities Policy	
NRHP 1	Proposals for nursing homes, retirement homes, and care facilities shall comply with Section 15.10.7 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.10.8 Integrated Living Centres/Accommodation Centres

The Council shall support the development of integrated living centres/accommodation centres for serviced and sustainable neighbourhoods having regard to the delivery of safe housing, job opportunities, investment in public transport and active modes of transport, creation of green public spaces and its connectivity with existing services.

A Capacity Assessment shall be submitted to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, that the proposed development is serviced and sustainable having regard to the existing range of, and access to, local services and facilities, including employment, commercial, educational, health, spiritual, civic amenities, various support services, other services and include proposals on how to integrate residents into the local community.

Integrated Living Centres/Accommodation Centres Policy	
WSP 1	Proposals for serviced and sustainable neighbourhood developments/ integrated living centres/accommodation centres shall comply with Section 15.10.8 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.11 Civic and Community Facilities

Favourable consideration will be given to proposals for community facilities on suitable sites within all land use zoning categories where such a proposal is suitably located within the settlement boundary and is easily accessible for all sections of the community.

Development proposals for new social and community infrastructure/service-related development (healthcare, sports/recreational facilities, playgrounds, community resource buildings, education facilities, burial grounds, etc) shall be normally acceptable where:

- It is located within the settlement boundaries. An alternative location on the fringes of the settlements which is within walking distance of local services may be considered acceptable where it is clearly demonstrated that there are no suitable sites available within the settlement, and a strong justification is given for the development of such a particular site.
- It is in close proximity to existing rural infrastructure (schools, sports facilities, churches etc) where it is demonstrated that the development is intended to serve a rural need or where there is no site available which meet the locational criteria set out in (a) above.
- (a) and (b) above shall be subject to relevant Development Management requirements and technical criteria of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

Community Facilities Policy	
CFP 1	Proposals for community facilities shall comply with Section 15.11 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.12 Industrial and Commercial Developments

The Council is committed to facilitating developments which contribute to the economic development of the County, and which have the potential to create sustainable employment opportunities. Notwithstanding this, the impact of such proposals on the landscape and the environment must be carefully assessed.

15.12.1 Industrial and Commercial Developments within Tier 1-4 settlements

Proposals for new industrial and commercial uses, or the expansion of existing uses within Tier 1-4 settlements shall generally comply with the following:

- a) In Tier 1-3 settlements, the use shall comply with the land use zoning objective.
- b) In Tier 4 settlements, the use shall not be incompatible with the adjoining land uses.
- c) Infrastructure has or can be provided in line with the principles of sustainable development.
- d) The scale, design and materials are cognisant of the setting and are in keeping with the surrounding area and adjoining developments.
- e) There is no adverse impact on the character or setting of the settlement or on the amenity of adjoining properties as a result of the use.
- f) There is no adverse impact on the adjoining uses in terms of emissions such as noise, light, odours.
- g) Where appropriate, a buffer zone up to 15m in width, or as otherwise determined by the Planning Authority according to the proposed operations, is provided within the site, to ensure there is no significant residential amenity loss by way of noise, smell, lighting or other nuisance, including traffic generation, to immediate neighbours or the area in general.
- h) Adequate site access and visibility splays, on-site parking, turning areas, and servicing arrangements are provided for all types of vehicles associated with the site.
- i) A high-quality layout scheme is proposed which demonstrates that the site is not dominated by extensive car parking, hard standing or roads, and that the topography and surrounding landscape are respected.
- j) A detailed quality landscape plan, planting schedule and planting programme is proposed and carried out which includes semi-mature indigenous trees to reduce the visual impact of the proposed buildings.

15.12.2 Industrial and Commercial Developments Outside Settlements

It is accepted that there may be circumstances where it is not possible or appropriate to locate a commercial or industrial development within a settlement. This may be due to matters such as a lack of suitable lands or infrastructure, the need to locate beside an existing development to benefit from synergies, or the need to locate beside a fixed resource. In these circumstances, industrial and commercial developments may be considered acceptable where it can be justified to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority in accordance with the criteria detailed below. Generally, sites adjacent to settlement envelopes shall be given preference over those located in the wider rural area.

Proposals for industrial/commercial development or the expansion of an existing business outside settlements, shall generally comply with the following:

- a) It is demonstrated that there is no alternative suitable site within the boundaries of nearby settlements and the proposed development is appropriate at the proposed location.
- b) Where relevant, it is demonstrated that the proposed development is tied to a fixed resource and/or requires an extensive site area or specific settings.
- c) The design, nature and scale of the development integrates with the surrounding landscape and will not detract from the character of the rural area.
- d) There is no significant adverse impact on the amenity of occupants of nearby properties as a result of the proposed development such as noise, light and/or odours.
- e) The traffic generated by the proposal is appropriate for the surrounding road network, will not result in unsustainable traffic movements and will not necessitate roads improvements that would damage the character of the rural roads in the area.
- f) A high-quality layout scheme is proposed which demonstrates that the site is not dominated by extensive car parking, hard standing or roads, and that the topography and surrounding landscape are respected as appropriate.

- g) Any external storage is adequately screened from the public domain/road and adjoining residential properties.
- h) A detailed quality landscape plan, planting schedule and planting programme is proposed and carried out which includes semi-mature indigenous trees to reduce the visual impact of the proposed buildings.
- i) Any proposal shall comply with all other relevant objectives and policies set out in this Development Plan.

15.12.3 Change of Use / Redevelopment of Existing Industrial and Commercial Developments

Proposals for a change of use or the redevelopment of existing industrial and/or commercial lands/buildings to another use shall generally comply with the following:

- a) It has been clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the loss/release of existing industrial/commercial land to another use ensures that the cumulative diminution of this floor space does not result in industrial/commercial land shortage in the nearby settlements or general vicinity of the site.
- b) It has been clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the change of the existing industrial/commercial use/redevelopment is acceptable in terms of amenity, operational matters, economic benefit to the County, or to secure the future of a building of historical or architectural merit.
- c) The proposal is in keeping with the surrounding area and adjoining developments.
- d) There is no adverse impact on the amenity of occupants of adjoining properties as a result of the change of use/redevelopment.
- e) Adequate site access and visibility splays, and on-site parking, turning areas, and servicing arrangements are provided for all types of vehicles associated with the change of use/redevelopment.

Industrial and Commercial Development Policy	
ICDP 1	Proposals for industrial and commercial development shall comply with Sections 15.12.1 to 15.12.3 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.13 Agricultural Development

The Council recognises the importance of agriculture in contributing to the economic development of the County and as a source of employment in rural areas. Proposals for agricultural developments will be assessed having regard to matters including potential environmental, heritage and landscape impacts.

All planning applications shall be accompanied by a completed Supplementary Planning Application Form for Agricultural Developments (Appendix 7).

15.13.1 General Requirements for Agricultural Development

Proposals for agricultural development on new and established agricultural holdings shall comply with the following:

- a) It is demonstrated that the development is necessary for the running of the agricultural enterprise.
- b) It is located within or adjacent to existing agricultural buildings, unless it has been clearly demonstrated that the development must be located elsewhere for essential operational or other reasons.
- c) The appearance, design, scale and materials are appropriate to its location and sympathetic to the locality and adjacent buildings.

- d) The proposal visually integrates into the local landscape and additional landscaping is provided where necessary.
- e) The proposal will not have an adverse impact on the natural or built heritage.
- f) The proposal will not result in a detrimental impact on the amenity of residential dwellings (for example, noise, smell and pollution impacts) outside of the holding.
- g) Where a development is proposed within 100m of any residential property not located on the holding within the rural area (i.e. outside of a designated settlement) written consent from the adjoining property owner stating there is no objection to the proposal and witnessed by a Solicitor or a Peace Commissioner must be provided.
- h) The proposal will not result in a pollution threat to sources of potable water, water courses, aquifers, or ground water.
- i) Proper provision for disposal of liquid and solid waste is provided.
- j) Adequate machinery parking and circulation areas are provided.
- k) Where a new access is proposed and/or where there is an intensification of use of an existing access, sight visibility splays shall comply with Table 15.4 Minimum Visibility Standards of Section 15.27 of the Development Plan.

General Agricultural Development Policy	
AGP 1	Proposals for agricultural developments shall comply with Section 15.13.1 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.13.2 Intensive Agriculture, Poultry and Pig Installations

Intensive agricultural installations such as poultry units are of important economic benefit to the County. However, due to their nature, intensive agricultural developments must be regulated to ensure there are no adverse environmental impacts arising from them. In this regard, any development which will result in an increase in ammonia and/or nitrogen emissions within 10km of a European Site (Natura 2000 site) shall not be permitted.

In addition to complying with the General Requirements for Agricultural Development in Section 15.13.1 above, proposals for intensive poultry/pig units or similar specialised agricultural developments shall be required to provide satisfactory details of measures to address waste and emissions such as litter, slurry, etc, generated by the development are provided.

Intensive Agriculture /Poultry and Pig Farming Policy	
AGP 2	Proposals for intensive agricultural developments shall comply with Section 15.13.2 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.14 Farm Diversification

The diversification of the rural economy from mainstream farming can both supplement existing rural incomes and add to the richness of the rural area. Farming has been diversifying into areas such as horticulture, forestry, agri-tourism, visitor accommodation and supplementary activities including health farms, heritage and natural trails, eco/green tourism, open/pet farms, and horse/pony trekking.

Proposals for farm diversification schemes within the rural area shall generally comply with the following:

- a) The proposed development is operated in conjunction with the established agricultural operations on-site.
- b) Where applicable, the proposed development shall normally reuse or adapt existing/redundant farm buildings.

- c) Any new proposed building must be of a scale, form and design appropriate to the rural area.
- d) It must be demonstrated that the new development can be adequately serviced and complies with all other relevant policies and development management standards in this Development Plan.

Farm Diversification Policy	
FDP 1	Proposals for farm diversification development shall comply with Section 15.14 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.15 Forestry

Forestry has direct benefits for local communities through the establishment of plantations, in spin-off effects in support services, through industries ranging from woodcraft to industrial processing, to rural tourism, and contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gases by absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

The Planning Authority will facilitate afforestation in appropriate locations in accordance with the principles of sustainable forest management and code of best practice.

Proposals for forestry, including harvesting will only be considered acceptable where it does not adversely impact upon the following:

- a) The visual amenity of the rural environment,
- b) The integrity of habitats, biodiversity and designated sites (for example Natura 2000 sites, NHAs, pNHAs),
- c) Public rights of way,
- d) Public road network,
- e) Water quality,
- f) Residential amenity,
- g) Archaeology, and
- h) Overhead Electricity and Telecommunication Lines

Forestry Policy	
FP 1	Proposals for forestry development shall comply with Section 15.15 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.16 Tourism

It is important that the Tourism sector within County Monaghan is developed in a sustainable manner that supports integration within communities and optimises the economic benefit for the County. In general, the Council shall encourage and promote the development of tourist facilities, attractions and accommodation in order to develop this industry throughout County Monaghan. In the rural area, the Council shall encourage the provision of tourist accommodation and facilities in appropriate locations where the development is considered necessary to the nature and purpose of the proposed development and meets a clearly identified site-specific tourism need.

The provision of additional hotel and guest house bed spaces, bed and breakfast and self-catering accommodation within defined settlements will be encouraged and facilitated in the first instance. Any proposed change of use or replacement of tourism accommodation to a non-tourism use, including short-term let to permanent residential accommodation, shall be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the facility is not viable in the long term, and there is sufficient alternative provision in the locality to offset the loss of tourism accommodation and benefit.

Proposals for tourism development shall generally comply with the following:

- a) In rural areas, a clearly identified site-specific tourism need shall be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.
- b) It shall incorporate a high standard of design and materials, particularly when sensitively located.
- c) It shall not be detrimental to scenic and heritage assets, in Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area, Natural Heritage Areas and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas, areas of primary amenity value or secondary amenity value, and along scenic routes.
- d) Where relevant, ensure the sensitive redevelopment of derelict and vacant properties.

Tourism Policy	
TOUP 1	Proposals for tourist development shall comply with Section 15.16 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.17 Renewable Energy Development

The Planning Authority will support, encourage and facilitate renewable energy proposals at suitable locations where it is demonstrated that the development will not have a detrimental impact on the visual and residential amenities of the surrounding area and other matters of acknowledged importance.

Proposals for wind energy development must meet the requirements as set out in the Wind Energy Development Guidelines (DEHLG, 2006). The Planning Authority will have regard to the DHLGH's Draft Wind Energy Guidelines (2019), and any new or updated/subsequent versions, when considering planning applications for wind energy developments and modifications to existing developments.

Other forms of renewable energy include anaerobic digestors, battery storage, biomass/bioenergy, solar, geothermal and hydro power/storage. At present, there are no national planning guidelines for these types of energy developments. Therefore, the Council shall assess individual applications having regard to normal planning considerations and the locational criteria applicable to other types of renewable energy developments.

Proposals for renewable energy development, including associated infrastructure and connection to the grid, shall not have any adverse impacts upon:

- a) The visual amenities of the area and surrounding landscape, either individually, or cumulatively with other similar projects in the area, particularly in respect of the scale, size and layout of the project and the degree of visibility over extensive areas.
- b) Areas of Primary and Secondary Amenity Value, Scenic Routes or any other designated scenic landscapes.
- c) Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, protected habitats, nature conservation, wildlife, or ecology.
- d) Soil, hydrology, surface waters, or groundwater.
- e) Archaeology or built heritage.
- f) The residential amenities of the existing or permitted area.
- g) The public road network in the area.
- h) Public rights of way and walking routes.
- i) Existing or permitted land uses in the area due to noise disturbance generated by the proposal or cumulatively generated by other similar proposals within the area.
- j) Existing or permitted land uses in the area due to shadow flicker generated by wind energy proposals or cumulatively generated by other similar proposals.

- k) Existing or permitted land uses in the area due to glint and glare generated by solar energy proposals or cumulatively generated by other similar proposals within the area, upon landscapes, traffic and aircraft safety.
- l) Existing authorised permitted buildings and land uses by reason of emissions or odours, either individually or cumulatively with other similar proposals in the area.

Renewable Energy Policy	
REP 1	Proposals for renewable energy development shall comply with Section 15.17 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.18 Extractive Industry

Any application for an extractive industry shall have regard to the Quarrying and Ancillary Activities, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG 2004), Guidelines for Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry (EPA, 2006), Guidelines on Biodiversity in the Extractive Industry (NPWS), Geological Survey of Ireland Geological Heritage Guidelines for the Extractive Industry (2008), the Archaeological Code of Practice (2009) and the Architectural Heritage Protections Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DAHG, 2011) and any new or update/subsequent documents.

Proposals for extractive industry shall normally be resisted in the following circumstances:

- a) Where it is located within an Area of Primary or Secondary Amenity, Special Protection Area, Special Area of Conservation, Natural Heritage Area or Proposed Natural Heritage Area, Architectural Conservation Area or on or near protected structures, recorded monuments and places, unless in exceptional circumstances where the Planning Authority is satisfied that the need for the resource outweighs the environmental impact.
- b) Where it is located in close proximity to existing developments where potential sources of nuisance are considered to be incompatible.
- c) Where it may have a detrimental impact on the natural or built environment or matters of acknowledged public importance.

Proposals for extractive industry shall as a minimum be accompanied by the following information:

- a) Map(s) detailing the total site area, the area of excavation, any ancillary proposed development, the location of all dwelling(s) and/or any other development within 1km of the application site.
- b) Description of the aggregate/mineral to be extracted, method of extraction and any ancillary processes (crushing etc), as well as details of equipment to be used, stockpiles, storage of soil and overburden, and storage of waste materials.
- c) Total and annual tonnage of extracted aggregates/minerals expected lifetime of the extraction, maximum extent and depth of workings and an extraction phasing programme.
- d) Details of water courses within or adjoining the site of extraction, water table depth and hydrological impacts, natural and cultural heritage impacts, traffic impact and waste management.
- e) An assessment of cumulative impact when taken with any other extractive operations in the vicinity.
- f) Details in respect of the likely environmental effects, proposed mitigation measures, and restoration and aftercare proposals.

Extractive Industry Policy	
EIP 1	Proposals for extractive industry shall comply with Section 15.18 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.19 Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures

The provision of telecommunication services is essential to promoting commercial and industrial development, enhancing social inclusion and improving personal and household security. It is therefore a policy of the Council to facilitate development involving telecommunications provided it does not detrimentally impact on the natural and built environment or the character of the area. The Council encourages engagement between telecommunication providers and local residents, prior to the installation of telecommunication infrastructure.

Proposals for telecommunications antennae and support structures shall generally comply with the following:

- a) The 'Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures – Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (1996) and Circular PL 07/12, or any new or updated/subsequent versions.
- b) Best practice in siting and design to ensure the visual amenity and the landscape character of the area is protected.
- c) Be located to benefit from the screening afforded by existing tree belts, topography or buildings.
- d) On more obtrusive sites, alternative designs of mast shall be employed, unless where its use is prohibited by reasonable technical reasons.
- e) Have due regard to the location of antennae or other support structure in sensitive landscapes, scenic routes, Areas of Primary or Secondary Amenity, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Architectural Conservation Areas, or on or near protected structures or recorded monuments and places.
- f) The co-location on other antennae support structures and sites, unless it demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that the co-location is not feasible.
- g) Be accompanied with a Communication Strategy which indicates how the proposal has been discussed with relevant stakeholders such as the local community.

Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures Policy	
TASP 1	Proposals for telecommunications antennae and support structures development shall comply with Section 15.19 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.20 Electricity and Gas Infrastructure

Electricity transmission and distribution infrastructure is essential to ensuring growth of the local and national economy, as well as being central to everyday life.

The development of a secure and reliable electricity transmission/distribution infrastructure is a key factor for supporting economic development and attracting investment into an area. However, the need to accommodate electricity infrastructure must be balanced against a requirement to protect the environment.

In addition, the importance of gas as an energy supply for industry, and potentially for residential properties, is recognised.

Certain classes of development carried out by statutory undertakers are exempted development under the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended), however, major electricity infrastructure provision requires planning permission. It is a policy of the Council to facilitate development involving electricity and gas infrastructure, provided that it does not detrimentally impact on the natural or man-made environment or on the character of its setting.

Proposals for electricity and gas infrastructure development and any ancillary development shall be resisted where there is:

- a) An adverse impact by the proposal on the visual amenities of the area and surrounding landscape.
- b) An adverse impact by the proposal on the residential amenities of the area.
- c) A cumulative adverse visual impact when considered with other similar projects across the local landscape.
- d) An adverse visual impact by the proposal upon Areas of Primary and Secondary Amenity, scenic routes and any other designated scenic landscapes.
- e) An adverse impact by the proposal on nature conservation, ecology, soil, hydrology, groundwater, archaeology, built heritage and public rights of way.
- f) An adverse impact by the proposal on the road network in the area.

Electricity and Gas Infrastructure Policies	
EGP 1	Proposals for electricity and gas infrastructure development and any ancillary development shall comply with Section 15.20 and Policy EGP2 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.
EGP 2	The undergrounding of electricity transmission lines must be considered in the first instance, as part of a detailed consideration and evaluation of all options available in delivering and providing this type of infrastructure. The development shall be consistent with international best practice with regard to materials and technologies that will ensure a safe, secure, reliable, economic, efficient and high-quality network, and mitigation measures shall be provided where impacts are inevitable.

15.21 Open Access Ducting, Servicing and Public Lighting

The Council shall require that open access is made available to all ducting networks provided to support a competitive telecommunications service and to safeguard existing roads and footpaths from unnecessary future excavation.

Public lighting shall be provided by the developer in accordance with the specifications required by Monaghan County Council. The developer shall agree the details, location and specification for public lighting provision prior to the commencement of development and shall undertake an energy efficient design for public lighting.

The Council will consider the potential for light pollution from new development and the intensification or alteration of existing development. The prevention of light pollution is important in the interests of nature conservation, residential amenity and energy efficiency.

Proposals incorporating ducting, servicing and public lighting shall comply with the following:

- a) Open access ducting for broadband and telecommunications shall be provided in all new developments and infrastructure projects in compliance with the EU Gigabit Infrastructure Act.
- b) All services shall be located underground and in easily accessible locations for future maintenance, in accordance with the specifications required by Monaghan County Council.
- c) In respect of public lighting,
 - i. performance low energy lighting shall be provided in all new development proposals
 - ii. it shall be controlled in sensitive locations, to minimise impacts on residential amenity, habitats and species of importance, such as bats.
 - iii. fixtures shall provide only the amount of light necessary for personal safety and be designed to avoid glare or emitting light above a horizontal plane.

Ducting, Servicing and Public Lighting Policy	
DSP 1	Proposals for ducting, servicing and public lighting shall comply with Section 15.21 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.22 General Development Management Standards

This section contains policies and guidelines that shall be considered in respect of all applicable developments.

15.22.1 Renewable Energy Requirement

The Council shall require the provision of at least one energy efficient measure in the design of all new developments (solar panels, geo-thermal, passive design, wood burning installation, etc.).

Renewable Energy Requirement Policy	
RERP 1	Proposals for all development shall comply with Section 15.22.1 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.22.2 Residential Amenity

All developments must have regard to their potential impact upon the residential amenity of existing and permitted residential land uses in the vicinity of the development.

Development which has the potential to detrimentally impact on the residential amenity of properties in the vicinity of the development, by reason of overshadowing, overbearing, overlooking, dominance, emissions (e.g. noise, smell, pollution) or general disturbance, shall be resisted.

Residential Amenity Policy	
RAP 1	Proposals for all development shall comply with Section 15.22.2 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.22.3 All Rural Accesses

The location and design of a rural access can have a significant visual impact on the countryside. Proposals for all new rural accesses shall comply with the following:

- a) Be positioned to minimise loss of hedgerow/trees.
- b) Where possible follow alongside existing boundaries/hedgerows.
- c) Follow the natural contours of the site and avoid sweeping driveways.
- d) Use existing lanes where practical.

Rural Accesses Policy	
RRP 1	Proposals for all new rural accesses shall comply with Section 15.22.3 in Chapter 15 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.22.4 Landscaping and Boundary Treatment

Landscaping plans should be submitted with all planning applications and the inclusion of semi-mature trees in larger development schemes shall be required.

Walls, fences, railings and gates used to define spaces can have a significant impact on the visual character of the area and as such should be carefully considered as part of the overall design concept. Hard landscaping, including paving and street furniture is an important element in defining the character of open spaces. Materials must be appropriate and of good quality and as such careful

consideration should be given to the design of hard surfaces such as streets, open spaces, paved areas and footpaths.

Development proposals shall generally comply with the following:

- a) The submission of a comprehensive landscaping plan commensurate to the scale of development being proposed. At a minimum, landscaping plans shall include the number, species, location, height at planting, height at maturity and an implementation timescale for all proposed planting.
- b) New planting schemes should consist of local native plant types which will enhance the visual amenity and the biodiversity of the area.
- c) Where sites contain mature trees and/or substantial hedgerow(s) a detailed tree and hedgerow survey should be submitted clearly outlining the extent of what will be retained and replaced. Any existing mature trees to be retained shall be protected during site development works and incorporated into the scheme design.
- d) The removal of hedgerows to facilitate development must be clearly identified on the application drawings and a satisfactory, detailed replanting proposal submitted.
- e) The use of inappropriate or ornate boundary treatments, gates and piers which incorporate concrete balustrades, brickwork, blockwork or other unsympathetic materials should be avoided.
- f) Hard landscaping proposals for public areas in accordance with the principles of Urban Design Manual Best Practice Guide (2009) as appropriate and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to minimise run off and maximise efficient management of surface water.
- g) Where removal of extensive hedgerow and trees is proposed, existing site boundaries shall be supplemented, where new site boundaries need to be created, or where landscape mounds are proposed, a costed landscape plan, prepared by a suitably qualified, competent, technical professional with landscaping expertise shall be submitted where appropriate. A bond may be applied in the event of a grant of permission to ensure the satisfactory completion of the landscaping.

Landscaping and Boundary Treatment Policy	
LCP 1	Proposals for landscaping and boundary treatments shall comply with Section 15.22.4 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.22.5 On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems

On-site wastewater treatment systems should be located, constructed and maintained to the highest standards to ensure minimal impacts on water quality, including groundwater and surface water. Private wastewater treatment facilities serving more than one house will not be permitted.

Proposals for on-site wastewater treatment systems shall normally comply with the following:

- a) All planning applications must be accompanied by a Site Characterisation Form, which has been completed by a suitably qualified, competent, technical professional.
- b) In respect of a rural dwelling, the Environmental Protection Agency Code of Practice - Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Systems Serving Single Houses (PE≤10) (2021), or any new or updated/subsequent versions.
- c) In respect of all other developments, the Environmental Protection Agency Wastewater Treatment Manual – Treatment Systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels (1999) or any new or updated/subsequent versions.
- d) Include details and assess impacts on nearby private wells or water extraction points for human consumption.

On-Site Wastewater Treatment Policy	
WWTP 1	Proposals for all on-site wastewater treatment systems shall comply with Section 15.22.5 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.22.6 Water Protection

Development management can play a significant role in the prevention of further deterioration of water status and in the protection of existing high and good quality waters. Therefore, developers should adequately assess environmental risks, take account of site limitations and prepare a water protection plan. Site selection should take account of sensitive areas and sensitive water bodies. Water protection plans should aim to prevent contamination of storm water, minimise soiled and waste waters, install proper containment for material storage, install appropriate treatment and disposal arrangement for soiled and waste waters and take account of legal requirements for discharges to ground and surface waters.

Soft engineering solutions such as Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be integrated into drainage system designs to enhance water quality protection. Developments in the vicinity of waterbodies should include appropriate riparian protection corridors and in-stream works should be avoided. Where necessary, in stream works should be carried out under the guidance of Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) document 'Requirements for the Protection of Fishery Habitat During Construction and Development Works at River Sites'. IFI should be consulted prior to the submission of any plans involving works close to waterbodies.

All planning applications shall be accompanied by a completed Water Protection Plan Checklist (Refer to Appendix 6) and site drainage plan, to help identify aspects of the development which are likely to pose a risk to water. While guidance on water protection is available from a number of sources, developers will also need to seek professional advice and assistance in the preparation of plans and in assessing measures to deal with wastewaters.

Sediment pollution is an issue impacting a significant proportion of water bodies. A Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which includes soil management and water protection measures for the construction phase is a vital component of water protection. The preparation of a CEMP, where appropriate, is critical to ensure water protection during the construction phase.

Developments generating trade effluents (waste waters) or discharging domestic type wastewater in unsewered areas may be subject to the discharge licensing system under the Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts 1977 and 1990. Such developments must address the requirements of the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations, 2009 (S.I. No 272 of 2009) and the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater Regulations, 2010 (S.I. No 9 of 2010) for the entire site. All wastewater discharges, including storm water discharges which come within the scope of the Wastewater Discharge (Authorisation) Regulations are required to be licensed. Incorporation of water conservation measures into developments would contribute to minimisation of wastewater generation.

Development proposals shall:

- Not be permitted where it would have an unacceptable impact on the water environment, including surface water and groundwater quality and quantity, river corridors and associated wetlands.
- Not be permitted within 200 metres of any lake, that is the source of a water supply, where any part of that development has the potential to pollute the lake.
- Ensure that there is no adverse impact on the quality of surface waters having regard to the targets and measures set out in the draft River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2022-2027 (and any finalised version) and any subsequent local or regional plans.

- d) Ensure compliance with the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Surface Waters) Regulations, 2009 (S.I. No 272 of 2009) (as amended), and the European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater Regulations, 2010 (S.I. No. 9 of 2010), as amended.
- e) Consider the impact on the quality of water reserves having regard to the recommended approach in the Groundwater Protection Response Schemes published by Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI), the methodology identified in the 'Groundwater Protection Scheme Reports for County Monaghan public supply sources' (available at www.gsi.ie), and the 'Guidance on the Authorisation of Discharges to Groundwater' (available at www.epa.ie) where appropriate.
- f) Ensure that industrial or intensive agricultural developments generating manure, organic fertilisers, or sludge, that are dependent on off-site recovery or disposal, take account of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidance document Land Spreading of Organic Waste, EPA Pollution Impact Potential maps and the sensitive area maps within the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 including lands with impaired drainage/percolation properties, steeply sloping topography and lands where rock outcrops and extreme vulnerability of groundwater are present.
- g) Avoid the use of imported manure, slurry or organic fertilisers into water supply source catchments, high status waterbodies and "At Risk" water bodies, unless it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that no adverse impacts would occur on water quality.
- h) Include, where appropriate, a Water Protection Plan Checklist, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and detailed site drainage plans.
- i) Where appropriate, include provisions for a protective buffer to prevent further degradation of habitats within riparian corridors and to prevent any in stream works, or culverting of waterways, unless in accordance with Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) guidance document 'Requirements for the Protection of Fishery Habitat During Construction and Development Works at River Sites'.
- j) Where appropriate, incorporate details of land spreading arrangements including a fertiliser plan for manures, organic fertilisers, or sludge arising from industrial or intensive agricultural development.
- k) Not be permitted within the vicinity of groundwater or surface water dependant Natura 2000 sites where there is potential for a likely significant impact upon the groundwater or surface water supply to the Natura 2000 site, unless demonstrated with hydro-geological evidence, that the proposed development will not adversely affect the quality or quantity of groundwater or surface water supply to the Natura 2000 sites.
- l) Be required to connect to the public sewer and public water network where available. Connections to Uisce Éireann infrastructure will be subject to an executed connection agreement with Uisce Éireann.
- m) Require all agricultural developments to submit the Supplementary Planning Application Form for Agricultural Development.
- n) Be resisted within a high-status waterbody catchment, where there is a potential for a reduction in status of a waterbody.
- o) Ensure that there is no adverse impact on the water environment, including surface waters, groundwater quality and quantity, river corridors and associated woodlands, and be cognisant of, where relevant, the EU's Common Implementation Strategy Guidance Document No. 20 and 36 which provides guidance on exemptions to the environmental objectives of the Water Framework Directive.

Water Protection Policy	
WPP 1	Proposals for developments shall comply with Section 15.22.6 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.22.7 Surface Water Drainage

All development proposals are required to be adequately serviced with surface water drainage infrastructure and water recycling and conservations measures as appropriate to minimise the effect of a development on flooding and pollution of existing waterways.

Developments (including amendments/extensions to existing developments) will generally be required to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) as part of the development/design proposals. SuDS are effective technologies, which aim to reduce flood risk, improve water quality and enhance biodiversity and amenity. The systems should aim to mimic the natural drainage of the application site to minimise the effect of a development on flooding and pollution of existing waterways. SuDS include devices such as swales, permeable pavements, filter drains, storage ponds, constructed wetlands, soakways and green roofs.

In some exceptional circumstances, where it is demonstrated that SuDS devices are not feasible, approval may be given to install underground attenuation tanks or enlarged pipes in conjunction with other devices to achieve the required control of water discharge. Such alternative measures will only be considered in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Planning Authority.

Proposals incorporating Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) shall:

- Include best practice in the design, construction and operation of expanding and new developments to ensure minimum effects on the aquatic environment, to ensure both water quality protection and flood minimisation.
- Require that all development proposals, where appropriate, are accompanied by a comprehensive SuDS assessment that addresses run-off quantity, run-off quality and its impact on the existing habitat and water quality.
- Ensure that all storm water/run-off discharges are restricted by onsite attenuation and/or other measures to maintain pre-development run-off levels. In all new developments, all attenuated storage volumes shall take into consideration climate change.

All new developments in urban areas will be required to implement nature-based solutions in accordance with Nature Based Management of Urban Rainwater and Urban Surface Water Discharges – A National Strategy 2024 where appropriate. Public road surface water drainage regimes are constructed with the objective of disposing of road surface water, it is important that capacity in the drainage regime is retained to address this function.

Surface Water Drainage Policy	
SWDP 1	Development proposals shall include provision for SuDS in accordance with Section 15.22.7 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.
SWDP 2	Development proposals shall ensure the capacity and efficiency of the public road network drainage regimes in County Monaghan will be safeguarded for road drainage purposes.

15.22.8 Flood Zones and Appropriate Uses

The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities sets out a sequential approach and justification test for development proposed in areas at risk of flooding. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) was prepared to inform the land use zonings in this Development Plan and has identified areas at risk of flooding.

It is essential that flooding issues are properly considered, and development shall be restricted and/or limited in areas which are at risk of flooding. Monaghan County Council will restrict development in areas susceptible to flooding except where:

- a) The proposed development can be justified on strategic grounds.
- b) The proposed development has addressed the flooding concerns which exist.
- c) The flood risk can be managed to an acceptable degree and without increasing flood risk beyond the site itself.
- d) Appropriate and detailed mitigation measures can be implemented to remove/minimise flood effects.

All development proposals in flood risk areas should be supported with a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), in accordance with the DECLG The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2009) and Departmental Circular PL2/2014 (or any new or updated/subsequent versions).

Figure 15.1 Matrix of vulnerability versus flood zone to illustrate appropriate development and that required to meet the Justification Test.

	Flood Zone A	Flood Zone B	Flood Zone C
Highly vulnerable development (including essential infrastructure)	Justification Test	Justification Test	Appropriate
Less vulnerable development	Justification Test	Appropriate	Appropriate
Water-compatible development	Appropriate	Appropriate	Appropriate

Source: Table 3.2 of The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (November 2009).

In respect of Figure 15.1:

- Highly Vulnerable Development includes houses, schools, hospitals, residential institutions, emergency services, essential infrastructure, etc.
- Less Vulnerable Development includes economic uses (retail, leisure, warehousing, commercial, industrial, non-residential institutions etc), land and buildings used for agriculture or forestry, local transport infrastructure, etc.
- Water Compatible Development includes docks, marinas, wharves, water-based recreation, and tourism (excluding sleeping accommodation, amenity open space, sports and recreation, flood control infrastructure, etc.

Where developments/land uses are proposed that are considered inappropriate to the Flood Zone in Figure 15.1, a Development Management Justification Test and a Site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will be required in accordance with the Guidelines.

Where developments/land uses are proposed that are considered appropriate to the Flood Zone, a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment will be required in accordance with the Guidelines.

Where all criteria of the justification test cannot be satisfied, proposals involving existing development will be limited to minor development only as outlined in Section 5.28 of the Flood Risk Management Guidelines, new development in Flood Zone A will be limited to water compatible uses, and new development in Flood Zone B will be limited to water compatible and less vulnerable uses.

Table 6.4 of the SFRA accompanying this development plan specifies design level requirements for highly vulnerable and less vulnerable receptors. In some instances, where an alternative minimum design level requirement can be demonstrated to be appropriate for the type and / or scale of the development and site characteristics, the freeboard requirements specified in Table 6.4 of the SFRA may be relaxed if justified as part of a Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment and adequate mitigation (including emergency planning) is included in overall site design. Consultation with the Council must take place prior to submission of a planning application in relation to any proposal where a reduction of this minimum design level requirement is proposed.

Compensatory flood storage provision or the provision of flood defences will not override the need for completion of the justification test. A site-specific FRA will also be required for development proposals on lands identified within groundwater and pluvial (PFRA) areas for County Monaghan.

Flood Risk Assessments shall:

- Be undertaken by a competent person, such as a suitably qualified hydrologist, flood risk management professional or specialist water engineer as early as possible in the planning process.
- Be proportionate to the risk, scale, nature and location of the development.
- Be supported by appropriate data and information, including historical information on previous events, but focusing more on predictive assessment of less frequent or more extreme events, taking the likely impacts of climate change into account.
- Clearly identify the risk to people and development, and how that risk will be managed over the lifetime of the development.
- Include any mitigation measures proposed to remove/minimise flood effects upon the proposed development.
- Demonstrate that the proposed development will not exacerbate flood risk in the wider area.

Flood Risk Policy	
FRP 1	Proposals for developments shall comply with Section 15.22.8 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.23 Road Access Standards

A well-designed access is important for the safety and convenience of all road users, those proceeding on the public road, as well as those using the access. When the Planning Authority considers proposals for a new access or the intensification¹ of use of an existing access, it will have a number of requirements to promote safety and avoid excessive delay. These requirements are outlined in this section. In the event that the National Standards are changed during the lifetime of this plan, any new standards shall take precedence and be applied to proposed developments.

Road Access Standards Policy	
RASP 1	Proposals for new accesses or the intensification of use of an existing access shall comply with Section 15.23 to 15.23.8 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.23.1 Visibility Splays Agreement

It is the Council policy to only grant planning permission for development involving the creation of an access and/or the provision of visibility splays, where the applicant is able to demonstrate control,

¹ Intensification is considered to occur where a proposed development would increase the traffic flow using an access by 5% or more.

or the reasonable prospect of acquiring control of any land required for the provision of any access and/or visibility splays. Proposals requiring works on third party land must be accompanied by a written legal agreement, in accordance with Appendix 13. This legal agreement and accompanying maps shall be signed by all parties and witnessed by a Solicitor.

15.23.2 Minimum Visibility Standards for Non-Urban Roads

The minimum visibility standards for a new access or intensification of an existing access onto non-urban roads² shall comply with the standards set out in Table 15.4. These requirements are in accordance with National Standards as set out in TII publications DN-GEO-03060 'Geometric Design of Junctions' (2017) and DN-GEO-043031 'Rural Road Link Design' (2017).

The distance back-from the edge of a minor road into the access from which full visibility is measured is known as the 'X' distance. The 'Y' distance is the distance a driver can see in each direction along the major road from the specified set-back (X) in the centre of the access.

The sight distances shall be measured to the near-side edge of the carriageway in both directions from a height of between 1.05m – 2.0m above the ground and from a point 2.4m/3.0m (Table 15.4) back from the edge of the road.³

Table 15.4 Minimum Visibility Standards

Road Category	Design Speed (Km/hr)	Y distance (m)	X Setback distance (m)	Eye Height/Object height (m)
National (upgraded)*	100	215	3.0	1.05 – 2.0m
National (not upgraded)	85	160	3.0	1.05 – 2.0m
Regional (upgraded)*	85	160	3.0	1.05 – 2.0m
Regional (not upgraded)	85	120	2.4	1.05 – 2.0m
Local Primary (80km/hr)	85	90	2.4	1.05 – 2.0m
Local Primary (60km/hr)	70	70	2.4	1.05 – 2.0m
Local Secondary	70	70	2.4	1.05 – 2.0m
Local Tertiary	60	50	2.4	1.05 – 2.0m
Cul-de-sac	42	35	2.4	1.05 – 2.0m

*Upgraded to TII standards

The standards set out in Table 15.4 may be reduced where it is satisfactorily demonstrated by way of a site-specific survey and accompanying report completed by a suitably qualified, competent technical professional, that a reduced standard would be appropriate and safe. In these circumstances the required 'Y' distance shall be calculated on the basis of the 85% percentile speeds on the applicable road.

15.23.3 Minimum Required Sight Distances for Urban Roads

Within the speed limits of the urban areas, the required sight distances for new access or intensification of existing accesses shall comply with the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS, 2019), or any new or updated/subsequent versions.

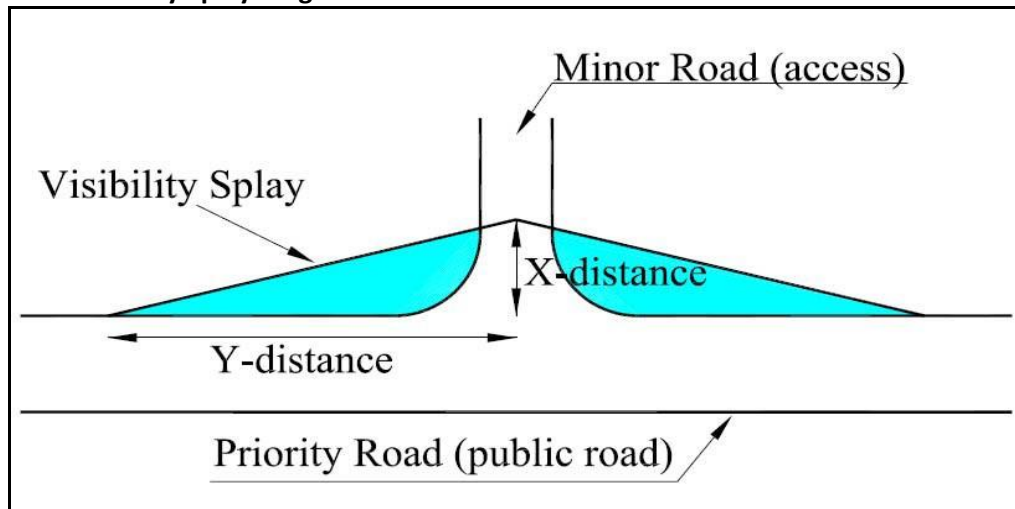
² An urban road is a road which is in a built-up area with a speed limit of 60 kph or less.

³ Range is to allow for vehicle type (car/lorry) and classification of public road (national road, local road, etc).

15.23.4 Visibility Arrangements at the Access

Good visibility is essential to enable drivers emerging from the minor road (access) to see and be seen by drivers proceeding along the priority road (public road). Figure 15.2 illustrates how visibility splays are achieved. Throughout this section the access is referred to as the minor road and the public road which it joins is called the priority road.

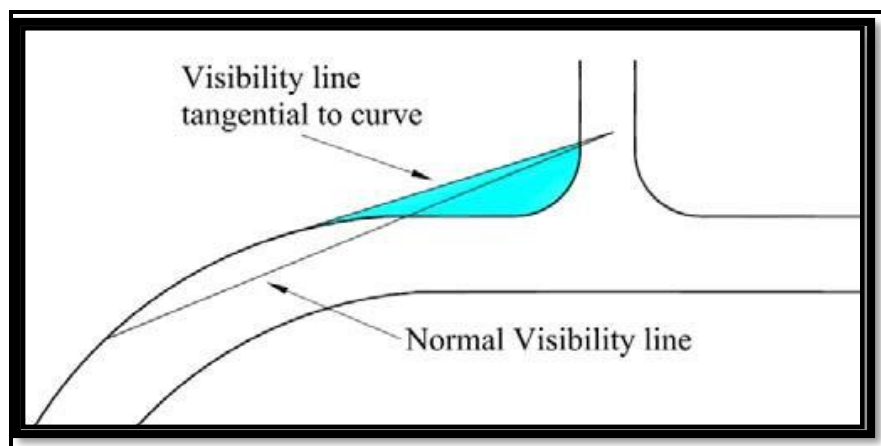
Figure 15.2: Visibility Splay Diagram



Visibility is required over the shaded area shown in Figure 15.2. The X distance is measured along the centre line of the minor road from the edge of the running carriageway of the priority road. The Y distance is measured along the near edge of the running carriageway of the priority road from the centre line of the minor road.

Where the access is on the outside of a bend, an additional area will be necessary to provide splays which are tangential to the road edge as shown in Figure 15.3.

Figure 15.3 Visibility Splays for Access on the Outside of Bend



Where the minor road is relatively busy and traffic on the priority road is fast, a greater X distance is required to allow drivers on the priority road to see in good time vehicles approaching the give way or stop line of the minor road. In addition, when the minor road is busy, a greater X distance is necessary to allow more than one emerging vehicle to accept the same gap in priority road traffic, thus reducing delay and frustration for emerging drivers.

If there is any dispute about the predicted minor road access traffic flows, it shall be determined by reference to a recognised database such as TRICS (Trip Rate Information Computer System: JMP Consultants Ltd) or failing that by a direct survey by a suitably qualified, competent technical professional, of a similar existing development over an acceptable period.

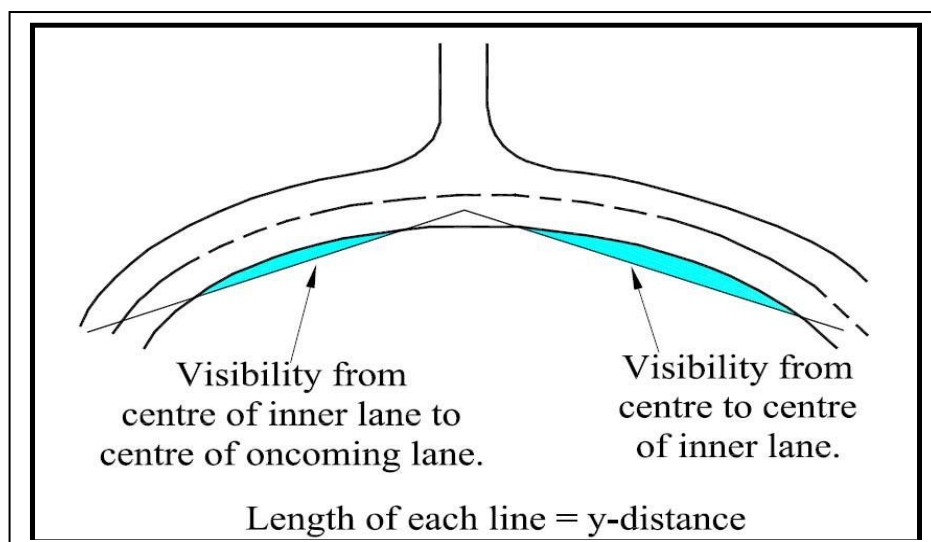
In the case of a new access, X and Y distances must be adjusted as necessary to allow for any planned road improvements.

15.23.5 Forward and Rear Visibility on the Priority Road

Forward and rear visibility as shown in Figure 15.4 is also required to provide inter-visibility between vehicles using the minor road and those proceeding along the priority road. In particular, a vehicle waiting on the priority road to turn right into the minor road must be able to see oncoming traffic and be seen by following traffic.

Forward visibility depends on the same factors as Y distances and are calculated as per TII requirements for accesses onto non-urban roads (Table 15.4) or as per DMURS for accesses onto urban roads.

Figure 15.4 Forward Visibility Requirements



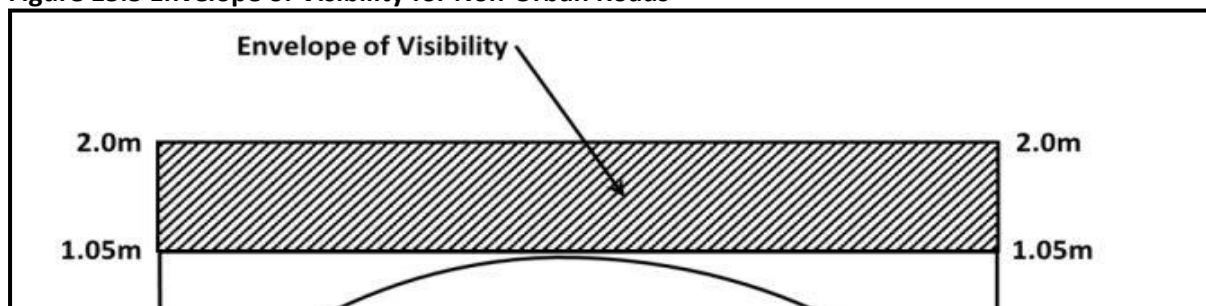
15.23.6 Other Visibility Requirements

Visibility in a vertical plane which must normally be provided from a driver's eye height of 1.05m to 2.00m. Once provided, visibility splays must be retained permanently clear.

In rural areas, where there is existing hedge/bank or where amenity is a consideration, a native species hedge may be required 0.5m behind the visibility splay to maintain the character of the rural area. To reduce the visual impact of an access in the countryside, its location and design must be carefully considered and existing accesses, including lanes, should be used where possible.

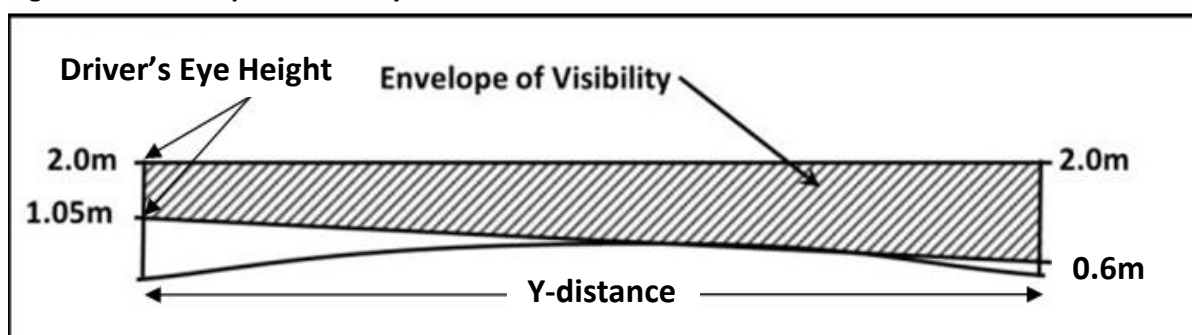
The visibility plane for accesses for single dwellings onto non-urban local roads shall be at a driver's eye height of 1.05 to 2.0m to an object height of 1.05m to 2.0m as illustrated in Figure 15.5.

Figure 15.5 Envelope of Visibility for Non-Urban Roads



As shown in Figure 15.6, in the case of urban roads the envelope of visibility shall be measured from a driver's eye height of between 1.05m and 2.00m to an object height of between 0.6m and 2.00m above the road surface.

Figure 15.6 Envelope of Visibility for Urban Roads

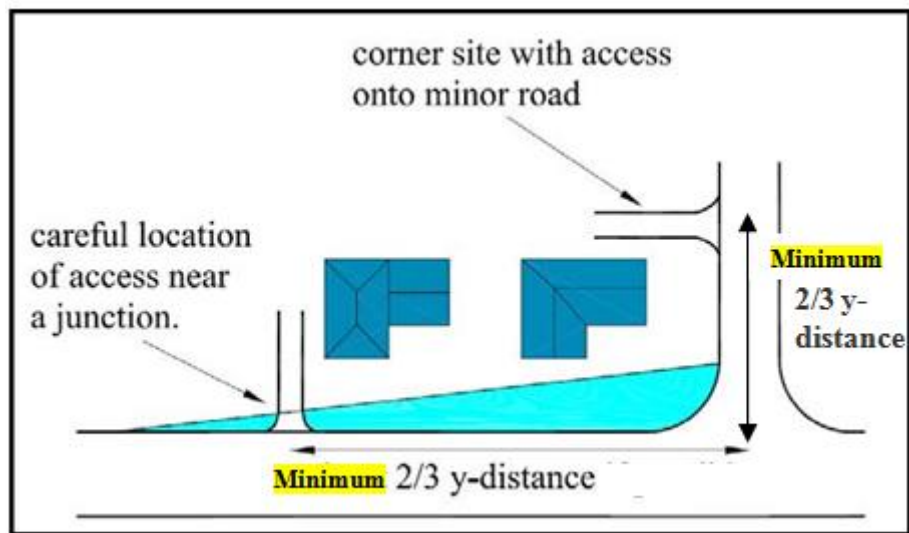


For urban roads, the area within visibility splays, including forward and rear visibility, must be cleared to provide a surface no higher than 260mm above the level of the adjacent carriageway. Minor departures from this requirement, such as the retention of single slender pole or column, may be permitted at the discretion of the local authority as long as visibility or road safety is not affected.

15.23.7 Location of Accesses

Where a site is at the junction of two public roads, the access should normally emerge onto the minor road as shown in Figure 15.7. This concentrates turning movements at a single point onto the major road via the minor road. If an access is located near a junction, visitors might park their vehicles on the road and obstruct junction visibility. To reduce this risk, accesses should not join a road within the Y distance of a junction. On urban roads and local roads, accesses should not join a road within the first $\frac{2}{3}$ of the Y distance. This will not apply to Regional or National Roads outside the 60kph.

Figure 15.7 Locations of Accesses near a Junction on Local or Urban Roads



15.23.8 Access Details

Accesses shall be constructed in accordance with details in Appendix 11 (Access Details) of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.24 Car Parking Standards

All development proposals shall be required to provide within the site, suitable provision for servicing, parking and manoeuvring of vehicles associated with the proposal, except where it is determined by the Planning Authority, having regard to the type of the development, its location, and proximity to transport alternatives, that the provision of servicing, parking and manoeuvring of vehicles would not be in the interests of urban regeneration, infill / brownfield and compact growth nor promote the uptake and use of sustainable modes of transport. The provision of a lower standard of car parking will be acceptable where justified in accordance with Policy SPPR 3 – Car Parking of the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024). The car parking requirement shall be calculated in accordance with the standards in Table 15.5 Car Parking Standards.

Developments that comprise more than one land use shall normally be required to comply with the combined standards applicable. Where a mixed-use development is proposed, flexibility may apply in the calculation of the parking standards where it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that complementary parking takes places.

Where the parking standards set out in Table 15.5 do not cover the type of development proposed, the requirement shall be calculated relative to the most appropriate standard/similar type development.

If there is a dispute about the parking requirements of a development, it shall be determined using a recognised database such as TRICS (Trip Rate Information Computer System; JMP Consultants London LTD).

A reduction of up to 50% of the standards required in Table 15.5 for new developments or redevelopment of infill/brownfield/derelict sites located within the designated town centres, shall be applied, where appropriate.

Car parking provision will be required to be located within or immediately adjacent to the site of the proposed development.

Car parking spaces for persons with impaired mobility shall be provided at a rate of one space in twenty-five.

All residential developments with proposed communal parking and all non-residential proposed development shall normally provide EV car parking spaces at a rate of one space in five.

A reduction in the car parking standards set out in Table 15.5 shall be permitted, where appropriate, where the developer cannot provide the required car parking spaces and financial contribution in lieu of the provision of car parking is being provided by the developer.

The loss of public car parking spaces shall not normally be permitted. In limited circumstances, where the developer requires the removal of public car parking spaces to facilitate a proposed development, and where this is agreed to by the Planning Authority, a financial contribution in lieu of the public car parking spaces shall be paid by the developer.

Car Parking Standards Policy	
CP 1	Proposals for car parking shall comply with Section 15.24 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

Table 15.5 Car Parking Standards

Land Use Classification	Maximum Car Parking Standard
Dwelling	2 per unit
Apartment (1 – 2 bed)	1.5 per unit
Apartment (3 – 4 bed)	2 per unit
Nursing Home/Hospital	1 per staff member 1 per bedspace which includes parking for ambulance and service lorries
Health Centres/Surgeries/Clinics	1 per staff member 1 per consulting room
Veterinary Services	1 per staff member 1 per consulting room Which includes parking for larger vehicles and trailers
Sheltered Accommodation for elderly/disabled	1 per bedspace
Retail/Service Station	1 per 15m ² GFA* 1 per HGV fuel pump
Retail Warehouse/Factory Retail Unit	1 per 30m ² GFA
Office/Financial and Professional Services	1 per 25m ² GFA
Schools	1 per teaching staff 1 space per classroom plus circulation and set down/pick-up area to cater for school operations.

Cinema/Theatre/Community Hall/Church Hall/Place of Worship/Amusement Centre	1 per 30m ² GFA
Leisure Centre/Sports Club	1 per 100m ² GFA
Hotel/Guesthouse/B&B	1 per bedroom (plus requirement for other uses e.g. bar/restaurant) Facilities are required for pick up and set down areas for cars and coaches, where appropriate.
Cafe/Bar/Lounge/Restaurant	1 per 20m ² GFA
Disco/Function Room/Conference Centre	1 per 10m ² GFA
Car Wash	5 waiting spaces per site without interference to other spaces or public road
Take Away	1 per 20m ² GFA
Drive Through	Minimum length of drive through queue should accommodate 10 no cars without interference to other spaces or public road
Industry	1 per 50m ² GFA Facilities are required for the parking and turning of vehicles servicing the development
Storage/Distribution/Warehouse/Cash and Carry	1 per 200m ² GFA Facilities are required for the parking and turning of vehicles servicing the development
Garage/Showroom	1 per 100m ² GFA
Student Accommodation	1 per 3 student beds
Garden Centres	1 per 60m ² GFA
Creches	1 per 6 children and 1 per staff including circulation and pick up and set down facilities
Funeral Home	1 per 20m ² GFA
Golf Course/Pitch and Putt	2 spaces per hole
Golf Driving Range	1 per bay
Caravan/Glamping/Camping Site	1 space per pitch
Hostel	1 space per 2 bedrooms or 1 space per 10 bed dormitories

*GFA – Gross Floor Area

15.25 Bicycle and Scooter Parking and Associated Facilities

Development proposals shall normally be required to provide within the site suitable provision for the parking/storage of bicycles and scooters. This includes covered and uncovered facilities, and long stay and short stay requirements. Different standards apply to different land uses, including whether showers and locker facilities are required, however minimum standards apply to the size and layout of such facilities.

National standards are not yet available, however standards for provision of facilities in County Monaghan should be in line with the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council Municipal Services Department 'Standards for Cycle Parking and associated Cycling Facilities for New Developments. January 2018', or other applicable standards when available.

Bicycle and Scooter Parking and Associated Facilities Policy	
BSP 1	Proposals for bicycle and scooter parking and cycling facilities shall comply with Section 15.25 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025 – 2031

15.26 Agricultural Access Underpasses

The Planning Authority shall support the provision of underpasses constructed under a public road where it results in the removal, or reduction in the numbers of livestock crossing a public road.

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) issued Minimum Specification for Farm Roadways and Underpasses (March 2024), which sets out design and construction requirements including the Planning, Roadworks Licensing, and training requirements.

Proposals for livestock/agricultural underpasses shall only be considered acceptable where:

- The Applicant has engaged with the Local Authority in accordance with the Roadworks Licensing requirements for such works.
- The design and construction requirements comply with TII Series 2500 Specification and Standard Construction Details, such as CC-SPW-02500 Specification for Road Works – Special Structures (2021).
- A guarantee in the form of a security deposit is lodged with the Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development, to ensure the satisfactory completion of the development. The amount of the bond shall be determined by the Planning Authority having regards to the scale and nature of the underpass and shall remain in place for a minimum period of 1 year post completion and certification by a competent professional.

Proposals for access underpasses shall generally comply with, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) Details of the underpass in accordance with DAFM Guidance and Specifications, or any new or updated/subsequent versions.
- b) Submission of a Technical Report in accordance with TII Publication CC-SPW-02500 Specification for Road Works – Special Structures (2021).
- c) Incorporate aspects of TIIs technical acceptance and specification procedures for structures on the design and installation of the underpass including:
 - Technical Acceptance Report
 - TII publication DN-STR-03001 (Technical Acceptance of Road Structures on Motorways and Other National Roads)
 - Certification – Design, Check and Completion
 - TII Series 2500 Specification and Standard Construction Details, such as CC-SPW-02500 Specification for Road Works – Special Structures (2021),
- d) Submission of a Structural Design Report, prepared by a suitably qualified competent technical professional with expertise in bridge and underpass design.
- e) Justification for the structure and details on the function of the structure, for example, livestock, vehicular, or both.
- f) Loading requirements including traffic loading from public road.
- g) Box culvert design calculations, including foundation requirements with retaining wall and headwall elements.
- h) Details of ground conditions and groundwater.
- i) Details of Existing and proposed underground and overground services to include depths of underground services.
- j) Vehicle restraint requirements.
- k) Road Safety Audit.

Access Underpass Policy	
LAUP 1	All access underpass development proposals shall comply with Section 15.26 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.27 Building Lines

Generally, new development should not take place in front of established building lines. The Planning Authority shall usually require a continuous building line along a street and in new industrial or business park developments. Where developments are proposed along roads of significant importance an increased set back may be required for greater amenity, safety of road users and to allow for future road widening.

Development proposals, excluding fences, wing walls and piers, in the vicinity of public roads in the rural area shall generally comply with the following setback requirements from the near edge of the surfaced carriageway:

- National Route: 90m
- Regional Route: 30m
- County Road: 18m

Building Lines in the Rural Area Policy	
BLP 1	Development proposals in the rural area shall comply with Section 15.27 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.28 Pedestrian Footpaths and Public Lighting

Where a development is proposed within or adjacent to the defined limit of a town or village, the developer shall be required to provide a pedestrian footpath along the entire site frontage.

In addition, where it is considered that the proposed development would result in significant pedestrian movements (i.e. developments involving five or more dwellings or equivalent), the developer shall provide a pedestrian footpath and public lighting which links the development to the existing footpath network or the nearest community/social facility within the settlement, as considered appropriate.

The detail and specification of the footpath and lighting shall be agreed with the Planning Authority but shall normally comply with the Transport Infrastructure Ireland standards. The Planning Authority may accept a reduced footpath width in circumstances where this would allow for the development and expansion of the settlement in accordance with Policy RDSP 2 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 (Section 15.8.11 Tier 5 and 6 Settlements).

The Planning Authority may, at its discretion, accept a full financial contribution for the provision of this infrastructure where the Authority considers that this is the appropriate mechanism.

Pedestrian Footpaths and Public Lighting Policy	
PFP 1	All developments, where applicable, shall comply with Section 15.28 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.29 Waste Storage

Suitable facilities for the storage, segregation and recycling of waste and convenient access for its deposit and collection shall be provided in all new developments. Refuse enclosures should be designed in such a manner to ensure adequate provision for the three-bin system and their integration within the associated building or boundary enclosure and should be appropriately screened.

Communal bin storage facilities of sufficient size to accommodate segregated waste streams should be provided in a secure well-ventilated space convenient to the units served and for the purposes of collection.

Waste Storage Policy	
WSP 1	Proposals for waste storage for all new development shall comply with Section 15.29 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.30 Construction Wastes and Construction and Environmental Management Plans

Construction wastes arising from development proposals will be managed and disposed of in a way that ensures the provisions of the Waste Management Acts and the National Waste Management for a Circular Economy 2024-2030 (DECC) and any subsequent version.

Construction Waste Management Plans shall be required where relevant, to minimise waste and ensure correct handling and disposal of construction waste streams in accordance with Environmental Protection Agency Best Practice Guidelines for the preparation of Resource and Waste Management Plans for Construction and Demolition Projects 2024, and any subsequent revisions.

Development proposals, where deemed necessary by the Planning Authority, shall be accompanied by a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

The CEMP shall, where appropriate, include the following:

- a) The location of the materials compound(s) including area(s) identified for the storage of construction refuse.
- b) The location of areas for construction site offices and staff facilities, including sanitary facilities
- c) Details of site security fencing and hoardings.
- d) Details of on-site car parking facilities for site workers during construction.
- e) Details of the timing and routing of construction traffic to and from the construction site and associated directional signage.
- f) Measures to prevent queuing of construction traffic on the adjoining road network.
- g) Measures to prevent the spillage or deposit of clay, rubble or other debris.
- h) Alternative arrangements for pedestrians and vehicles in the case of the closure of any public right of way during site development works.
- i) Details of appropriate mitigation measures for noise, dust and vibration, and monitoring of such levels.
- j) Containment of all construction-related fuel and oil within specially constructed bunds to ensure that fuel spillages are fully contained; such bunds shall be roofed to exclude rainwater.
- k) Details of disposal of construction/demolition waste and how it is proposed to manage excavated soil.
- l) A water and sediment management plan to ensure that surface water runoff is controlled so that no silt or other pollutants enter local water courses or drains.
- m) Details of a water quality monitoring and sampling plan.
- n) If peat is encountered, a peat storage, handling and reinstatement management plan.
- o) Measures to prevent the spread of invasive species (such as Japanese Knotweed).
- p) Details of the appointment of an ecological clerk of works at site investigation, preparation and construction phases.
- q) Details of appropriate mitigation measures for lighting specifically designed to minimise impacts to biodiversity.

Construction and Environmental Management Plan Policy	
CEMP 1	All development proposals, where applicable, shall comply with Section 15.30 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.31 Contaminated Lands

Contaminated lands can comprise of sites used for historic industrial land-uses, waste disposal and land reclamation. There are a number of locations in the County where contaminated land exist, and which have the potential to cause negative environmental impacts if not properly addressed. Any contaminated land will require appropriate remediation prior to redevelopment, including, in some instances, removal of material from a site which may require a licence under the Waste Management Act, 1996, as amended, prior to the undertaking of such works.

Proposals for development on contaminated lands shall:

- a) Include a full contaminated land risk assessment prepared by a suitably qualified, competent and technical professional with remediation expertise to demonstrate how any contaminated soil or water encountered will be appropriately addressed in accordance with international best practice.
- b) Demonstrate that the proposed land use(s) will ensure the health and safety standards during both construction and operational phases (including the durability of structures and services).

Contaminated Lands Policy	
CLP 1	Proposals for development on contaminated lands shall comply with Section 15.31 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.32 Infilling of Lands

Development proposals for the infilling of lands with inert construction and demolition waste will only be acceptable where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority that there will be no adverse impact upon surface and groundwaters, or upon areas which are at risk of flooding. Proposals for the prevention and mitigation of any perceived impacts shall satisfy the targets of any Waterbody and Catchment Management Plans as developed by Monaghan County Council, LAWPRO and Uisce Éireann and also any Source Protection Plans developed by Group Water Schemes. Proposals for infilling of lands at risk of flooding will be required to be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment in accordance with Section 15.22.8 of Chapter 15 of this Development Plan.

Development proposals for the infilling of lands for agricultural improvement will only be acceptable where it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority how the infilling of the lands will meet current farm management requirements and will not adversely affect water quality and biodiversity or cause/exacerbate flooding.

Proposals for the infilling of land shall have regard relevant development management policies in this Development Plan such as traffic management and access arrangements.

Infilling of lands Policy	
ILP 1	Development proposals for infilling of lands shall comply with Section 15.32 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.33 Protection of Public Assets and Infrastructure

The protection of public assets and infrastructure including resources such as public open spaces, parks and recreational areas; public buildings and services; and utility infrastructure (electricity, gas, telecommunications, water supply, wastewater infrastructure etc.) is a priority for Monaghan County Council.

Development proposals will be assessed, inter alia, in terms of the potential impact on existing adjacent developments, existing land uses and/or the surrounding landscape. Where proposed developments would be likely to have a significant adverse effect on the amenities of the asset/infrastructure by reason of noise, fumes, odours, dust, grit or vibration, or the pollution of air, water and/or soil, mitigation measures may be required to eliminate adverse environmental impacts or reduce them to an acceptable operating level.

Development proposals which will have an adverse impact upon public assets and infrastructure shall be resisted.

Protection of Public Assets and Infrastructure Policy	
PAIP 1	Development proposals shall generally comply with Section 15.33 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

15.34 Accessibility

Monaghan County Council recognises the need to build accessibility and equality into all of our policies and functions. The guiding principle behind this process is that Monaghan County Council aims to treat everybody fairly and promote equality of access and opportunity.

To achieve this, the Planning Authority will ensure accessibility proofing exercises are carried out on policies, projects, and services where relevant. Accessibility proofing is a strategy that aims to make sure that the specific needs of all potential end users are considered and incorporated into the planning and design stage all our policies and functions.

Accessibility Policy	
AP 1	Monaghan County Council shall ensure accessibility proofing exercises are carried out on policies, projects, and services where relevant.

15.35 Environmental Hazard Zones

The European Communities (Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations 2006 transposes the SEVESO II Directive 96/82/EC (relating to the prevention of major accidents involving dangerous substances) into Irish Law. The Directive aims to prevent accident hazards from dangerous substances and to limit the consequence of such accidents

There are currently no SEVESO sites in County Monaghan, but there are SEVESO sites in adjoining counties. Development proposals within the consultation distance of Major Accidents Directive sites, shall have regard to the provisions of the Major Accidents Directive, relating to the control of major accident hazards, involving dangerous substances, and the recommendations of the Health and Safety Authority.

Environmental Hazard Zones Policy	
EHZP 1	Proposals for developments within Environmental Hazard Zones shall comply with Section 15.35 of the Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031.

Chapter 16

Implementation and Monitoring

Chapter 16

Implementation and Monitoring

16.0 Implementation

This Plan sets out Monaghan County Councils vision and strategy for sustainable development of the County over the period 2025-2031. It contains a wide range of objectives and policies covering all functions of the Council. Section 15(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) (the Act) places a statutory obligation on the Planning Authority to take such steps within its powers as may be necessary to secure the objectives of the Plan. The implementation of the policies and objectives of the Development Plan may be influenced by a range of external factors, which are beyond the control of the local authority, most notably wider economic circumstances and availability of resources.

The implementation of the policies, objectives and projects contained within the Development Plan does not fall to the Council alone. The people and communities of County Monaghan as well as developers, government agencies amongst others will be required to play a significant role if the Development Plan is to be fully delivered. The Plan will also be reviewed to assess progress and to determine whether amendments are required. The Council may therefore carry out variations of the Plan where it is considered that such amendments are warranted.

Where necessary, to pursue the implementation of the Strategic Objectives of the Plan, the preparation of further action plans or projects will be pursued.

16.1 Monitoring and Review

The purpose of monitoring and reviewing the Development Plan is to assess the effectiveness in terms of achieving the stated aims and objectives. The Act states that, "It shall be the duty of a Planning Authority to take such steps within its powers as may be necessary for securing the objectives of the Development Plan". Section 15 (2) of the Act requires that the Chief Executive of a Planning Authority shall not more than 2 years after the making of a Development Plan, give a report to the members on the progress achieved in securing the objectives.

The Development Plans Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2022) recommends that planning authorities establish a frequent, reliable and ongoing monitoring system for their development plan as a permanent function. The guidelines outline that the monitoring task comprises of two strategic elements:

- (a) Core Strategy Monitoring
- (b) Plan Objective Monitoring (including Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Monitoring)

In accordance with Section 10.3 of the aforementioned guidelines, the Council will deliver the following:

A. Core Strategy Monitoring

It is the intention of the Planning Department to deliver an Annual Development Plan Monitoring Report. The report will provide a focus on development patterns occurring under the settlement strategy of the development plan and the tracking of the nature of new development that is occurring.

The development trends will be analysed spatially, with accompanying mapping, to illustrate the development trends being experienced at settlement level and to assess the consistency of such trends with the agreed housing and population targets set out in the core strategy.

The data required for successful monitoring will be a mixture of the Council's own sources, such as Development Management statistics (number of planning permissions and commencement notices) and data from external sources such as the Central Statistics Office, Ireland.

Section 10.3.1 of the guidelines sets out seven indicators to determine the progress made in achieving the Core Strategy of the Plan. These indicators are:

Indicator	
Residential	
1	New home completions (including through refurbishment/conversions)
2	New home completions per NPO 3 (Compact Growth)
3	Planning permissions granted for residential development with: (i) A breakdown of 1, 2, 3 and 4+ units permitted and (ii) A breakdown per Tier 1 and Tier 2 lands
4	Breakdown by relevant rural area type of rural housing: (i) Planning Applications lodged (ii) Breakdown in decisions (iii) New home completions
Commercial	
5	Developed and occupied commercial floorspace
6	Planning permissions for business/employment uses (m2 of development) for: (i) Office (ii) Industrial (iii) Retail (iv) Warehousing/Logistics
Settlement Consolidation Sites	
7	Specific reporting on the progression of the Settlement Consolidation Sites identified in the development plan. This should include information on enabling infrastructural services delivery, planning permissions granted, housing constructed, funding applications made, project timelines, Vacant Site Levy commentary, etc.

B. Plan Objectives Monitoring

The plan objectives have been formulated with effort made to ensure that they are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Assignable, Realistic and Time related) and thereby facilitate their monitoring over the lifetime of the plan. These objectives are required to be monitored and reported on. Accordingly, the following report shall be prepared:

- (i) A Two-Year Progress Report by the Chief Executive on the Development Plan in accordance with Section 15 (2) of the Act;

This report shall monitor and assess the overall implementation of policy and objectives including those pertaining to the core strategy and the environmental objectives as set out in the SEA. The objectives included within the development plan are varied, and it is therefore acknowledged that not all objectives may be easily measured quantitatively.

This exercise will allow the Council to determine the effectiveness of the Development Plan in meeting its stated objectives. Indicators will be agreed to allow a review of each objective, that are aligned with national policies or for the purposes of monitoring the SEA. Supplementary indicators will also be agreed, which will be specific to objectives. Given the long-term nature of some of the objectives contained within the Development Plan, it will not be appropriate to measure or indicate progress on each objective.

The overarching Strategic Objectives set out within the Development Plan, and related objectives set out in each chapter are included below. There are also supplementary objectives within each chapter.

Plan Strategic Objectives		Related Chapter Objectives
SO 1	To develop to its full potential each part of County Monaghan in economic, social and environmental terms.	CSSO 1 EDSO 1 EECSO 1
SO 2	To sustain traditional settlement patterns while developing the role and function of each town, village, and settlement throughout the County in accordance with the settlement strategy.	HSSO 1 SSO 1-21 VSO 1 VIO 1–4
SO 3	To promote sustainable compact development forms, including more comprehensive backland development where appropriate, ensuring the efficient use of available public infrastructure and services.	SSO 14 CSO 5
SO 4	To realise the potential of County Monaghan in the context of its strategic location along the border, adjacent to the eastern economic corridor and to improve linkages and communications between Monaghan and its neighbouring counties.	EDSO 1 EDO 1–10 TISO 1 TO 1-3
SO 5	To support balanced economic development throughout the county by delivering improved infrastructure and services.	TISO 1 TO 1–4 TMO 1–3 ISO 1–8
SO 6	To protect, nurture and enhance the County’s rich natural resources, heritage, tourism assets and amenities along with the environmental quality of the natural and built environment in both the urban and rural areas.	EECSO 1 HCLSO 1
SO 7	To prepare and implement a Masterplan and Development Framework for Lough Muckno and its environs, which will act as a blueprint for its evolution and sustainable development as an exemplar recreational and amenity facility.	CBO 8 CBO 5 CBO 6 CBO 12
SO 8	To plan for greater social inclusion and to improve the quality of life of all who live and work in County Monaghan.	CSFO 1 SIO1-4
SO 9	To provide a framework for the management and regulation of development and use of land that will guide day to day planning decisions.	CSSO 1 SSO 1–4 LUZO 1
SO 10	To maintain the strategic capacity and safety of the national roads network and to safeguard the investment in national roads.	TMO 1

- (ii) The Baseline Report, which is published as the evidence base for commencing the review procedure for the Development Plan not later than four years after its adoption.

The aforementioned reporting exercises will allow the Council to determine the status of the effectiveness of the Development Plan in meeting its stated objectives.

The implementation and delivery of the Development Plan will be monitored by the Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR), the Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA) and the National Audit Commission (NOAC). The Council shall report to the Northern and Western Regional Assembly (NWRA) outlining the progress made in supporting objectives of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) as required under Section 25 (1) of the Act.

The Council shall endeavour to attract state and other investment programmes to support the implementation of the objectives of the Development Plan, including national funding programmes for urban and rural regeneration.

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