

Monaghan County Council (MCC)

Draft Monaghan Town Local Transport Plan (LTP)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Reference:

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1. Introduction

Monaghan County Council (MCC), in conjunction with the National Transport Authority (NTA), are currently preparing a Draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Monaghan Town. The Draft LTP presents a comprehensive analysis of the current transport situation in Monaghan Town with the opportunities and constraints associated with the transport network identified and used to inform potential solutions to improve the transport network for all users.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is defined as *‘the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt that plan or programme.’* (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, 2004).

Arup has been commissioned by MCC to prepare a report for the purposes of Strategic SEA Screening. The report will assist MCC in making their determination, in respect of the Draft LTP, if SEA is required in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment (“SEA Directive”) as transposed by the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (S.I. 435 of 2004), as amended.

2. Strategic Environmental Assessment

SEA is a systematic, on-going process for evaluation, at the earliest possible stage, of the environmental quality and consequences of implementing certain plans and programmes on the environment. It is intended to provide the framework for influencing decision-making at an earlier stage when plans and programmes - which give rise to individual projects - are being developed. SEA should result in more sustainable development through the systematic appraisal of policy options.

The SEA Screening process determines whether or not SEA of a Plan or Programme is required. This is the current stage of the SEA process to which this report relates. If SEA is considered to be required following Screening, the following steps are required:

- **Scoping:** Consultation with the defined statutory bodies on the scope and level of detail to be considered in the assessment
- **Environmental Assessment:** An assessment of the likely significant impacts on the environment as a result of the Plan or Programme
- **Preparation of an Environmental Report**
- **Consultation on the Plan or Programme and associated Environmental Report**
- **Evaluation of the submissions and observations made on the Plan or Programme and Environmental Report;** and
- **Issuance of a SEA Statement** identifying how environmental considerations and consultation have been integrated into the Final Plan or Programme.

This process is outlined in Figure 1.

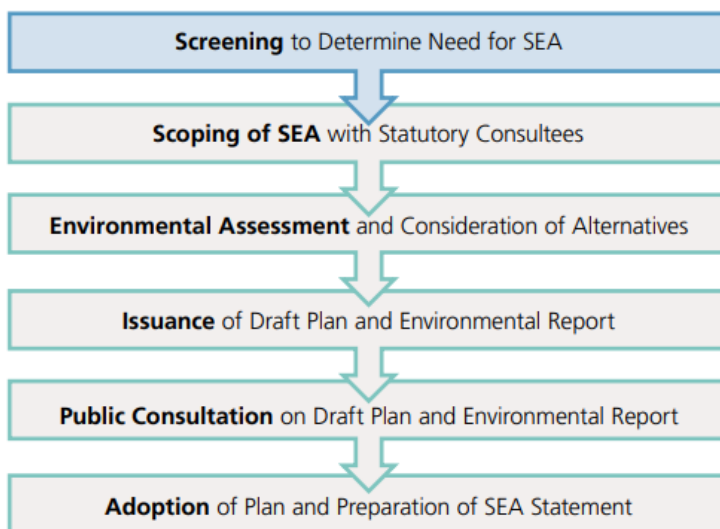


Figure 1 How SEA Screening relates to the overall SEA process

3. Guidance and Legislation

3.1 Legislative Overview

The SEA Directive - *Directive 2001/42/EC on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment* - requires that an environmental assessment be carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

The objective of the SEA Directive is ‘to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans...with a view to promoting sustainable development’ (Article 1 SEA Directive 2001).

In Ireland, the SEA Directive has been transposed into national legislation through the following regulations:

- S.I. No. 435 of 2004 (European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011 (European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011)
- S.I. No. 436 of 2004 (Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 201 of 2011 (Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011).

As the Draft LTP is not a ‘development plan’, as defined by the regulations, S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended, is the application legislation to the draft Plan.

3.2 Guidance Documents

A number of national guidance documents on SEA were reviewed in the preparation of this SEA Screening Report, including:

- Development of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Methodologies for Plans and Programmes in Ireland (EPA, 2013)
- Good Practice Guidance on SEA Screening (EPA, 2021)
- Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC): Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment- Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, 2004)
- Implementation of Directive 2001/42 on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment (European Commission, ND)
- SEA Resource Manual for Local and Regional Planning Authorities (EPA, 2015)
- Integrating Climatic Factors into Strategic Environmental Assessment in Ireland - A Guidance Note (EPA, 2019); and
- Synthesis Report on Developing a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Methodologies For Plans and Programmes In Ireland (EPA, 2003).

4. Monaghan Town Draft LTP

4.1 Plan Overview

As previously discussed, the Draft LTP presents a comprehensive analysis of the current transport situation in Monaghan Town with the opportunities and constraints associated with the transport network identified and used to inform potential solutions to improve the transport network for all users. The following subsections provide an overview of the factors that contributed to the development of the Draft LTP including the local policy context, the study area, the Draft LTP objectives and existing infrastructure networks.

4.2 Policy Context

The National Planning Framework (NPF) 2040 promotes National Strategic Outcomes relevant to the future development of Monaghan Town. These include the promotion of sustainable management of more compact towns and villages, enhanced access between residential areas and work opportunities and a shift towards sustainable modes of transport. Table 1 summarises the key existing National, Regional and Local policies and guidelines relevant to the future development of the Draft LTP area and which have been reviewed to inform the content of the Monaghan Town Draft LTP.

Table 1 Relevant National, Regional and Local policy documents

National Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project Ireland 2040 – National Planning Framework (NPF) and National Development Plan (NDP)• National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) (2021)• Climate Action Plan (2025)• National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022-2030)
Regional Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Northern and Western Region (2020-2032)
Local Policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monaghan County Development Plan (CDP) (2019-2025)• Draft Monaghan CDP (2025-2031)• Roosky Masterplan (2022)• Dublin Street North Regeneration Plan (2022)• South Dublin Street and Backlands Regeneration Project (2022)• Monaghan County Council Climate Change Action Plan (2024-2029)• Monaghan Land Use and Transportation Study (2018)• County Walking and Cycling Strategy (2021-2026)
Other Key Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan (2021)• Cycle Connects – Monaghan Cycle Network (2022)• National Cycle Network (NCN) (2023)

4.3 Plan Area

The study area is Monaghan Town. Monaghan Town is the administrative centre of County Monaghan and an important area for employment, services, and shopping in the region. Monaghan Town is strategically located at the intersection of three national routes:

- The N2 National Primary Road from Dublin to Derry
- The N12 National Primary Road to Armagh/Craigavon/Belfast; and
- The N54 National Secondary Road to Cavan.

These national roads are linked by an extensive network of regional roads to the Northern Ireland border counties and towns such as Clones, Cootehill, Cavan, Kingscourt, Castleblaney, and Emyvale. The R867 in the centre of Monaghan Town connects Market Square with the Diamond (An Diamant).

There is a 4.5km Greenway through the Town, which follows the path of the Ulster Canal. The Ulster Canal Greenway provides a pedestrian and cycle link from Coolshannagh Roundabout on the N2, northwest of town centre to the R189 to the west of the town, adjacent to the N54. The study area is shown in Figure 2.

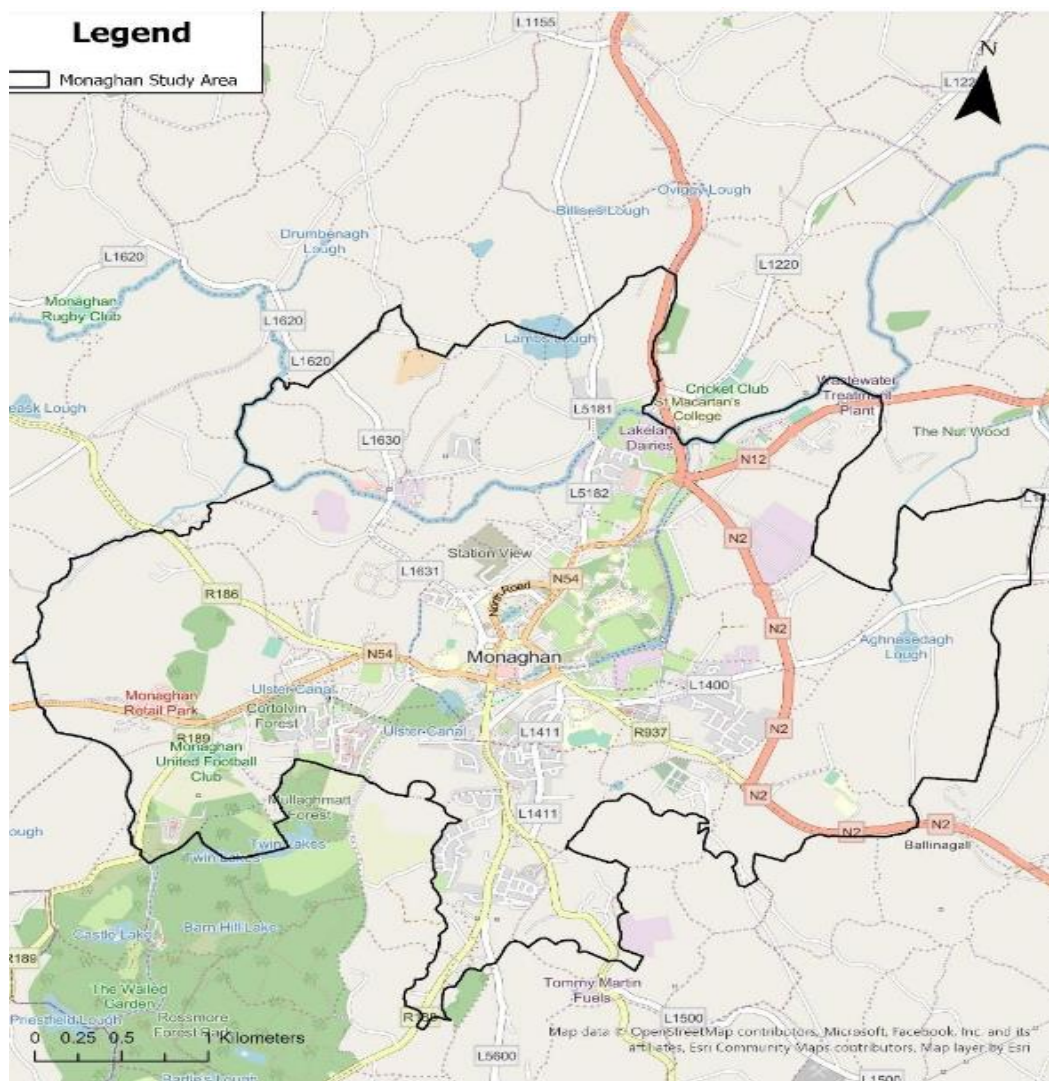


Figure 2 Study Area

4.4 Principles and objectives of the Draft LTP

The Draft LTP proposes five principles and six objectives to implement the vision for Monaghan Town and its Environs. The five principles proposed to implement the vision for Monaghan Town and its Environs are:

- **P1** – Protecting the vitality and viability of Monaghan Town and its Environs
- **P2** – Support housing
- **P3** – Support climate change resilience
- **P4** – Support economic activity; and
- **P5** – Support community.

Taken together, the objectives form an integrated and measurable strategy that promotes positive outcomes from a movement and place perspective. The six proposed objectives are listed as follows:

- **OB1 – Active Travel:** - improve walking and cycling connections throughout the Study Area and all land uses:
 - Measured through modal shift and delivery of active travel schemes.
- **OB2 – Public Transport:** - encourage the use of public transport by promoting the existing connections and improving the infrastructure:
 - Measured through increased bus patronage.
- **OB3 – Car Parking:** - rationalise and manage the existing off and on street parking opportunities to improve the public realm, support travel by sustainable mode and provide other functions such as wider footpath, cycle parking, outdoor dining areas, etc.
 - Measured through a reduction in short duration/ short trip (<30min) car parking and delivery of active travel/public realm schemes.
- **OB4 – Integration of Land Use and Transport:** - integration of existing and future land use and transport networks:
 - Measured through active travel connections/ infrastructure within regeneration plans/ developments and new link roads.
- **OB5 – Safety:** - improve and enhance safety for all, especially vulnerable roads users:
 - Measured through collision statistics, new pedestrian, and cycle priority interventions at junctions.
- **OB6 – National Road Network:** - Provide, protect and maintain for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods whilst safeguarding the strategic function of the national road network:
 - Measured through traffic volumes and growth along the national road network and at key junctions within the study area.

4.5 Complementary Measures

A series of complimentary measures are also proposed to support the principles and objectives of the Monaghan Draft LTP. These are outlined in Table 2.

Table 2 Complimentary Measures

Measure	Description
CM1	Re-allocation of existing public on-street and off-street parking spaces for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EV charging (EV charging strategy currently being developed separate to this plan) • Dedicated senior citizen car parking • Dedicated accessible parking; and • Cycle parking
CM2	Introduction of a Bike Share Scheme on Monaghan Town (e.g. similar to Bolt in Sligo)
CM3	Cargo Bike Rental Scheme (e.g. similar to scheme in Fingal County Council)
CM4	Bike Parking (provision of mix on on-street and secure facilities in the town centre and at other key destinations particularly schools)
CM5	Car Share Scheme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the provision of a private car share scheme (e.g. such as Go Car) through the provision of dedicated on-street or off-street parking spaces)
CM6	Additional pedestrian and cyclist wayfinding signage throughout the town
CM7	Active Travel Plans for Schools and Workplaces
CM8	Review of transition zones and gateway locations on approach roads into Monaghan Town, given the buildup of development along particular routes (e.g. N54 Clones Road). These gateways can influence driver behaviour, signalling an entrance into an urban area.
CM9	Review of speed limits within the town centre, including introduction of 30kph zones where appropriate.
CM10	Mobility hubs which support secure cycle parking and EV charging
CM11	Reclassification of R937 and N54 Dawson Street and North Road to accommodate active travel improvements

5. SEA Screening Methodology

5.1 Overview

The approach to SEA Screening broadly follows the SEA Decision Tree adapted from the research report Development of SEA Methodologies for Plans and Programmes (P/P) in Ireland (Scott and Marsden, 2001), the adaptation of such is shown in Figure 3 below.

According to the EPA guidance, the screening process comprises three principal stages:

1. Applicability
2. Screening
3. Determination.

The guidance states that the overall characteristics of the plan or programme should first be considered, by means of Stage 1 ‘Applicability’ check to see if it falls within the requirements of the SEA Directive.

Should this Stage 1 Applicability check determine that the plan or programme is of a type that falls within the requirements of the SEA Directive, the potential environmental significance of implementing the proposed plan or programme should then be considered, against the significance criteria outlined in Annex II (2) of the SEA Directive (Stage 2 ‘Screening’).

EPA guidance for the Screening process is outlined in Figure 3.

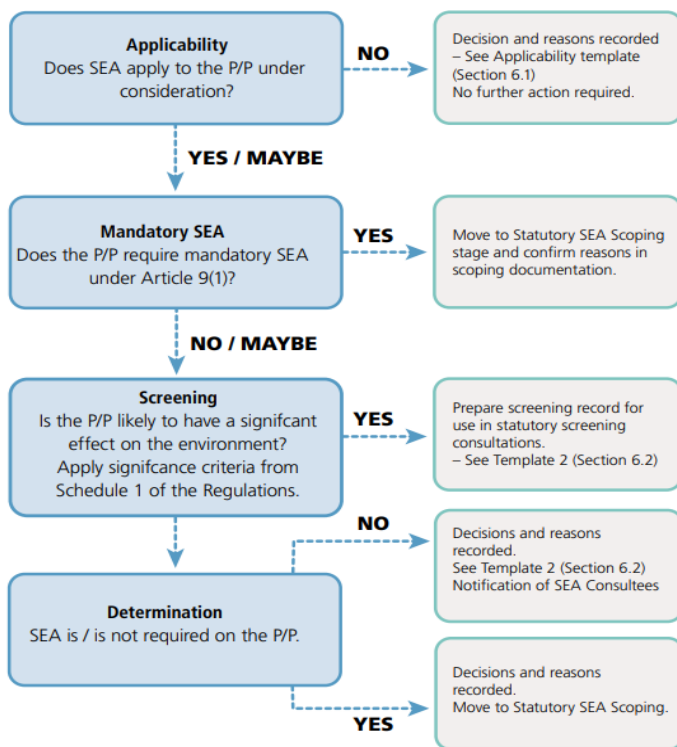


Figure 3 SEA Screening Process under S.I. 435/2004, as amended Source: (EPA, 2021)

The three principal stages – applicability, screening and determination of screening have been summarised as follows:

- **Stage 1: Applicability** (including mandatory requirement) - To determine the applicability of SEA to the Plan/Programme (P/P) maker and P/P and/or where relevant to confirm if mandatory SEA is required. The first step of SEA Screening is to determine the mandatory requirements if SEA is required under the SEA Directive. Refer to Section 6 of this report for further details on whether or not the Draft Strategy is considered to constitute a P/P under the SEA Directive, and Section 7 for whether SEA is or is not determined to be required under the SEA Directive.
- If the P/P is determined to constitute a P/P under the SEA Directive, an Applicability Table is completed (as included in 6.1 of this report) and with this analysis it can be identified whether the P/P constitutes a P/P under the SEA Directive and whether the P/P does or does not require SEA under the SEA Directive.
- Where there is uncertainty about the nature of the P/P and whether it may give rise to significant effects on the environment, the P/P should move to Stage 2 Screening as the Plan cannot be screened out for SEA or AA and requires a more detailed screening assessment. Refer to Stage 2 Screening below and Section 5.2 of this report for further details.
- **Stage 2: Screening** - To examine whether a P/P which relates to use of a small area at local level, or a minor modification to a plan or programme listed under the SEA Directive, or a P/P other than those listed under the SEA Directive, but which sets the framework for development consent, is likely to have significant effects on the environment.
- **Stage 3: Determination** - Where screening of non-mandatory P/P is required, a formal determination on the outcome is required.
- Where it is considered that the P/P does require SEA, the plan maker should advise that they will move forward to SEA scoping.

Detailed descriptions of the Screening Stages have been outlined in Section 5.2 – Section 5.4.

5.2 Stage 1 ‘Applicability’

The Applicability Stage of Screening includes the mandatory requirements. Under S.I. No. 435 of 2004, plans and programmes (P/P) are defined as:

“plans and programmes” means P/P, as well as any modifications to them

(a) which are subject to preparation and/or adoption by an authority at national, regional or local level or which are prepared by an authority for adoption, through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government, and

(b) which are required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions.

Should the plan fall under the definition of ‘plans and programmes’, then the requirement to carry out environmental assessment is dependent on the following:

- *which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism and town and country planning or land use, and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, or*
- *which are not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site but, either individually or in combination with other plans, are likely to have a significant effect on any such site.*

If these triggers are met, then an assessment of potential significant effects on the environment is required to determine the need for SEA.

Under S.I. No. 436 of 2004, plans and programmes (P/P) are defined as:

“‘plan’ for the purposes of Schedules 2A and 2B, means, where the context requires, a development plan, a variation of a development plan, a local area plan (or an amendment thereto), regional planning guidelines or a planning scheme”.

The Applicability Stage of Screening consists of a four-step process. as outlined in Table 3 below:

Table 3 Stage 1 ‘Applicability’ Steps Source: (EPA, 2021)

Step 1:	Establish the status of the plan or programme-making body Is the P/P prepared and/or adopted by an authority at national, regional or local level or prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government?
Step 2:	Establish the nature of the plan or programme Is the P/P required by legislative, regulatory, or administrative provisions?
Step 3:	Check the plan or programme is not exempt Is the sole purpose of the P/P for national defence, civil emergency or finance / budget?
Step 4:	Check if the plan or programme requires mandatory SEA Is the P/P prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecoms, tourism, town and country planning or land use and does the P/P set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in the Annexes of the EIA Directive; or Will the P/P require assessment under Art. 6 or 7 of the EU Habitats Directive?

There are three possible outcomes following Stage 1 Applicability Screening:

1. **The SEA Directive does not apply** - The P/P is not of a type which falls within the remit of the SEA Directive / SEA Regulations. It is recommended as good practice to keep a note of the deliberations alongside the P/P on the relevant website, alongside the AA screening determination. There is no requirement to notify the environmental authorities.
2. **The SEA Directive does apply** - The P/P is of a type which falls within the remit of the SEA Directive / SEA Regulations and requires mandatory SEA. Proceed to SEA Scoping and statutory consultation with the designated environmental authorities. The Screening outcome should be confirmed within the SEA Scoping Report.
3. **The SEA Directive may apply** - The P/P may be within the remit of the SEA Directive as either it relates to use of a small area at local level or minor modifications to a relevant P/P, it is a P/P which may set the framework for future development consent even though not listed as a P/P type, or there is uncertainty in relation to any of the provisions considered at the Applicability Stage, and so a case-by-case determination will be required. Proceed to Stage 2 Screening.

An Applicability Screening template (‘**Template 1**’) is provided in the EPA guidance document and is utilised in Section 6.1 of this SEA Screening Report.

5.3 Stage 2 ‘Screening’

Stage 2 consists of determining, on a case-by-case basis, if SEA is required for a Plan or Programme which has characteristics that may give rise to significant effects or for which there is uncertainty on key characteristics. Although an SEA Screening Report is not a mandatory requirement in the legislation it has become embedded good practice and is the recommended approach in this guidance note.

The Screening Stage consists of a four-step process, outlined in Table 4, as set out in the EPA’s Good Practice Guidance on SEA Screening Report.

Table 4 Summarised Stage 2 ‘Screening’ Steps Source: (EPA, 2021)

Step 5:	Describe the characteristics of the P/P and the receiving environment including any environmental problems.
Step 6:	Identify the potential for significant environmental effects
Step 7:	Statutory consultation with Designated Environmental Authorities
Step 8:	Draft Determination

Stage 2 of the SEA Screening methodology consists of an environmental significance screening, which may be undertaken to assess whether a plan or programme, which has not been screened out by the ‘Applicability Stage’, is likely to result in significant environmental effects and should therefore, be taken forward for SEA.

An SEA Screening template (‘Template 2’) is provided in the EPA’s Good Practice Guidance on SEA Screening Report.

Annex II of the SEA Directive sets out the “statutory” criteria that should be addressed when undertaking the ‘Screening Stage’. Annex II of the SEA Directive is transposed into national legislation as Schedule 1 ‘Criteria for determining whether a Plan or Programme (or Modification thereto) is likely to have significant effects on the Environment’ of the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, as amended.

The ‘Significance Criteria’ and sub-criteria are outlined below.

“Criteria for determining whether a Plan or Programme (or Modification thereto) is likely to have significant effects on the Environment.

1. The characteristics of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, having regard, in particular, to:

1. *the degree to which the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;*
2. *the degree to which the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, influences other plans including those in a hierarchy;*
3. *the relevance of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;*
4. *environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme;*
5. *the relevance of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).*

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

1. *the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;*
2. *the cumulative nature of the effects;*
3. *the transboundary nature of the effects;*
4. *the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents);*

5. *the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);*
6. *the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:*
 - a. *special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;*
 - b. *exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values;*
 - c. *intensive land-use.*

the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status.”

5.4 Stage 3 ‘Determination’

As soon as practicable after making the final determination as to whether SEA is required or not, the plan maker should make a copy of the decision, including, as appropriate, the reasons for requiring or not requiring an environmental assessment, available for public inspection at the P/P offices and on the website.

The P/P maker should also send a copy of the final determination to the relevant SEA environmental authorities notified during screening. This determination should stay linked to the P/P or modification on the website to ensure transparency and provide important information on decision making during the lifetime of the P/P or if any modifications are made.

6. SEA Screening

6.1 Stage 1 – SEA ‘Applicability’

As outlined in Section 5.2, Stage 1 ‘Applicability’ of the SEA Screening methodology constitutes the use of Template 1, based upon the relevant Applicability steps. Template 1 is reproduced as Table 5.

Table 5 Stage 1 ‘Applicability’ of SEA Screening Source: (EPA, 2021)

Section 1: General Details	
Type and title of P/P:	Draft Monaghan Town LTP
Name of P/P Maker:	Monaghan County Council
Date:	2025
Section 2: Status of P/P maker	
Is the P/P prepared and/or adopted by an authority at national, regional or local level or prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The Draft LTP is being prepared by Arup in conjunction with MCC.</p> <p>A competent authority for the purpose of SEA is defined under S.I. No. 435 of 2004 as <i>“the authority which is, or the authorities which are jointly, responsible for the preparation of a plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme”</i>.</p> <p>MCC is the local authority for County Monaghan. As such, the Draft LTP can be considered a document prepared by an authority at local level.</p>
Is the P/P required by legislative, regulatory, or administrative provisions?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Northern and Western Region provides for the preparation of LTPs for Key Towns (Monaghan Town is defined as a ‘key town’ in the RSES).</p> <p>Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 6.27 sets out the requirement for same:</p> <p><i>“The Assembly supports the collaborative preparation of Local Transport Plans led by local authorities in conjunction with the NTA and other stakeholders, based on Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) guidance and alignment with environmental policy, for Athlone, Letterkenny, Sligo Town, Cavan Town, Monaghan Town, Castlebar, Roscommon Town, Ballinasloe, Carrickon Shannon, Donegal Town, Tuam, Ballina and other areas as may be determined. The LTP will inform the urban area plans, development plans, local area plans and other planning framework documents.”</i></p> <p>Further, Chapter 7 Transport and Infrastructure of the Draft Monaghan County Development Plan 2025-2031 sets out provisions for the preparation of the Draft LTP.</p> <p>Ultimately, it can be considered that the Monaghan LTP is required by administrative provisions.</p>
Section 3: Nature of the P/P	
Is the P/P prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The Draft LTP provides a strategic framework for the future development of transport infrastructure in the study area. The Draft LTP is therefore considered to be a plan prepared for the transport sector.</p>
Does the P/P provide a framework for the development consent for projects listed in the EIA Directive?	<p>Uncertain.</p> <p>Some provisions set out in the Draft LTP could be considered to be <i>‘projects listed in the EIA Directive,’</i> for example, the proposed new mid-town link road scheme (from Old Cross Square to Annahagh roundabout). This Emerging Preferred Road Network provision could be considered to have potential to set a framework for development consent for projects listed in the EIA Directive, in particular under Annex II Part 10 (e) of the EIA Directive,</p> <p><i>‘Construction of roads, harbours and port installations, including fishing harbours (projects not included in Annex I)’.</i></p> <p>Further, as the EIA Directive is transposed into Irish law through amendments to the Roads Act 1993, Regulation 8 of the European Union (Roads Act 1993)</p>

	<p>(Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2019 (S.I. No. 279 of 2019) was also reviewed to ascertain whether the proposed new mid-town link road scheme could constitute a type of proposed road development under Section 50(1)(a)(iv) of the Roads Act 1993, as follows:</p> <p><i>‘(a) the construction of a new road of four or more lanes, or the realignment or widening of an existing road so as to provide four or more lanes, where such new, realigned or widened road would be eight kilometres or more in length in a rural area, or 500 meters or more in length in an urban area;</i></p> <p><i>(b) the construction of a new bridge or tunnel which would be 100 meters or more in length. ’</i></p> <p>Overall, the question of whether the Draft LTP, in and of itself, provides a framework for the development consent for projects listed in the EIA Directive is uncertain.</p>
Is the P/P likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site which leads to a requirement for Article 6 or 7 assessments?	<p>No.</p> <p>A report for the purposes of Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening has been prepared by Arup on behalf of MCC which concludes that the Draft LTP is not likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site which might lead to a requirement for Article 6 or 6 assessments.</p>
Section 4: Exemptions	
Is the sole purpose of the P/P to serve national defence or civil emergency or is it a financial/budget P/P or is it co-financed by the current SF/RDF programme?	<p>No.</p> <p>The sole purpose of the Draft LTP is not to serve national defence or civil emergency, and the Draft LTP is not a financial budget, or co-financed by the current Structural Funds and Regional Development Funds programme.</p>
Section 5: Conclusion	
<p>Does fall within scope:</p> <p>1. The plan does apply to one or more of the sectors in the SEA Directive and does provide a framework for development consent of projects requiring EIA</p> <p>AND/OR</p> <p>the plan is likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site and, therefore, requires an assessment under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. SEA is therefore required.</p> <p>2. There is uncertainty about the nature of the P/P and whether it may give rise to significant effects on the environment. The plan cannot be screened out for SEA or AA and requires a more detailed screening assessment.</p> <p>Does NOT fall within scope:</p> <p>3. The plan does not apply to any of the sectors in the SEA Directive and does not provide a framework for development consent of projects requiring EIA,</p> <p>AND</p> <p>The plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site and therefore does not require an assessment under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive. SEA is therefore not required.</p> <p>For outcome 1 the plan maker should advise that they will move forward to SEA scoping. For outcome 2 the P/P should move to Stage 2 Screening. For outcome 3 the applicability template should be completed and kept on file.</p>	<p>S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended, defines ‘plans and programmes’ (P/P) as those:</p> <p><i>“(a) which are subject to preparation and/or adoption by an authority at national, regional or local level or which are prepared by an authority for adoption, through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government, and</i></p> <p><i>(b) which are required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions.”</i></p> <p>The Draft LTP is prepared by MCC, an authority at a local level, and is required by provisions of the RSES for the Northern and Western Region, as well as the Monaghan CDP. It is therefore a type of ‘plan or programme’ defined under S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended.</p> <p>As the Draft LTP falls under the definition of ‘plans and programmes’, the requirement to carry out environmental assessment is dependent on the Draft LTP being of the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>which are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism and town and country planning or land use, and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive, or</i> <i>which are not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site but, either individually or in combination with other plans, are likely to have a significant effect on any such site.</i> <p>The Draft LTP is a plan that is being prepared for the transport sector. However, there is uncertainty as to whether it could be considered a plan that, in and of itself, provides the framework for development consent for projects listed in the EIA Directive.</p> <p>The Draft Monaghan CDP, may set a framework for development consent for listed in the EIA Directive.</p> <p>Thus, the findings of the Applicability Screening are as follows:</p> <p>The SEA Directive may apply - The Draft LTP may be within the remit of the SEA Directive as <i>“there is uncertainty in relation to any of the provisions considered at the Applicability Stage, and so a case-by-case determination will be required. Proceed to Stage 2 Screening.”</i></p>

6.2 Stage 2 ‘Screening’

As outlined in Section 0, Stage 1 ‘Applicability’ of the SEA Screening methodology constitutes the use of Template 2, based upon the relevant Applicability steps. Template 2 is reproduced as Table 6.

Table 6 Stage 2 ‘Screening’ of SEA Screening Source: (EPA, 2021)

Section 1: Details of the P/P	
Name of the P/P Maker:	Monaghan County Council
Title of the P/P:	Draft Monaghan Town LTP
Type of plan:	Transport Plan
Date:	May 2025
Section 2: Key Information about the P/P	
Background and Context of the P/P	The Draft LTP presents a comprehensive analysis of the current transport situation in Monaghan Town with the opportunities and constraints associated with the transport network identified and used to inform potential solutions to improve the transport network for all users.
Purpose of the P/P	The aim of the Draft LTP is to establish a strategic framework for the future development of transport infrastructure in the study area.
Geographical Area Covered by the P/P	Monaghan Town in County Monaghan (refer to Figure 2 in Section 0 of this report).
Content of the P/P	<p>The Draft LTP provides a baseline assessment of the current transport situation within Monaghan Town, including an analysis of relevant policies, land use, population demographics and transport infrastructure.</p> <p>The Draft LTP also assesses the opportunities and constraints associated with the transport network identified and uses this information to inform potential solutions to improve the transport network in Monaghan Town for all users.</p> <p>The following areas have been assessed as part of the Draft LTP, existing infrastructure, public transport routes and active travel options in Monaghan Town.</p> <p>The Draft LTP proposes five principles and six objectives to implement the vision for Monaghan Town.</p> <p>Finally, the Draft LTP establishes an Emerging Preferred Strategy (EPS) for each area of the transport networks assessed and outlines a number of transport measures designed to achieve the project's objectives. The EPS of the Draft LTP consists of the following networks and measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerging Preferred Active Travel Network; • Emerging Preferred Road Network; • Proposed Public Transport Measures; and • Proposed Complimentary Measures.
Section 3: Potential for Significant Environmental Effects	
The degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size, operating conditions or by allocating resources. Will it set out locations, rules, standards or criteria that will guide developments later in the planning hierarchy? This could include guidelines, legislation, plans, masterplans etc.	<p>The EPS and complimentary measures outlined in the Draft LTP are location and size specific. As such the Draft LTP, in and of itself, could be considered a plan that could guide development later in the planning hierarchy.</p> <p>However, it is important to consider the Draft LTP in the context of the planning hierarchy in which it sits. According to the Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) and Local Transport Plans Advice Note (National Transport Authority, 2024),</p> <p><i>“the ABTA process and resultant LTP represents the lowest tier of the National Planning Framework (NPF) for the integration of land use and transport planning and the achievement of compact smart growth.”</i></p> <p>The Advice Note goes on to state that one of the primary purposes of the ABTA is:</p> <p><i>“to fully integrate land use planning and transport planning at the earliest stages of plan preparation.”</i></p> <p>The Advice Note also states that:</p> <p><i>“It is essential, therefore, that the objectives and measures in the LTP reflect higher level transport policies and priorities and that there is a clear demonstrable link in each LTP to this hierarchy. It is by this pathway that land use planning can fully account for, and be fully integrated with, transport planning at the local level.”</i></p> <p>Following a detailed review of the draft Monaghan LTP, it can be determined that all of the provisions set out in the draft LTP are reflective of higher-level transport policies, in accordance with the NTA Advice Note. Further, it can be determined that all of the provisions set out in the</p>

	<p>draft Monaghan LTP have already been set out in the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031, by means of the Monaghan Town Settlement Plan 2025-2031.</p> <p>As previously discussed, the Draft Monaghan CDP provides an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Monaghan over the timescale of the Plan. It is considered that the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031 which comes into effect this year (2025) and will replace the existing Monaghan CDP 2019-2025, ultimately sets the framework for development consent for projects listed in the EIA Directive.</p> <p>Thus, the degree to which the Draft LTP, in and of itself, will set a framework for projects and other activities that will guide developments later in the planning hierarchy is not considered to be significant when reviewed in the context of the hierarchy of national, regional and local plans in which it sits, and the relevant policy which underpins the Irish planning process. The provisions outlined in the Draft LTP are provided for under the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031.</p>
The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	<p>As previously discussed, and following a detailed review of the Draft Monaghan LTP, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the Draft LTP are reflective of higher-level transport policies, in accordance with the NTA Advice Note. Further, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the Draft Monaghan LTP have already been set out in the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031.</p> <p>As previously discussed, the Draft Monaghan CDP provides an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Monaghan over the timescale of the Plan. It is considered that the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031 which comes into effect this year (2025) and will replace the existing Monaghan CDP 2019-2025, ultimately sets the framework for development consent for projects listed in the EIA Directive.</p> <p>Thus, the degree to which the Draft LTP, in and of itself, will set a framework for projects and other activities that will guide developments later in the planning hierarchy is not considered to be significant when reviewed in the context of the hierarchy of national, regional and local plans in which it sits, and the relevant policy which underpins the Irish planning process. The provisions outlined in the Draft LTP are provided for under the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031.</p> <p>No lower-level plans are anticipated to be prepared that would sit under the Draft LTP in a hierarchy.</p>
<p>The relevance of the plan, for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.</p> <p>The degree to which the P/P addresses environmental and sustainability issues. Does it provide for conservation or protection of any environmental receptor?</p>	<p>As outlined in Section 4.1, the aim of the Draft LTP is to establish a strategic framework for the future development of transport infrastructure in the study area. The Draft LTP promotes active travel through the provision of new and improved cycle infrastructure and the improvement of public transport services.</p> <p>The Draft LTP also makes provision for reduced car dependency in Monaghan Town, which will deliver considerable benefits in terms of reduced congestion, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, enhanced health and wellbeing and has benefits for the public realm.</p>
<p>Environmental problems relevant to the plan.</p> <p>What is the current state of the receiving environment, is water quality / air quality at good status, are populations and areas of protected habitats and species increasing or declining</p>	<p>One relevant ‘environmental problem’ noted in the Draft LTP arises from the dominance of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) that create severance to walking and cycling within Monaghan Town. This has resulted in high levels of congestion within Monaghan town and nearby residential areas.</p> <p>As previously discussed, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the draft Monaghan LTP have already been set out in the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031, by means of the Monaghan Town Settlement Plan 2025-2031.</p> <p>The Draft Monaghan CDP has been subject to full SEA and full AA and thus, it is considered that the baseline environment in Monaghan Town, and relevant environmental problems have been adequately assessed and mitigated against in the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP. Refer to Section 4 ‘The Baseline Environment’ of the SEA Environmental Report and the AA of the Draft CDP for further details.</p>
The relevance of the plan for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	<p>A principal reason for the development of the Draft LTP is the need to respond to national and county level plans including the NPF 2040 and Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031. Both of which include objectives to achieve sustainable development through improving transport infrastructure.</p> <p>The EU Green Deal seeks a 90% reduction in green-house gas emissions by 2050. This requires a substantial reduction in emissions across all sectors including the transport sector meaning significant development of sustainable transportation networks is a necessity. A European Climate Law has been proposed by the European Commission to turn this political commitment into a legal obligation.</p>

	<p>The Draft LTP has potential to contribute to targets set by the EU Green Deal and the objectives of the Draft Monaghan CDP and NPF 2040 by setting a framework that supports the development of infrastructure which encourages sustainable transport methods. For example, increased active travel and public transport usage in Monaghan Town. It is considered that by doing so, there is potential to reduce transport related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Monaghan and in the long term aid GHG emission targets in Ireland/ Europe.</p>
Characteristics of the Effects and of the Area Likely to be Affected, Having Regard in Particular to:	
<p>The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects</p>	<p>As previously discussed, following a detailed review of the draft Monaghan LTP, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the draft LTP are reflective of higher-level transport policies, in accordance with the NTA Advice Note. Further, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the draft Monaghan LTP have already been set out in the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031, by means of the Monaghan Town Settlement Plan 2025-2031.</p> <p>The Draft Monaghan CDP has been subject to full SEA and full AA and thus, it is considered that the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects in Monaghan Town have been adequately assessed and mitigated against in the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP. Refer to the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP for further details.</p>
<p>The cumulative nature of the effects</p>	<p>As previously discussed, following a detailed review of the draft Monaghan LTP, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the draft LTP are reflective of higher-level transport policies, in accordance with the NTA Advice Note. Further, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the draft Monaghan LTP have already been set out in the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031, by means of the Monaghan Town Settlement Plan 2025-2031.</p> <p>The Draft Monaghan CDP has been subject to full SEA and full AA and thus, it is considered that cumulative effects in Monaghan Town have been adequately assessed and mitigated against in the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP. Refer to the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP for further details.</p>
<p>The transboundary nature of the effects.</p>	<p>As previously discussed, following a detailed review of the draft Monaghan LTP, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the draft LTP are reflective of higher-level transport policies, in accordance with the NTA Advice Note. Further, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the draft Monaghan LTP have already been set out in the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031, by means of the Monaghan Town Settlement Plan 2025-2031.</p> <p>The Draft Monaghan CDP has been subject to full SEA and full AA and thus, it is considered that transboundary effects in Monaghan Town have been adequately assessed and mitigated against in the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP. Refer to the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP for further details.</p>
<p>The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)</p>	<p>As previously discussed, following a detailed review of the draft Monaghan LTP, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the draft LTP are reflective of higher-level transport policies, in accordance with the NTA Advice Note. Further, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the draft Monaghan LTP have already been set out in the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031, by means of the Monaghan Town Settlement Plan 2025-2031.</p> <p>The Draft Monaghan CDP has been subject to full SEA and full AA and thus, it is considered that risks to human health and/or the environment in Monaghan Town have been adequately assessed and mitigated against in the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP. Refer to the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP for further details.</p>
<p>The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)</p>	<p>As previously discussed, following a detailed review of the draft Monaghan LTP, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the draft LTP are reflective of higher-level transport policies, in accordance with the NTA Advice Note. Further, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the draft Monaghan LTP have already been set out in the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031, by means of the Monaghan Town Settlement Plan 2025-2031.</p> <p>The Draft Monaghan CDP has been subject to full SEA and full AA and thus, it is considered that the magnitude and spatial extent of potential effects have been adequately assessed and mitigated against in the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP. Refer to the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP for further details.</p>
<p>The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. special natural characteristics or cultural heritage, b. exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values, c. intensive land-use, 	<p>As previously discussed, following a detailed review of the draft Monaghan LTP, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the draft LTP are reflective of higher-level transport policies, in accordance with the NTA Advice Note. Further, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the draft Monaghan LTP have already been set out in the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031, by means of the Monaghan Town Settlement Plan 2025-2031.</p> <p>The Draft Monaghan CDP has been subject to full SEA and full AA and thus, it is considered that the value and vulnerability likely to be affected due to special natural characteristics or cultural heritage, exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values and/or intensive land-use in Monaghan Town have been adequately assessed and mitigated against in the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP. Refer to the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP for further details.</p>

<p>The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status.</p>	<p>As previously discussed, following a detailed review of the draft Monaghan LTP, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the draft LTP are reflective of higher-level transport policies, in accordance with the NTA Advice Note. Further, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the draft Monaghan LTP have already been set out in the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031, by means of the Monaghan Town Settlement Plan 2025-2031.</p> <p>The Draft Monaghan CDP has been subject to full SEA and full AA and thus, it is considered that effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status in Monaghan Town have been adequately assessed and mitigated against in the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP. Refer to the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP for further details.</p>
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Section 5: Summary and Conclusion

The Draft LTP was assessed using the EPA ‘Good Practice SEA Screening Guidance’ (2021) and broadly following the SEA Decision Tree adapted from the research report Development of SEA Methodologies for Plans and Programmes (P/P) in Ireland (Scott and Marsden, 2001).

The EPA guidance states that the overall characteristics of the plan or programme should first be considered, by means of Stage 1 ‘Applicability’ check to see if it falls within the requirements of the SEA Directive. Stage 1 ‘Applicability’ was carried out in Section 6.1 of this report. The findings of the Applicability Screening were as follows:

The SEA Directive may apply - The Draft LTP may be within the remit of the SEA Directive as *“there is uncertainty in relation to any of the provisions considered at the Applicability Stage, and so a case-by-case determination will be required. Proceed to Stage 2 Screening.”*

As the Stage 1 ‘Applicability’ check determined that the plan or programme is of a type that may fall within the requirements of the SEA Directive, the potential environmental significance of implementing the Draft LTP was considered, against the significance criteria outlined in Annex II (2) of the SEA Directive (Stage 2 ‘Screening’). The findings of Stage 2 ‘Screening’ were as follows:

In considering the Draft LTP in the context of the planning hierarchy in which it sits, with reference to the ABTA and Local Transport Plans Advice Note (National Transport Authority, 2024) and following a detailed review of the draft Monaghan LTP, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the Draft LTP are reflective of higher-level transport policies, in accordance with the NTA Advice Note. Further, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the Draft Monaghan LTP have already been set out in the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031, by means of the Monaghan Town Settlement Plan 2025-2031.

As previously discussed, the Draft Monaghan CDP provides an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Monaghan over the timescale of the Plan. It is considered that the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031 which comes into effect this year (2025) and will replace the existing Monaghan CDP 2019-2025, ultimately sets the framework for development consent for projects listed in the EIA Directive.

Thus, the degree to which the Draft LTP, in and of itself, will set a framework for projects and other activities that will guide developments later in the planning hierarchy was not considered to be significant when reviewed in the context of the hierarchy of national, regional and local plans in which it sits, and the relevant policy which underpins the Irish planning process.

Furthermore, the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031 was subject to full SEA in accordance with the requirements of S.I. No. 435 of 2004 (European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011 and full AA in accordance with Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive. Thus, it is considered that any effects likely to occur as a result of the Draft LTP (including effects on population and human health; biodiversity; land and soils; air quality; climate; landscape and visuals; cultural heritage; and material assets in Monaghan Town) have been adequately assessed and mitigated against in the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP. Refer to the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP for further details.

As a result of the findings outlined in this Stage 2 ‘Screening’ assessment table, it is the professional opinion of the author(s) of this report that SEA is not required for the Draft LTP and that the Draft LTP can be screened out at Stage 2 ‘Screening’.

Section 6: Statutory Consultation

As outlined in the EPA ‘Good Practice Guidance for SEA Screening’, prior to finalising any determination on the need for SEA, it is a statutory requirement to consult with the SEA Environmental Authorities. Plan makers are required to notify the EPA for all stages of the SEA process. The remit of the other Environmental Authorities is set out in the relevant SEA Regulations, as amended.

The SEA Environmental Authorities for the purposes of S.I. 435/2004, as amended are:

- Environmental Protection Agency;
- Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine;
- Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage;
- Development Applications Unit of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage; and
- Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications.

Additionally, under S.I. 436/2004 as amended, adjoining local authorities should also be notified.

In certain circumstances, transboundary consultation may be warranted, e.g. where rivers flow between Ireland and Northern Ireland or where shared marine waters occur. In these cases, the Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) should be contacted as the designated Environmental Authority. As the Draft LTP study area is located in

close proximity to the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland boundary, it is a recommendation of this SEA Screening that the Plan maker (MCC) also extend the statutory consultation to include DEARA.

Notice of the screening must be sent to the designated environmental authorities for their consideration for a period of not less than 4 weeks from the date of the notice. A copy of relevant P/P information which has informed the SEA screening (including an outline of the Draft P/P) and the Draft SEA Screening Report should be included with the notice. These documents are considered Draft until the consultation is completed and a final determination is made. The notice must state that the P/P authority is making a new P/P or is modifying a P/P; that the P/P authority must determine if the P/P would have significant effects on the environment having regard to the significance criteria at Schedule 1 of the Regulations; and that a submission or observation in relation to whether or not the implementation of a new P/P would be likely to have significant effects on the environment may be made to the authority within a specified period which shall be not less than 4 weeks from the date of the notice. It should also state that any submissions or observations received will be considered prior to making a determination.

Following the consultation period, the P/P maker and SEA team should update the outline of the Draft Plan and Screening Template to reflect feedback. A determination can then be made on the basis of the screening information and the observations/submissions received.

6.3 Stage 3 – Determination

As soon as practicable after making the final determination as to whether SEA is required or not, the plan maker should make a copy of the decision, including, as appropriate, the reasons for requiring or not requiring an environmental assessment, available for public inspection at the P/P offices and on the website. The P/P maker should also send a copy of the final determination to the relevant SEA environmental authorities notified during screening. This determination should stay linked to the P/P or modification on the website to ensure transparency and provide important information on decision making during the lifetime of the P/P or if any modifications are made.

A Screening Determination Template is provided in Appendix A.1 of this report (as adapted from EPA ‘Good Practice Guidance on SEA Screening’ report). It is recommended as good practice for this be presented on the competent authority headed paper and kept with the plan for the duration of the P/P cycle.

7. Conclusion

The Draft LTP was assessed using the EPA ‘Good Practice SEA Screening Guidance’ (2021) and broadly following the SEA Decision Tree adapted from the research report Development of SEA Methodologies for Plans and Programmes (P/P) in Ireland (Scott and Marsden, 2001).

The EPA guidance states that the overall characteristics of the plan or programme should first be considered, by means of Stage 1 ‘Applicability’ check to see if it falls within the requirements of the SEA Directive. Stage 1 ‘Applicability’ was carried out in Section 6.1 of this report. The findings of the Applicability Screening were as follows:

The SEA Directive may apply - The Draft LTP may be within the remit of the SEA Directive as *“there is uncertainty in relation to any of the provisions considered at the Applicability Stage, and so a case-by-case determination will be required. Proceed to Stage 2 Screening.”*

As the Stage 1 ‘Applicability’ check determined that the plan or programme is of a type that **may** fall within the requirements of the SEA Directive, the potential environmental significance of implementing the Draft LTP was considered, against the significance criteria outlined in Annex II (2) of the SEA Directive (Stage 2 ‘Screening’). The findings of Stage 2 ‘Screening’ were as follows:

In considering the Draft LTP in the context of the planning hierarchy in which it sits, with reference to the ABTA and Local Transport Plans Advice Note (National Transport Authority, 2024) and following a detailed review of the draft Monaghan LTP, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the draft LTP are reflective of higher-level transport policies, in accordance with the NTA Advice Note. Further, it was determined that all of the provisions set out in the draft Monaghan LTP have already been set out in the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031, by means of the Monaghan Town Settlement Plan 2025-2031.

As previously discussed, the Draft Monaghan CDP provides an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Monaghan over the timescale of the Plan. It is considered that the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031 which comes into effect this year (2025) and will replace the existing Monaghan CDP 2019-2025, ultimately sets the framework for development consent for projects listed in the EIA Directive.

Thus, the degree to which the Draft LTP, in and of itself, will set a framework for projects and other activities that will guide developments later in the planning hierarchy was not considered to be significant when reviewed in the context of the hierarchy of national, regional and local plans in which it sits, and the relevant policy which underpins the Irish planning process.

Furthermore, the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031 was subject to full SEA in accordance with the requirements of S.I. No. 435 of 2004 (European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004, as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011 and full AA in accordance with Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive. Thus, it is considered that any effects likely to occur as a result of the Draft LTP (including effects on population and human health; biodiversity; land and soils; air quality; climate; landscape and visuals; cultural heritage; and material assets in Monaghan Town) have been adequately assessed and mitigated against in the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP. Refer to the SEA and AA of the Draft CDP for further details.

As a result of the findings outlined in this Stage 2 ‘Screening’ assessment table, it is the professional opinion of the author(s) of this report that SEA is not required for the Draft LTP and that the Draft LTP can be screened out at Stage 2 ‘Screening’.

Appendix A

A.1 Screening Determination Template

Screening Determination for Strategic Environmental Assessment under SEA Directive 2001/42/EC

as transposed into Irish law under S.I. 435/2004, as amended

Concerning the proposed [Insert P/P name].

[Insert Competent Authority Name] as the Competent Authority for the [Name of P/P] has undertaken screening for SEA under Directive 2001/42/EC. The screening assessment was carried out using the criteria for determining the likely significance of effects as set out in Schedule 1 of S.I. 435/2004, as amended.

Following assessment of the criteria and having regard to the nature of the P/P and the potential for likely significant environmental effects from implementation of the P/P, [Insert Competent Authority Name] has determined that the P/P **will / will not** give rise to likely significant effects on the environment.

This determination has been made following consideration of the information contained in the SEA Screening Report (attached to this determination), the criteria set out in Schedule 1 to S.I. 435/2004 as amended, and consultation feedback from [insert organisations which provided feedback], as statutory Environmental Authorities for SEA.

The principal reasons the P/P [does/does not require an SEA] are as follows:

- [Provide reasons in bullet]

Signed on behalf of [insert CA name]:

Dated:

Attached:

- Outline P/P or modification under consideration;
- SEA Screening Report dated [insert date]; and
- Correspondence from statutory consultees [as appendix to Screening Report]

A.2 Detailed Assessment

Table 7 Detailed Assessment of Emerging Preferred Road Networks¹

Relevant section of the Draft LTP	Details of Emerging Preferred Road Network as detailed in the Draft LTP	Relevant page number of the Draft Monaghan CDP	Relevant roads/ improvement proposals for Monaghan Town as outlined in the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031, as applicable.	Assessment
Section 6.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade of key junctions along N54 including: Margaret Skinnider roundabout. Dason Street junction N54 / Broad Rd with closure of connection from Canal St/ Castle Rd. Old Cross Square Roundabout Junction 	Page 163	<p>Regional Road Policy (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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>It is considered that the proposed junction upgrades, as detailed in the Draft LTP constitute minor development that is not considered to have potential to set a framework for development consent for projects listed in the EIA Directive.</p> <p>Furthermore, it is considered that junction upgrades in County Monaghan have already been assessed as part of the Draft Monaghan CDP. The Draft CDP has been subject to full SEA and AA. Thus, no likely significant are anticipated as a result of this Emerging Preferred Road Network.</p>
Section 6.2	Junction upgrade at Market St/Dawson St junction in town centre to support the town centre traffic circulation strategy.	Page 163	<p>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.</p>	<p>It is considered that the proposed junction upgrade, as detailed in the Draft LTP constitute minor development that is not considered to have potential to set a framework for development consent for projects listed in the EIA Directive.</p> <p>Furthermore, it is considered that junction upgrades in County Monaghan have already</p>

¹ **Note:** Only the Emerging Preferred Road Networks have been assessed as part of this assessment table as it was considered as part of Stage 1 'Applicability Screening' that the Emerging Preferred Road Networks detailed may have potential to set a framework for development consent for projects listed in the EIA Directive, in particular Annex II Part 10 (e) of the EIA Directive, 'Construction of roads, harbours and port installations, including fishing harbours (projects not included in Annex I)'. Whereas, none of the Objectives, Principles, Emerging Preferred Active Travel Networks, Proposed Public Transport Measures and Proposed Complimentary Measures in the Draft LTP were considered to have potential to set a framework for development consent for projects listed in the EIA Directive.

Relevant section of the Draft LTP	Details of Emerging Preferred Road Network as detailed in the Draft LTP	Relevant page number of the Draft Monaghan CDP	Relevant roads/ improvement proposals for Monaghan Town as outlined in the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031, as applicable.	Assessment
				been assessed as part of the Draft Monaghan CDP. The Draft CDP has been subject to full SEA and AA. Thus, no likely significant are anticipated as a result of this Emerging Preferred Road Network.
Section 6.2	Implementation of the proposed mid-town link scheme (from Old Cross Square to Annahagh roundabout)	Page 164-165	Strategic New Routes in Monaghan Town: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a Mid-town transport connection between development lands at Annahagh and the town centre. 	It is considered that the proposed mid-town town transport connection, as detailed in the Draft LTP has already been assessed as part of the Draft Monaghan CDP. The Draft CDP has already been subject to full SEA and AA. Thus, no likely significant are anticipated as a result of this Emerging Preferred Road Network.
Section 6.2	Reclassification of town centre roads		<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>It is considered that the proposed road reclassification, as detailed in the Draft LTP will not constitute any development and does not have potential to set a framework for development consent for projects listed in the EIA Directive.</p> <p>Furthermore, it is considered that improvement works and traffic management facilities in County Monaghan have already been assessed as part of the Draft Monaghan CDP. The Draft CDP has been subject to full SEA and AA. Thus, no likely significant are anticipated as a result of this Emerging Preferred Road Network.</p>
Section 6.2	Corridor preservation for Southern and Northern Links (as detailed in the County Development Plan).	Page 164-165	Strategic New Routes in Monaghan Town: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a Southern link between the R162 Ballybay Road and the N2 Dublin Road. 	It is considered that the corridor preservation for Southern Link, as detailed in the Draft LTP has already been assessed as part of the Draft Monaghan CDP. The Draft CDP has already been subject to full SEA and AA. Thus, no likely significant are anticipated as a result of this Emerging Preferred Road Network.
			Strategic New Routes in Monaghan Town: <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 7.3.0) 	It is considered that the corridor preservation for Northern Link, as detailed in the Draft LTP has already been assessed as part of the Draft Monaghan CDP. The Draft CDP has already

Relevant section of the Draft LTP	Details of Emerging Preferred Road Network as detailed in the Draft LTP	Relevant page number of the Draft Monaghan CDP	Relevant roads/ improvement proposals for Monaghan Town as outlined in the Draft Monaghan CDP 2025-2031, as applicable.	Assessment
				been subject to full SEA and AA. Thus, no likely significant are anticipated as a result of this Emerging Preferred Road Network.