

**Environmental Report
for the
Draft
County Donegal
Development Plan
2024-2030**
(Including Proposed Material Alterations)



**Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall**
Donegal County Council

Community Development & Planning Services

~~August~~ **February 2024**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Introduction	1
1.1	BACKGROUND TO THE DRAFT COUNTY DONEGAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (CDP) 2024-2030	1
1.2	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE CDP 2024-2030	1
1.3	SCREENING THE SEA	3
1.4	SCOPING THE SEA	3
1.5	APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT	5
1.6	CHECKLIST OF CONTENTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT	6
2	Outline of the Contents and Main Objectives of the CDP 2024-2030 and Relationship with Other Relevant Plans	9
2.1	OUTLINE OF THE CONTENTS AND MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE COUNTY DONEGAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2024-2030	9
2.1.1	Outline of Contents and Main Objectives.....	9
2.1.2	Geographical Scope/Land use Zoning Map	16
2.1.3	Temporal Scope	16
2.2	RELATIONSHIP OF THE CDP 2024-2030 WITH OTHER RELEVANT PLANS	20
2.2.1	Ireland 2040 Our Plan National Planning Framework (NPF)	21
2.2.2	Northern and Western Regional Assembly Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (NWRA RSES)	21
2.2.3	The Letterkenny Plan and Local Transport Plan 2023-2029	22
3	Relevant Aspects of the Current State of the Environment and Likely Evolution thereof without Implementation of the CDP 2024-2030	23
3.1	BIODIVERSITY, FLORA AND FAUNA.....	23
3.1.1	Natura 2000/European Sites And Associated Species	24
3.1.1	Corncrake	29
3.1.2	Freshwater Pearl Mussel	30
3.1.3	Natural Heritage Areas and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas	31
3.1.4	Designated Shellfish Waters	32
3.2	POPULATION AND HUMAN HEALTH.....	35
3.2.1	Population and Population Trends	35
3.2.2	Human Health	36
3.3	SOIL AND GEOLOGY	38
3.4	WATER.....	41
3.4.1	Waterbodies in Donegal, Environmental Pressures and the Water Framework Directive.	41
3.4.2	Water Quality in Donegal	42
3.4.3	Wastewater Treatment in Donegal	44

- 3.4.4 Drinking Water46
- 3.4.5 Bathing Water Quality.....46
- 3.5 AIR QUALITY48
- 3.6 CLIMATE CHANGE.....51
- 3.7 MATERIAL ASSETS.....56
- 3.8 CULTURAL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE59
- 3.9 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL60
- 3.10 LIKELY EVOLUTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT WITHOUT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CDP 2024-2030
.....64
- 4 Environmental Characteristics of the Areas Likely to be Significantly Affected by the
CDP 2024 69**
- 5 Existing Environmental Problems of Relevance to the CDP 2024-2030..... 75**
- 6 Environmental Protection Objectives of Relevance to the County Donegal
Development Plan 2024-2030 79**
- 6.1 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OBJECTIVES IN OTHER PLANS, PROGRAMMES AND POLICIES RELEVANT
TO THE CDP 2024-203079
- 7 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects on the Environment of Implementing the
CDP 2024-2030 81**
- 7.1 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY81
- 7.1.1 Legislative Requirements in relation to the assessment of 'Likely Significant
Effects'81
- 7.1.2 Guidance in Relation to the Assessment of Likely Significant Effects on the
Environment in the Environmental Report.82
- 7.1.3 Assessment Methodology Employed to Assess the Likely Significant Effects .82
- 7.2 SUMMARY ASSESSMENT MATRIX OF THE LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT OF
IMPLEMENTING THE CDP 2024-2030.....89
- 7.3 OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS ON KEY ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS..... 135
- 7.3.1 Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna 135
- 7.3.2 Population and Human Health 138
- 7.3.3 Soils and Geology 140
- 7.3.4 Water 142
- 7.3.5 Air 144
- 7.3.6 Climatic Factors 147
- 7.3.7 Material Assets 152
- 7.3.8 Cultural Heritage 156
- 7.3.9 Landscape and Visual 159
- 7.4 INTER PLAN/PROJECT IN-COMBINATION AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS 169

- 8 Measures Envisaged to Prevent, Reduce and as Fully as Possible Offset Any Significant Adverse Environmental Effects on the Environment of the CDP 2024-2030 179**
 - 8.1 INTRODUCTION179
 - 8.2 MEASURES TO PREVENT, REDUCE AND AS FULLY AS POSSIBLE OFFSET ANY SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS RELATED TO THE CDP 2024-2030.179
- 9. Selection of Alternatives for the County Donegal Development Plan 2024-2030 187**
- 10 Monitoring of Significant Environmental Effects 195**
- 11 Non-Technical Summary and Conclusion 203**

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the Draft County Donegal Development Plan (CDP) 2024-2030

The County Donegal Development Plan (CDP) 2024-2030 (hereafter also referred to as the CDP 2024-2030) is a land use plan for County Donegal prepared in accordance with the provisions of the of Sections 9-17 of the Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended). The plan sets out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of County Donegal including: a written statement with core strategy, development objectives and policies, Area Plans for Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Bundoran, planning frameworks for other settlements, and is framed within the wider context of the National Planning Framework (NPF), the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Assembly 2020-2032, other relevant national planning guidance.

The plan will inter alia guide local authority development management decisions around the nature and location of new residential, commercial and retail development and help guide public investment choices around urban regeneration, transport, water, wastewater, community and recreational infrastructure.

1.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment of the CDP 2024-2030

In summary Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a systematic and effective multistage process for ensuring that environmental issues are taken into account at every stage in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and review of plans, programmes and strategies. The preparation of an Environmental Report is a key part of this assessment process. In accordance with the SEA Directive this Environmental Report contains inter alia information on: the main objectives of the plan and relationship with other plan, the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment, the environmental characteristics areas likely to be significantly affected, existing environmental problems, relevant international European and national environmental protection objectives, the likely significant effects of implementing the plan on a range of environmental issues, measures to prevent reduce and offset significant adverse effects, information on alternatives, monitoring measures, and a non-technical summary. It should be read in conjunction with the Natura Impact Report (NIR), the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Report (SFRAR) and the Strategic Water Status Impact Assessment Report (SWSIAR).

The requirement for an SEA was introduced by Directive 2001/42/EC of the 27th June 2001 ("the SEA Directive") European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (Statutory Instrument Number (SI No. 435 of 2004) and the Planning and Development (SEA) Regulations 2004 (SI No. 436 of 2004) including European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 200 of 2011). Article 1 thereof set out the objective of the Directive as:

"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 and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development, by ensuring that, in accordance with this Directive, an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the Environment".

This SEA (and AA) has been prepared with due regard to, and in order to ensure compliance with the following legislation:

- The SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) and the Habitats (92/43/EEC) and Birds Directives (79/409/EEC);
- The European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (Statutory Instrument Number (SI No. 435 of 2004);
- The European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 (SI No. 200 of 2011);
- The Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2011; and • The European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011.

In addition to complying with the legislation, the processes has been undertaken taking into account the following guidance and associated documents:

- Implementation of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC): Guidelines for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities. Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2004;
- Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. Guidance for Planning Authorities. Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009;
- Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites: Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, European Commission Environment DG, 2000;
- Managing Natura 2000 sites: The Provisions of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC: European Commission, 2000;
- Guidance on Integrating Climate Change and Biodiversity into Strategic Environmental Assessment, European Commission, 2013;
- Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment – Streamlining AA, SEA and EIA Processes: Practitioner’s Manual, Environment Protection Agency, 2013 ;
- EPA GISEA Manual: Current Practice and Potential on the Application of Geographical Information Systems as a Support Tool in Strategic Environmental Assessment of Irish Land Use Plans, Environment Protection Agency, 2009 ;
- Emerging Guidance on Alternatives, Environment Protection Agency, ongoing ; and
- Relevant European Court of Justice Judgements.

In March 2022 the Minister of Housing, Local Government and Heritage issued the ‘Strategic Environmental Assessment Guidelines for Regional Assemblies and Planning Authorities’ under Sections 23(8) and 28(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended). Donegal County Council (“DCC”) as a Planning Authority is obliged to have regard to such guidelines in the performance of its functions and that requirement has been observed in the preparation of this Environmental Report.

The SEA Guidelines outline the SEA process and set out the following requisite steps, as outlined in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Steps in the SEA Processes for County Donegal Development Plan 2024-2030

Screening of the Draft County Donegal Development Plan 2024: Determines whether SEA is required.	Mandatory under A.13 of Planning and Development Regulations 2001(as amended)
Scoping of the CDP 2024-2030: Consultation with Statutory bodies and other interested parties on the scope and level of detail to be considered in the assessment of the Report.	Completed Q3 2022
Preparation of Environmental Report: An assessment of the likely significant impacts on the environment as a result of the implementation of the Draft CDP 2024. The Environmental Report is the output of this part of the SEA process.	Current Stage
Publication of and public consultation on the Draft CDP 2024 and associated Environmental Report.	To be Completed
Preparation of an addendum to the Environment Report in relation to any proposed Material Alternations to the Draft CDP 2024	To be Completed
Publication of and public consultation any Material Alteration of the Draft CDP 2024 and any associated Addendum to the Environmental Report	To be Completed

Making of CDP 2024 and Preparation of an SEA Statement summarising how environmental considerations and consultation have been integrated into CDP 2024	To be Completed
Publication of the Adopted CDP 2024 and SEA Statement	To be Completed

1.3 Screening the SEA

The first step in the SEA process was to 'screen' the County Donegal Development Plan 2024. However Article 13B of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) states that *"Where— (a) the population or the target population of the area of a planning authority is 10,000 persons or more, the planning authority will prepare an environmental report of the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the new plan"*.

Consequently, given that the population of County Donegal area is greater than 10,000 an SEA process must be undertaken. This Screening opinion was communicated to the EPA SEA unit. The next step was to conduct SEA Scoping and prepare an Environmental Report

1.4 Scoping the SEA

As noted above, an Environmental Report is required by reason of Regulation 13B of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended). Therefore in accordance with Article 13D of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) a Scoping exercise was conducted including the preparation of a Scoping Issues Paper/Report to generate comment from statutory consultees and relevant stakeholders about key environmental issues. Said Issues Paper/Report provided details on the nature of the plan, the likely scale, nature and location of development within the area during the lifetime of the plan, possible environmental effects arising from the plan, alternatives and the scope and level of detail expected in the environmental report. The scoping report can be accessed on www.donegaldevplan.ie

In addition, the following environmental authorities and planning authorities were notified on the 12th of May 2022 that an Environmental Report would be prepared and submissions in relation to the scope and level of detail to be included in said report were invited from same:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM)
- Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC)
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH)
- Sligo County Council
- Leitrim County Council
- Derry City & Strabane District Council
- Fermanagh & Omagh District Council
- Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council
- Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (Northern Ireland).
- Department for Infrastructure (Northern Ireland)

Submissions were received from the following consultees:

- Department for Communities (Historic Environment Division).
- Northern Ireland Environment Agency (SEA Team).
- Department of Agriculture Food and Marine (Environmental Co-ordination Unit).

These submissions are provided in **Appendix A**, and the issues raised are summarised in Table 1.2 below. The comments received were taken on board in the preparation of this Environmental Report, where appropriate as appears from the responses in Table 1.2. In this regard all environmental aspects

listed in Annex I(f) of the SEA Directive (i.e. biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage and landscape and interrelationship between same) were 'scoped' in as a result of the scoping exercise.

Table 1.2 Submissions received from Consultees

Ref	Submission by	Summary of Issues raised	Response
1	Department for Communities (Historic Environment Division).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> States that they operate a service level agreement with DAERA in relation to SEA in relation to cultural heritage. Welcomes that cultural heritage is recognised as a transboundary concern, consideration of potential transboundary impacts is relevant, the historic environment influences landscape character and heritage assets correlate to other assets in either jurisdiction. Advises that adequate consideration be afforded to potential effects on heritage assets and their settings including shared landscape context. Attaches links to NI historic environment digital datasets and historic environment map viewer. Provides a contact for datasets specific to NI's marine historic environment. Advises referring to the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland 	Comments Noted. This report will consider the potential transboundary effects of the plan in relation to the Cultural Heritage and the Landscape including the historic environment.
2	Northern Ireland Environment Agency (SEA Team).	<p>Natural Environment Division Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> States that where RoI shares a border with NI there is potential for transboundary impact and suggests adequate mitigation and monitoring measures are highlighted in the ER to ensure no adverse environmental impacts on NI. Requests that the ER contains a clear statement and reasons whether or not the plan is likely to have a significant effect on Northern Ireland. States that the plan should consider transboundary issues and impacts on NI including recognising NI designations. Highlights potential impacts on migratory species such as Salmon and that NI European sites priority habitats, river basins, and landscape types also require special attention. States that the Appropriate Assessment should include designated sites within NI and refers to the status of habitats and species available on the JNCC website including Article 17 and 12 reports. Refers to various NI specific plans and strategies and information sources which may be considered/referenced. <p>Marine and Fisheries Division Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommends considering seascape including the Lough Foyle Regional 	<p>Comments Noted.</p> <p>The ER will Assess the likely significant effects of the plan across a range of environmental topics including biodiversity, water quality, landscape and marine areas, including any transboundary effects</p> <p>The ER will also take into account the conclusions of the Natura Impact Report of the plan which shall also consider the impact of the plan on transboundary European sites and migratory species.</p> <p>The ER will also detail the mitigation and monitoring measures in relation to the likely significant effects. However, given the multifaceted nature of said assessment it may not be possible to provide a singular/overarching statement as to whether the plan will have a significant effect on NI.</p>

Ref	Submission by	Summary of Issues raised	Response
		<p>Seascape Character area and the North Coast Strands and dunes Regional Seascape character area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommends considering potential adverse impacts on marine protecting area (e.g. Lough Foyle SPA, Magilligan SAC, Lough Foyle Ramsar site). • Recommends large screening ranges for impacts on Seals and Porpoises. • States that various NI specific policies and legislation should be considered. • Marine Plan Team advises that the sustainable consideration of marine issues will be extremely pertinent to the preparation of the CDP and any transboundary issues and highlights NI specific Marine Plans and guidance. <p>Water Management Unit Comments States that DAERA's Draft River Basin Management Plan 2021-2027 should be considered as part of the assessment</p> <p>Drinking Water Inspectorate Comments Highlights the importance of groundwater and recommends consultations with NI Water Ltd.</p>	
3	Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine (Environmental Co-ordination Unit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlights the importance of commercial sea fishing. • states that it is essential that any negative impacts on fisheries are avoided. • Emphasises the importance of evaluating potential impacts on commercial sea fishing activities. • Recommends engagement with the fishing industry. 	<p>Comments Noted. The ER will take into account the findings of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The associated Strategic Water Status Impact Assessment Report of the plan which will specifically analyse the effects of the plan vis-à-vis the potential of conflict with the Water Framework Directive Objectives whose remit covers transitional and coastal waters. • The associated Natura Impact Report which will analyse the effects on the plan on, inter alia marine based Natura 2000 sites.

1.5 Appropriate Assessment

The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora obliges member states to designate, protect and conserve habitats and species of importance in a European Union context. Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires that *"Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the conservation of a site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives."*

A Natura Impact Report (NIR) of the Plan was completed in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (92/443/EEC), and in accordance with the requirements of Part XAB of the Planning and Development Act (2000), as amended.

The NIR concluded that adoption and implementation of CDP 2024-2030 will have no adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites due to the inclusion of mitigation measures and the safeguarding objectives/policies.

1.6 Checklist of Contents of Environmental Report

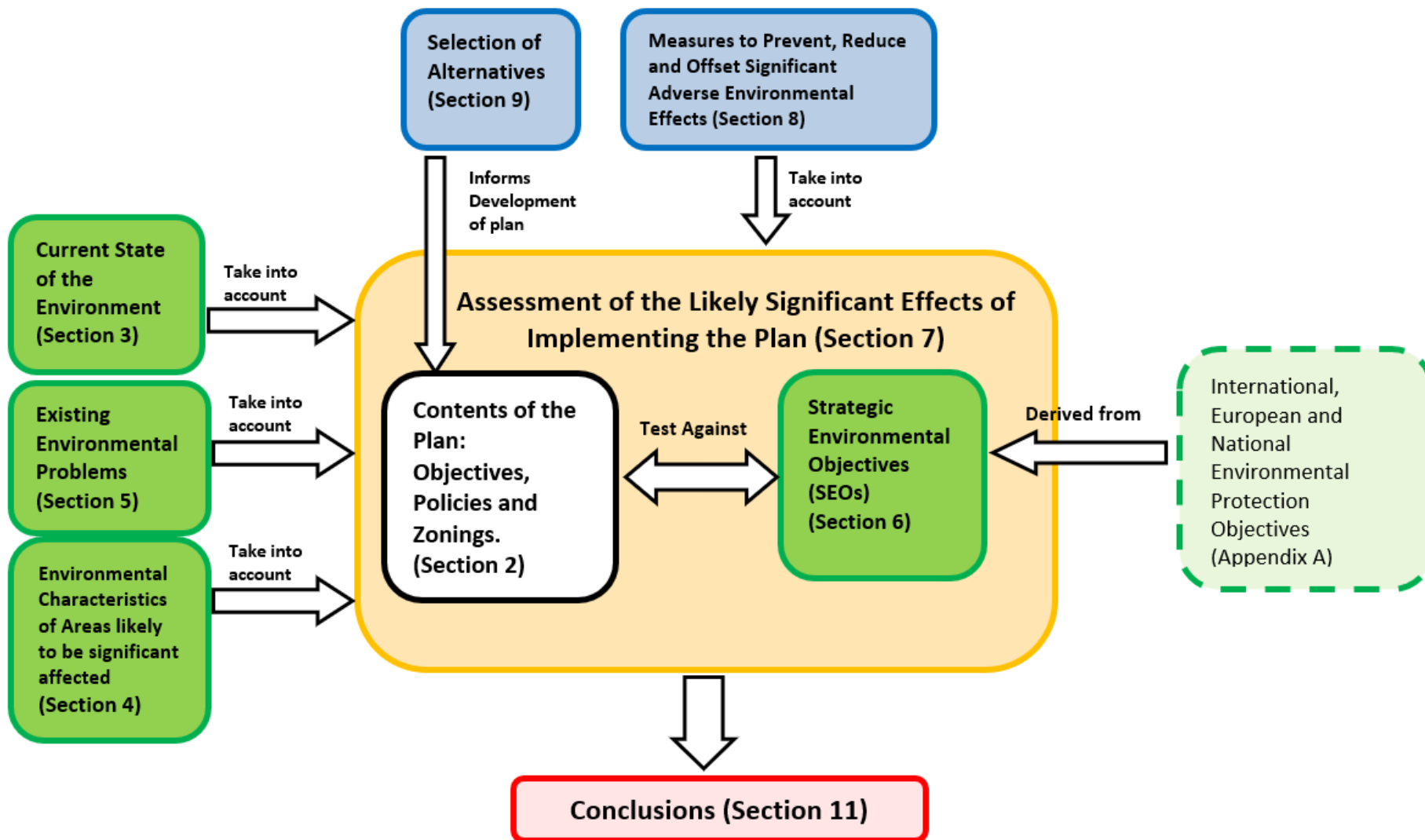
Table 1.3 sets out the information to be contained within the Environmental Report as set out in Annex 1 of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) and Schedule 2B of the 2001 Regulations and as per and indicates where in this Report each is included.

Table 1.3 Checklist of Contents of Environmental Report

Contents of Environmental Report		Section of Report
(a)	An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans.	Section 2 – Contents and Main Objectives of CDP 2024 and Relationship with Other Plans.
(b)	The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan.	Section 3 – Relevant Aspects of the Current State of the Environment and Likely Evolution thereof without Implementation of the CDP 2024
(c)	The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.	Section 4 – Environmental Characteristics of the Areas Likely to be Affected by the CDP 2024
(d)	Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to the Birds Directive or Habitats Directive.	Section 0 - Existing Environmental Problems of Relevance to The CDP 2024
(e)	The environmental protection objectives, established at international, European Union or national level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.	Section 6 - Environmental Protection Objectives of Relevance to The CDP 2024 & Appendix A.
(f)	The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors.	Section 7 – Assessment of the Likely Significant Effects on the Environment of Implementing the CDP 2024
(g)	The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan.	Section 8 - Measures Envisaged to Prevent, Reduce and as Fully as Possible Offset Any Significant Adverse Environmental Effects on the Environment of The CDP 2024
(h)	An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.	Section 9 - Selection of Alternatives for The CDP 2024
(i)	A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring of the significant environmental effects of implementation of the plan.	Section 10 - Monitoring of Significant Environmental Effects.

Contents of Environmental Report		Section of Report
(j)	A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings	Section 11 – Non Technical Summary and Conclusion

Figure 1.1 Infographic: How this Environmental Report Works



2 Outline of the Contents and Main Objectives of the CDP 2024-2030 and Relationship with Other Relevant Plans

2.1 Outline of the Contents and Main Objectives of the County Donegal Development Plan 2024-2030

An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan is set out in section 2.1.1 below. The geographical scope of the plan is detailed in Section 2.1.2. The temporal scope of the plan is detailed in Section 2.1.3. The relationship of the plan with other plans and programmes is set out in Section 2.2. The legal status of the plan has already been set out in Section 1.1.

2.1.1 Outline of Contents and Main Objectives

Table 2.1 Outline of Content and Main Objectives

Chapter	Objective Ref.	Outline of Content or Objective
The Draft County Donegal Development Plan 2024-2030		
Section A:		
Introduction	S-O-1:	To plan for population growth to 183,500 people by 2031 in line with the NPF, and to seek to realise a further population uplift of upwards of 200,000 people by 2040.
	S-O-2:	To assert County Donegal as having a key role within the area of the Northern and Western Regional Assembly, including realising the potential of the North-West City Region and the Atlantic Economic Corridor.
	S-O-3:	To support growth of the County through an 'All of County Strategy' in order to ensure effective development and to harness particular strengths and opportunities that exist within the different areas of the County.
	S-O-4:	To support the development and implementation of a sustainable economic model for County Donegal embracing growth in areas such as innovation, research and development, rural diversification, tourism initiatives, energy advances and the promotion of sustainable start up enterprises as an integral component of accelerating socio-economic growth throughout the County and in a Regional, Cross Border and National context.
	S-O-5:	To prioritise regeneration and renewal of the County's towns, villages and rural areas in order to support vibrant and strengthened communities and drivers of economic growth.
	S-O-6:	To protect, enhance and appropriately harness the unique quality and diversity of the environment in the County, through a wide range of measures, supported by proper planning and sustainable development.
	S-O-7:	To progress and ultimately carry out/implement the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal (TEN-T PRIPD) as one of critical strategic importance to Donegal subject to the granting of the required statutory approvals for same and the terms and conditions of any such approvals (if granted).
	S-O-X	To retain, promote, and drive Donegal's position as a premier domestic and international tourism destination, with a focus on developing green and sustainable tourism.
	S-O-X	To maintain the strategic function, capacity and safety of the national roads network, and to ensure that the existing extensive transport networks, discrete sections of which have been enhanced are maintained to a high level to ensure quality levels of service, safety, accessibility and connectivity to transport users.
Core Strategy	CS-O-1:	To support the growth of Letterkenny and its metropolitan area as the key driver of population and economic growth in the County.
	CS-O-2:	To support the growth of a network of 'County Growth Drivers and 'Service Towns' as key locations of population growth (providing for an additional approximate 5500 persons by 2030.
	CS-O-3:	To support vibrant 'Rural Settlements' and 'Open Countryside' by providing for an

Chapter	Objective Ref.	Outline of Content or Objective
		additional population of approximately 7000 persons by 2030.
	CS-O-4:	To seek alignment of investment in infrastructure with the priorities for growth established in the settlement structure unless, in specific instances, environmental constraints prevent such investment, environmental issues demand investment elsewhere or innovative opportunities arise for strategic investment of regional significance at alternative locations.
	CS-O-5	To pursue opportunities for further investment in essential infrastructure.
	CS-O-6:	To coordinate and promote the delivery of key roads and access infrastructure (including the A5 Western Transport Corridor and A6 road projects, the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal and improvements to the TEN-T network generally and the Bridgend Bypass Project) with the other relevant authorities including partners in the North West Strategic Growth Partnership and within the Northern and Western Regional Assembly so as to result in effective strategic connections to and throughout the County.
	CS-O-7:	To support economic growth throughout the County through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The establishment of Letterkenny as a centre for economic growth across the sectors, in particular through the promotion of the existing business park, consolidation of the town centre including the prioritising of improvements to public realm, the delivery of key road and access infrastructure, through a proactive approach to enable the delivery of key regeneration sites. (b) To continue to support 'County Growth Drivers and 'Service Towns' as critical drivers of growth outside of Letterkenny. (c) To continue to support the regeneration, renewal and development of the County's towns and villages over the life of the Plan. (d) To continue to identify and harness opportunities arising as a consequence of the impact of Brexit for new economic investment particularly within the border region.-
Climate Change	CA-O-1	promote sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas including measures to reduce energy demand and reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and address the necessity of adaptation to climate change,
	CA-O-1	support and implement: the UN Sustainable Development Goals, NPF Climate Change National Policy Objectives, objectives in climate Action Plan 2021, relevant Regional Policy Objectives in the RSES, and actions in DCC's Climate Adaptation Strategy
Town and Villages	TV-O-1:	To identify appropriate regeneration and renewal initiatives, primarily through enhancement schemes to strengthen communities in specific Layer 3 rural towns/areas namely; Churchill, Convoy, Dunkineely, Kilmacrennan, Mountcharles, Newtowncunningham and St. Johnston.
	TV-O-2:	To support initiatives, including collaboration across the public, private and community and voluntary sectors, to strengthen and improve the physical environment of towns and villages and encourage positive place-making.
	TV-O-3:	To seek innovation in addressing infrastructural constraints in the County's 'Strategic Towns'.
	TV-O-4:	To identify 'vacant' sites and 'regeneration sites' in urban areas in accordance with the Urban
	TV-O-5:	To ensure quality design proposals for new development within towns and villages in order to contribute to positive place-making.
	TV-O-6	To implement all projects funded under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund, Town Centre First, Town and Village Renewal and similar funding schemes, including those identified this Chapter.
Housing	UB-O-X	To provide accommodation for travellers, and to identify and use particular areas for this accommodation as and when such a need is identified in consultation with relevant stakeholders.
Housing	UB-O-1:	To identify appropriate regeneration and renewal initiatives, primarily through enhancement schemes to strengthen communities in specific Layer 3 rural towns/areas namely; Churchill, Convoy, Dunkineely, Kilmacrennan, Mountcharles, Newtowncunningham and St. Johnston.
	UB-O-2:	To deliver serviced sites for housing within towns and villages.
	UB-O-3:	To seek the effective resolution of unfinished residential development.
	RH-O-1:	To ensure that new residential development in rural areas provides for genuine rural need.
	RH-O-2	To protect rural areas under strong urban influence, rural areas under strong holiday home influence, and rural areas immediately outside towns from intensive levels of unsustainable urban/suburban residential development.
	RH-O-3:	To sustain identified small clachan-style communities in 'Structurally Weak Areas'.
	RH-O-4:	To ensure that rural housing is located, designed and constructed in a manner that does not detract from the character or quality of the receiving landscape having particular regard to Map 11.1: 'Scenic Amenity'
	RH-O-5	To facilitate the positive re-use of existing vacant rural housing stock in the County and to deliver at least 20% of all new housing in rural areas on brownfield sites to seek to prevent further deterioration and dereliction.

Chapter	Objective Ref.	Outline of Content or Objective
Economic Development	ED-O-1:	To align job creation with the Core Strategy's Settlement Hierarchy with a view to achieving a jobs ratio of 1.0 and above in Letterkenny and those settlements identified as County Growth Drivers.
	ED-O-2:	To support appropriately-scaled and located economic development projects in the County's smaller towns and villages.
	ED-O-3:	To support appropriately scaled and located rural economic development projects where they are functionally-related to the countryside.
	ED-O-4:	To support the development of Páirc Ghnó Gaoth Dobhair as a business, enterprise and manufacturing centre to support the employment base, economic vitality and in turn the linguistic vibrancy of the Gaeltacht.
	ED-O-5:	To facilitate cross-border collaboration to enable and sustain regional economic, cultural and social development opportunities including through the North West City Region, the Atlantic Economic Corridor and engagement with other neighbouring Council areas.
	ED-O-6:	To ensure that sufficient land is provided at appropriate locations for employment generating uses in key settlements and that such land is protected from inappropriate development that would prejudice its long-term development
	ED-O-7:	To facilitate the development of underutilised sites and buildings to meet demands for Grade A office accommodation and quality housing in core areas of key settlements.
	ED-O-8:	To develop serviced lands for economic development and job creation purposes in key settlements across the county
	ED-O-9:	To facilitate the activation of economically important lands through CPO or other means including public private partnerships as appropriate
	ED-O-10:	To encourage enterprise and employment developments to locate in brownfield sites or unoccupied buildings in town centres or, where appropriate, in existing industrial/retail parks or other brownfield industrial sites in preference to undeveloped zoned or unzoned lands as a key measure to drive economic activation of town centres and to optimise the economic spin off from enterprise.
	ED-O-11:	To enhance town centre vibrancy by supporting the development of 18 hour economy with quality gastronomy, entertainment and recreational options located in attractive and active town centre spaces.
	ED-O-12:	To encourage and facilitate the activation of new town centre housing options having regard to Chapter 5 and Chapter 6
	ED-O-13:	To support and facilitate, where appropriate, the further growth and development of the County's economic base through the key sectors identified in this plan. Proposals outside of these sectors shall be open for consideration and assessed against all policies and objectives of this plan, as well as national, regional plans, policies and guidelines
	ED-O-14:	To facilitate and support the future development of the ATU campuses in Letterkenny and Killybegs, including their innovation, research and development functions.
	ED-O-15:	To implement the policy objectives as set out within the National Marine Spatial Planning Framework to support the effective management of marine activities and the sustainable use of the county's marine resources in accordance with related objectives contained in Chapter 15: 'Marine Resource, Coastal Management, and the Islands'.
	ED-O-16:	To support the early development of a Designated Marine Area Plan, off the coast of Donegal and the North West region, in line with provisions in the Marine Spatial Planning Framework
	ED-O-17:	To support the strategic importance of Killybegs as a primary commercial fishing port, and as a hub for the development of the renewable energy sector.
	ED-O-18:	To support and facilitate the sustainable development of Offshore Wind opportunities off the Donegal coastline
	ED-O-19:	To facilitate the continued investment in key strategic infrastructure in Killybegs Port in a sustainable manner.
	ED-O-20:	To progress the delivery of key strategic enabling infrastructure including roads, rail, broadband, gas, electricity, water and wastewater as identified in this plan in close collaboration with government departments, agencies and utilities operators in order to align the Core Strategy and the economic development objectives of this plan with the development and roll out of their respective investment programmes.
ED-O-21:	To facilitate, where appropriate, proposals to enhance the Metropolitan Area Networks, all ICT resources and infrastructure to achieve sustainable economic development and support the initiatives contained in the Donegal Digital Action Plan.	
	RS-O-1:	To ensure that the vitality and viability of town centres are not prejudiced by the scale and/or location of significant retail development proposals.
	RS-O-2:	To secure high design quality in the form and layout of retail proposals in a manner that contributes to the physical quality of town centres.
Infrastructure	T-O-1:	To promote sustainable development and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas including the promotion of measures to:

Chapter	Objective Ref.	Outline of Content or Objective
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (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 (iii) address the necessity of adaptation to climate change.
	T-O-2:	To secure the development of strategic, coherent and high-quality walking and cycling networks that are integrated with public transport and connected with cultural, recreational, commercial, educational and employment destinations and attractions consistent with the National Outdoor Recreation Strategy, 2023-2027, the Draft Donegal Outdoor Recreation Strategy, and the Donegal networks as identified in the Cycle Connects: Ireland's Cycle Network Plan and as developed through the Local Transport Plan process.
	T-O-3:	To protect and acquire the lands necessary for, the <u>sustainable</u> transportation improvement projects identified in Table 8.2 Strategic Greenway Opportunities.
	T-O-4	To provide for safer routes to schools within the County and promote walking and cycling as safe and suitable modes of transport, including as part of local traffic management improvements and An Taisce's <i>Green Schools Programme</i> .
	T-O-5	To retrospectively provide safe walking and cycling infrastructure, segregated from other traffic, in settlements.
	T-O-6:	To support and facilitate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the provision of new, and the expansion of existing public transport services and supporting infrastructure; and b. the use of emerging renewable energy technologies for the transport fleet.
	T-O-7:	To secure the provision of a rail link between: (i.) Letterkenny and Derry; and (ii.) Letterkenny and Sligo.
	T-O-8:	To develop a centrally-located transport hub in Letterkenny and to seek to develop a dedicated bus corridor between the hub and the eastern edge of the town.
	T-O-9:	To sustain and enhance the services provided by Donegal Airport and City of Derry Airport.
	T-O-10:	To safeguard the carrying capacity and safety of National Roads and associated junctions in accordance with the <i>Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities</i> (DECLG, 2012) and the R238 Bridgend to Buncrana Regional Road.
	T-O-11:	<p>To deliver improvements to the Trans European Transport Network (TEN-T), (as required by EU Regulation (EU) No.1 58315/2013 "Guidelines for the development of the Trans European Transport Network as part of the core and comprehensive transport network of Ireland. In this regard it is a specific objective of the Council to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Progress and ultimately carry out/implement the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal as one of critical strategic importance to Donegal subject to the granting of the required statutory approvals for same and the terms and conditions of any such approvals (if granted). b) Reserve the preferred route corridors of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal as shown on maps 8.1.4, 8.1.5, and 8.1.6 for the purposes of the project and the ancillary facilities to service the same and not to permit other development within those corridors where such development may prejudice the implementation of the said project. 2. Progress and ultimately carry out/implement the N13 Bridgend to County Boundary Route Improvement TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal as one of critical strategic importance to Donegal subject to the granting of the required statutory approvals for same and the terms and conditions of any such approvals (if granted). 3. Reserve the preferred option corridors (to be determined) for the purposes of the project and the ancillary facilities to service same and not to permit other development within those corridors where such development may prejudice the implementation of the said project. 4. Progress and ultimately carry out/implement further improvements to the TEN-T Comprehensive Network, Donegal, such as the N13 Stranorlar to Letterkenny and N13 Manorcunningham to Bridgend as one of critical strategic importance to Donegal, subject to the granting of the required statutory approvals for same and the terms and conditions of any such approvals (if granted). Reserve the preferred option corridors (to be determined) for the purposes of the projects and the ancillary facilities to service same and not to permit other development within those corridors where such development may prejudice the implementation of the said project.

Chapter	Objective Ref.	Outline of Content or Objective
	T-O-12:	Should there be any ostensible or apparent conflict between, on the one hand, the Objectives, Policies and/or provisions of the development plan herein providing for the development of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal (TEN-T PRIPD) and the N13 Bridgend to County Boundary TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, and on the other hand, any other Objectives, Policies and/or provisions of the development plan, those Objectives, Policies and Provisions which provide for the development of the TEN-T projects shall take priority over all or any other provisions of the development plan and any such other provisions or Objectives shall be read and construed as subservient to and not in any material way contravening so much of the Objectives, Policies and provisions contained within this development plan as provide for the development of the TEN-T projects.
	T-O-13:	To achieve quality strategic and important inter-urban and cross border transport corridors, (including the A5 Western Transport Corridor) and support the development of new links to and within the North West City, Region , giving access to regional and international markets with links to sea, air and rail.
	T-O-14:	To provide for high quality connectivity within the County in line with the Core Strategy through the promotion of a quality Strategic Road Network as identified on Map 8.1.2-
	T-O-X	To safeguard the capacity and efficiency of the national road network drainage system for national road drainage purposes.
	T-O-15:	To protect the corridors and routes and acquire the lands necessary for the transportation improvement projects as identified in Table 8.1A and 8.1B
Water and Wastewater Infrastructure	WW-O-1	To maintain, improve and enhance the quality of surface and ground waters. as appropriate in accordance with the requirements of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EU Water Framework Directive including implementing the Programme of Measures contained with the River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027 and any subsequent plan. • The European Communities (Surface Water) Regulations 2009. • The European Communities (Ground Water) Regulations 2010.
	WW-O-2	To provide an adequate system of wastewater treatment in settlements to facilitate projected growth envisaged in the Core Strategy of the Plan and to protect public health.
	WW-O-3	To facilitate the provision of an adequate, reliable and clean supply of drinking water in accordance with relevant standards, including the protection of drinking water sources, and the provision of new/upgraded water collection, treatment, and distribution infrastructure.
Telecoms	TC-O-1	To facilitate the development and delivery of a sustainable telecommunications network across the County through a range of telecommunication systems including those arising out of National Strategic Outcome 6 of the National Development Plan (NDP) the Government's 'Harnessing Digital – the Digital Ireland Framework Network' and the National Broadband Plan, the National subvention plan to deliver High Speed Broadband to every rural household outside the commercially served areas as defined on the National Broadband Plan Map, subject to having due regard to natural and built heritage and to environmental considerations.
Flooding	F-O-1	To ensure that development does not give rise to unacceptable new flood risks, or does not exacerbate existing flood risk.
Electricity Transmissions and Gas Networks	ETN-O-1	To secure the upgrade-strengthening of the electricity distribution grid to include the provision of network serving the County to a minimum 220kv distribution transmission networks . To enable the harnessing and distribution of energy.
	G-O-1	To secure the build-out of the gas supply network into Donegal.
Natural Resource Development	E-O-1	To sustainably develop sustainably a diverse and secure renewable energy supply to meet demands and capitalize on the County's competitive locational advantage.
	E-O-2	To secure the maximum potential from the wind energy resources of the County commensurate with the receiving environment and local developments patterns consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development, thereby contributing to the national drive towards ensuring the security of energy supply
	E-O-3	To facilitate the strengthening of the electricity grid to a minimum rating of 220KV to enable the harnessing and distribution of energy.
	E-O-4	To facilitate the sustainable development of Donegal as a Centre of Excellence for renewable technology, and Killybegs as an offshore service centre and renewable energy hub.
	E-O-5	To ensure that wind energy developments do not adversely impact upon the existing residential amenities of residential properties, and other centres of human habitation (as defined in 'Definitions' below.
	E-O-X	To support and facilitate proposals for hybrid energy systems and/or co-location of renewable energy where such development has satisfactorily demonstrated that it will not have adverse impacts on the surrounding environment and subject to other

Chapter	Objective Ref.	Outline of Content or Objective
		objectives and policies of this plan.
	E-O-X	To recognise that natural gas, particularly renewable and indigenous gas with the exception of fracking proposals, will continue to have a role to play in the transition to a low carbon economy.
	EX-O-1	To facilitate extractive industries subject to the protection of residential and natural amenities, the prevention of pollution, and the safeguarding of aquifers and groundwater.
Tourism	TOU-O-1:	To facilitate the sustainable development of Donegal's tourism product as a key economic driver of, and social catalyst for, the County whilst protecting and enhancing the County's landscape, natural heritage, built heritage, and communities from inappropriate development that would detract from the tourism product.
Biodiversity	BIO-O-1	To preserve and enhance the biodiversity of the County in accordance with the relevant EU policies and national legislation.
	BIO-O-X	To have regard to the objectives of any extant National Biodiversity Action Plan and National Peatlands Strategy in all aspects of the sustainable development of the county.
Landscape	L-O-1	To protect, manage and conserve the character, quality and value of the Donegal landscape.
Built and Architectural Conservation	AH-O-1	Conserve, manage, protect and enhance the architectural heritage of Donegal namely Protected Structures, Architectural Conservation Areas, NIAH structures, designed landscapes and historic gardens, vernacular, historic building stock , industrial and maritime built heritage, character and setting of such structures.
	AH-O-2	Promote the sustainable and sensitive re-use of the existing built heritage as a positive response to climate change, and promote the circular economy and climate mitigation and adaptation through proper maintenance, repair and appropriate retro-fitting, adaptive re-use and regeneration employing best conservation practice. This objective will be pursued on a collaborative and integrated basis in partnership with all relevant stakeholders and through all available funding mechanisms.
	AH-O-3	Protect all structures and parts of structures on the Record of Protected Structures and to extend the RPS where appropriate.
	AH-O-4	Preserve the special character of the Ardara, Ballyshannon, Buncrana, Letterkenny, Ramelton, Raphoe, and Moville Architectural Conservation Areas as identified on Maps X.X 11.2 to 11.9 X.X inclusive
Archaeological Heritage	AYH-O-1	To conserve and protect archaeological heritage, achieve a greater public knowledge and appreciation of archaeology, protect existing access to, and where appropriate provide new access and visitor infrastructure for, such heritage.
Community, Culture	CCG-O-1:	To create sustainable, healthy, socially inclusive, and cultural vibrant communities with an optimum quality of life and high-quality childcare, education, recreational, and cultural infrastructure and facilities and to integrate the planning and sustainable development of the County with the social, community and cultural requirements of its population.
	CC-O-2	To provide a network of high-quality green, active and recreational infrastructure at sustainable and socially inclusive locations throughout the county
	CC-O-3:	To protect and enhance the vibrancy of Donegal's cultural resource in a sustainable and socially inclusive manner including providing new arts and cultural infrastructure, new spaces for arts and culture in the public realm, quality public art, and enhanced creative/artistic spaces.
Gaeltacht	GAE-O-1	To sustain and strengthen the Irish Language, to protect the cultural heritage of, and facilitate the sustainable social, physical, cultural, and economic development of the Gaeltacht.
Marine Resource, Coastal Management and the Islands	MRCM-O-1	To sustain and enhance the economic, social and cultural, and tourism vitality of Donegal's marine sector, coastal communities and island communities
	MRCM-O-2	To safeguard and enhance the health of Donegal's marine and coastal ecosystems and sustainably manage our coastal environment.
Public Rights of Way	PROW-O-1	To preserve public rights of way which give access to seashore, mountain, lakeshore, riverbank or other place of natural beauty or recreational utility.
Part B: Area Plans		
General Introduction	GEN-H-O-1	Facilitate an adequate supply, range and mix of high-quality housing at serviced, sustainable, accessible, and socially inclusive locations to meet anticipated housing need.
	GEN-T-O-1	Facilitate a significant increase in sustainable mobility through the provision of a compact permeable urban form, new and enhanced active travel infrastructure (walking and cycling), and public transport services and associated infrastructure.
	GEN-T-O-2	Improve strategic transport connectivity, traffic safety and local traffic flow and

Chapter	Objective Ref.	Outline of Content or Objective
		accessibility (including through the delivery of the TEN-T PRIPD strategic roads project in the case of Ballybofey/Stranorlar), the provision of new local access links and the implementation of appropriate safety, parking/traffic management solutions.
	GEN-TC-O-1	Create vibrant, multifunctional, attractive, and accessible town centres, including through the reduction of the overall level of Vacancy and Dereliction.
	GEN-RCNH-O-1	Create a high-quality integrated network of recreational and amenity spaces, linkages and infrastructure which provide an optimal quality of life and visually attractive environment.
Buncrana	BC-S-O-1:	To protect and enhance the character, setting and natural heritage of the shorefront in Buncrana, which is identified as an area of 'Open Space and Recreation' on the Buncrana Land-Use Zoning Map, in order to secure its existing and future amenity, and tourism and ecological value.
	BC-S-O-2:	To support the progress and implementation of the 'Re-powering Buncrana' – A Northwest Place Standard Project as funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD) and to support any future subsequent phases of the project that provides for strategic regeneration and development of the town in accordance with the Six Place Standard Priorities of the Project.
	BC-TC-O-1	To sustain and enhance the role of Buncrana as the retail and services hub of the Inishowen peninsula
	BC-TC-O-2	To strike the appropriate balance between facilitating the continued contribution of the Main Street commercial sectors to the town's retail and services offering with the need for the further enhancement of the streetscape and public realm.
	BC-TC-O-3	To secure the development of the brownfield 'Town Centre Opportunity Sites'
	BC-TC-O-4	To revitalise the public realm and built environment of the Market Square.
	BC-RG-O-1	To secure the development of the brownfield 'Settlement Consolidation Sites' and Opportunity Site 4 as referred to below
	BC-ZEL-O-1	To grow the industrial and office-based sectors in Buncrana inclusive of ensuring that there is sufficient zoned and appropriately located lands to attract such uses.
	BC-AT-O-1	Deliver the projects listed in the Transport/Sustainable Mobility Strategy above.
	BC-AT-O-2	To continue to work with Transport Infrastructure Ireland to progress and ultimately carry out and develop the Inishowen Greenway network and the further support future potential extension of the Network in Buncrana and to onward destinations within the Inishowen peninsula to create a Regional Network of Greenway infrastructure.
	BC-AT-O-X	To prepare a detailed Local Transport Plan for Buncrana during the lifetime of the plan in accordance with the NTAs/TIIs Area Based Transport Assessment manual.
	BC-R-O-1	To protect the corridors and routes and acquire the lands necessary for transportation improvement and projects as identified on the Land Use Zoning Map', subject to all other objectives and policies contained within this Plan.
	BC-F-O-1	To support and facilitate the implementation of the Buncrana-Luddan Flood Relief Scheme subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive.
	BC-SCC-O-1	To support and facilitate the redevelopment of the Buncrana Community Leisure Centre.
Ballybofey/Stranorlar	BS-ED-O-1	To strengthen and diversify the economic and employment base of Ballybofey/Stranorlar and capitalise on its strategic economic location.
	BS-T-O-1	Should there be any ostensible or apparent conflict between, on the one hand, the Objectives, Policies and/or provisions of the Area Plan herein providing for the development of Section 2 of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal (TEN-T PRIPD) and, on the other hand, any other Objectives, Policies and/or provisions of the Area Plan, those Objectives, Policies and Provisions which provide for the development of the TEN-T PRIPD shall take priority over all or any other provisions of the Area Plan and any such other provisions or Objectives shall be read and construed as subservient to and not in any material way contravening so much of the Objectives, Policies and provisions contained within this Plan as provide for the development of the TEN-T PRIPD.
	BS-T-O-2	Deliver the projects listed in Table 19.3 the Transport/Sustainable Mobility Strategy above.
	BS-T-O-3	Seek to prepare a detailed Local Transport Plan for Ballybofey/Stranorlar during the lifetime of the plan in accordance with relevant National Best Practice Guidance.
	BS-TC-O-1	Sustain and enhance the town centre's role as the retail, hospitality, tourism and cultural hub of the Finn Valley.
	BS-TC-O-2	Fully implement the SEED Project including the provision of a new Civic Square, restoration/extension of the Old Ritz cinema, and provision of a new 2 no. storey replacement car park with associated enhanced pedestrian link.
	BS-TC-O-3	Implement projects which achieve the placemaking objectives and principles set out in the Ballybofey/Stranorlar Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan in consultation with all key stakeholders and subject to resource availability.

Chapter	Objective Ref.	Outline of Content or Objective
	BS-RCNH-O-1	To support and strengthen Ballybofey/Stranorlar as a sporting centre of excellence including the completion of the Donegal Community Stadium, and the Stranorlar Multi-Use sports facility
	BS-RCNH-O-3	To protect, enhance, and, where appropriate, sustainably develop key natural heritage assets in Ballybofey/Stranorlar including: Drumboe Woods and Environs area, the River Finn Corridor and areas of rural local environment within the hinterland of Ballybofey/Stranorlar.
	BS-RCNH-O-4	To collaborate with the Ballybofey and Stranorlar Co-op Livestock Mart in their identification of a suitable alternative location.
Bundoran	BN-CZ-O-1	To protect and enhance the character, setting and natural heritage of the coastal zone in Bundoran, which is identified as a High Amenity Area on the Bundoran Land-Use Zoning Map, in order to secure its existing and future amenity, and tourism and ecological value.
	BN-TC-O-1:	To strike the appropriate balance between facilitating the continued contribution of the Main Street commercial sectors to the town's tourism offering with the need for the further enhancement of the streetscape and public realm.
	BN-REGEN-O-1	To seek the development and renewal of areas within Bundoran that are in need of regeneration, and in particular the Regeneration Areas identified on the Bundoran land-use zoning map (map 17.1 refers) in order to prevent (i.) adverse effects on existing amenities in such areas, (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.
	BD-EE-O-1	To diversify the local economic base in Bundoran to contribute towards year-round employment opportunities and increased service provision.
	BN-AT-O-1	To deliver the projects listed in Table 16.4 Transport/Sustainable Mobility Strategy for Bundoran above.

2.1.2 Geographical Scope/Land use Zoning Map

The CDP 2024-2030 geographically covers the entirety of County Donegal which is the functional area of Donegal County Council as a planning authority. In particular the Development Plan contains Area Plans for Bunrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Bundoran and settlement frameworks for many smaller settlements. However, it is important to note that, in addition to the wider objectives and policies of the CDP 2024, location specific development objectives, policies and zonings are included in the Draft Letterkenny Plan 2023-2029 and the existing Seven Strategic Towns Area Plan 2018-2024 for which a separate Environmental Reports have been prepared.

2.1.3 Temporal Scope

The temporal scope of the County Donegal Development Plan is the six-year period 2024 to 2030.

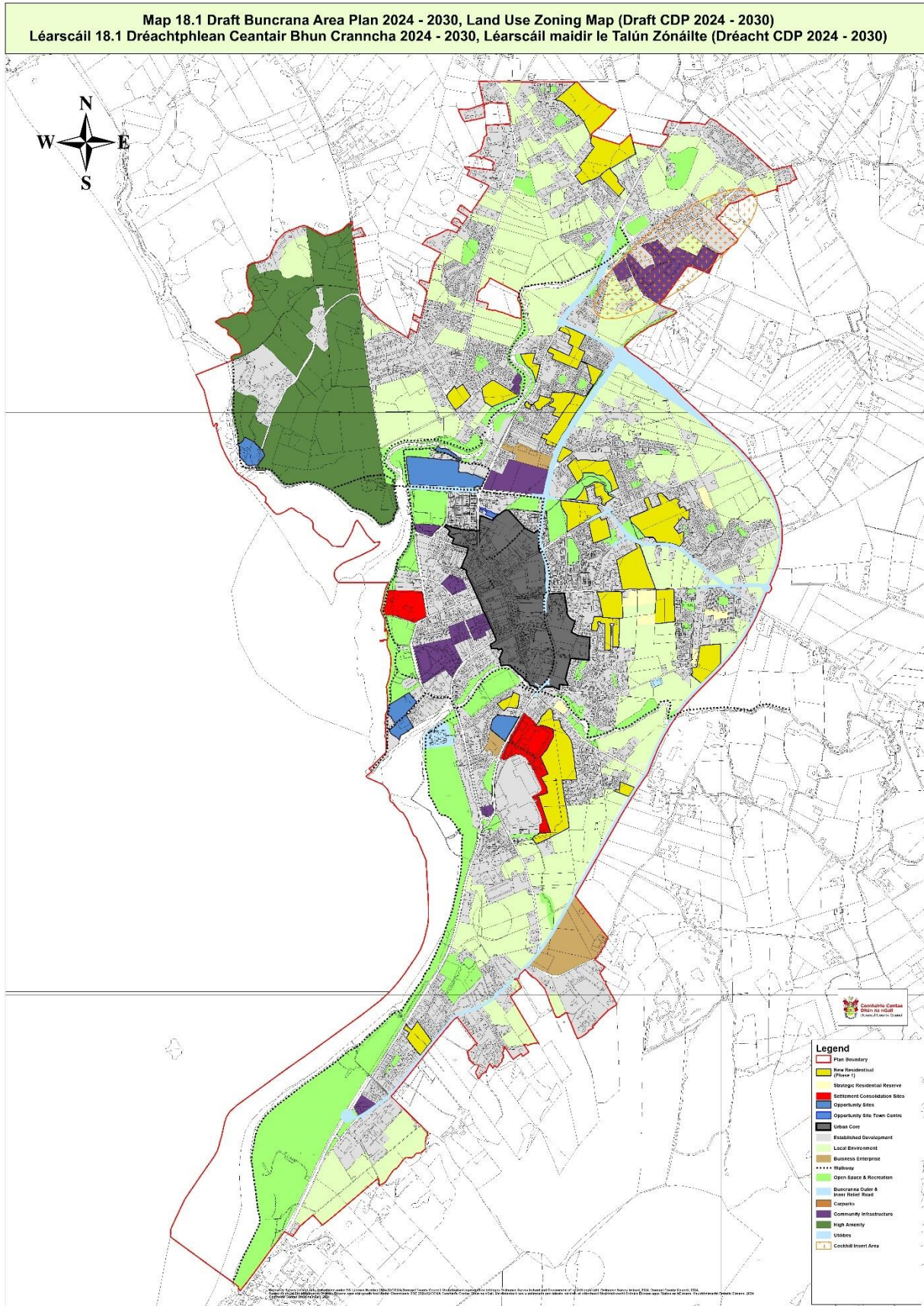


Figure 2.1 Land Use Zoning Map for the Buncrana Area Plan (including Proposed Material Alterations)

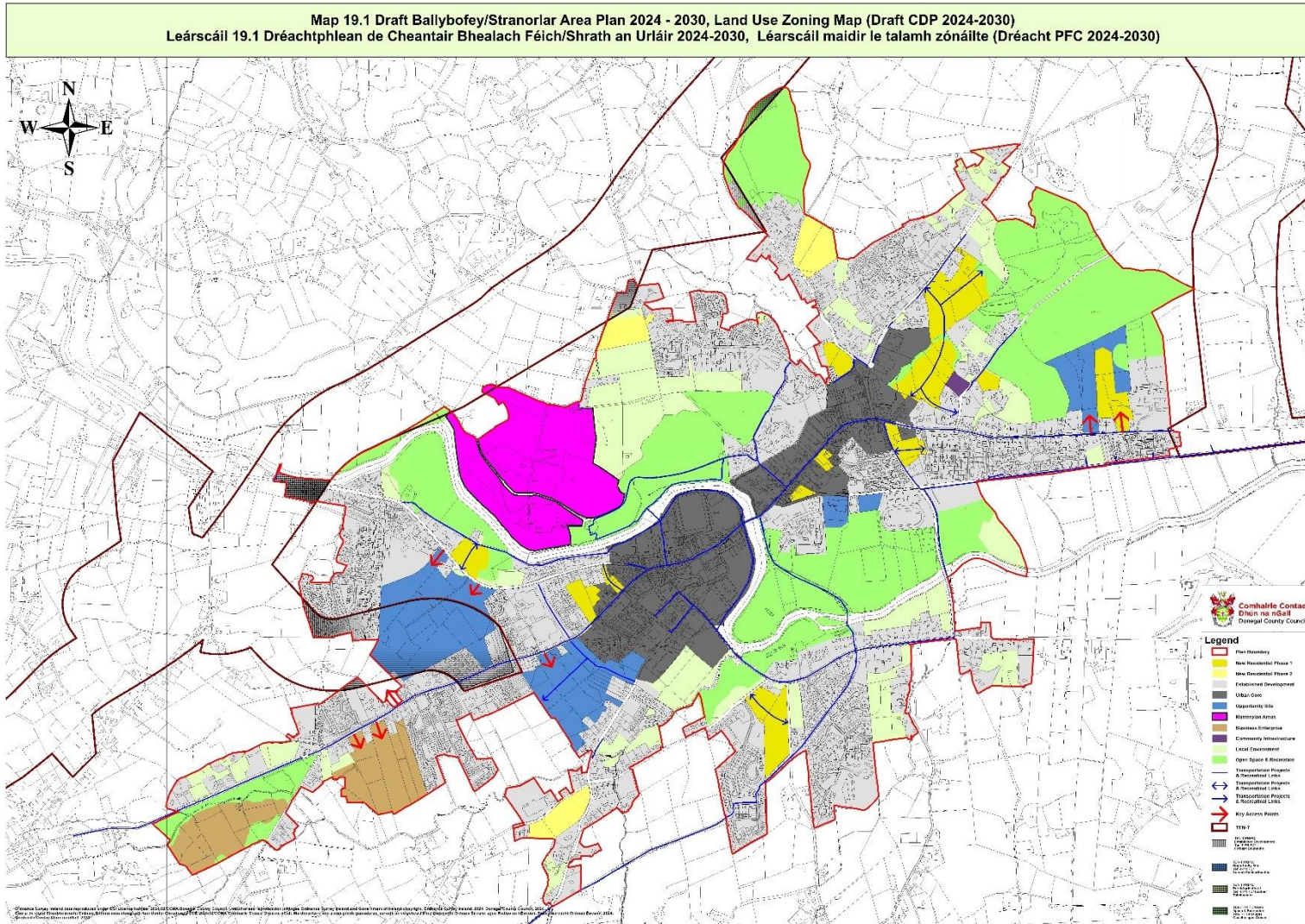


Figure 2.2 Land Use Zoning for the Ballybofey/Stranorlar Area Plan (including Proposed Material Alterations)

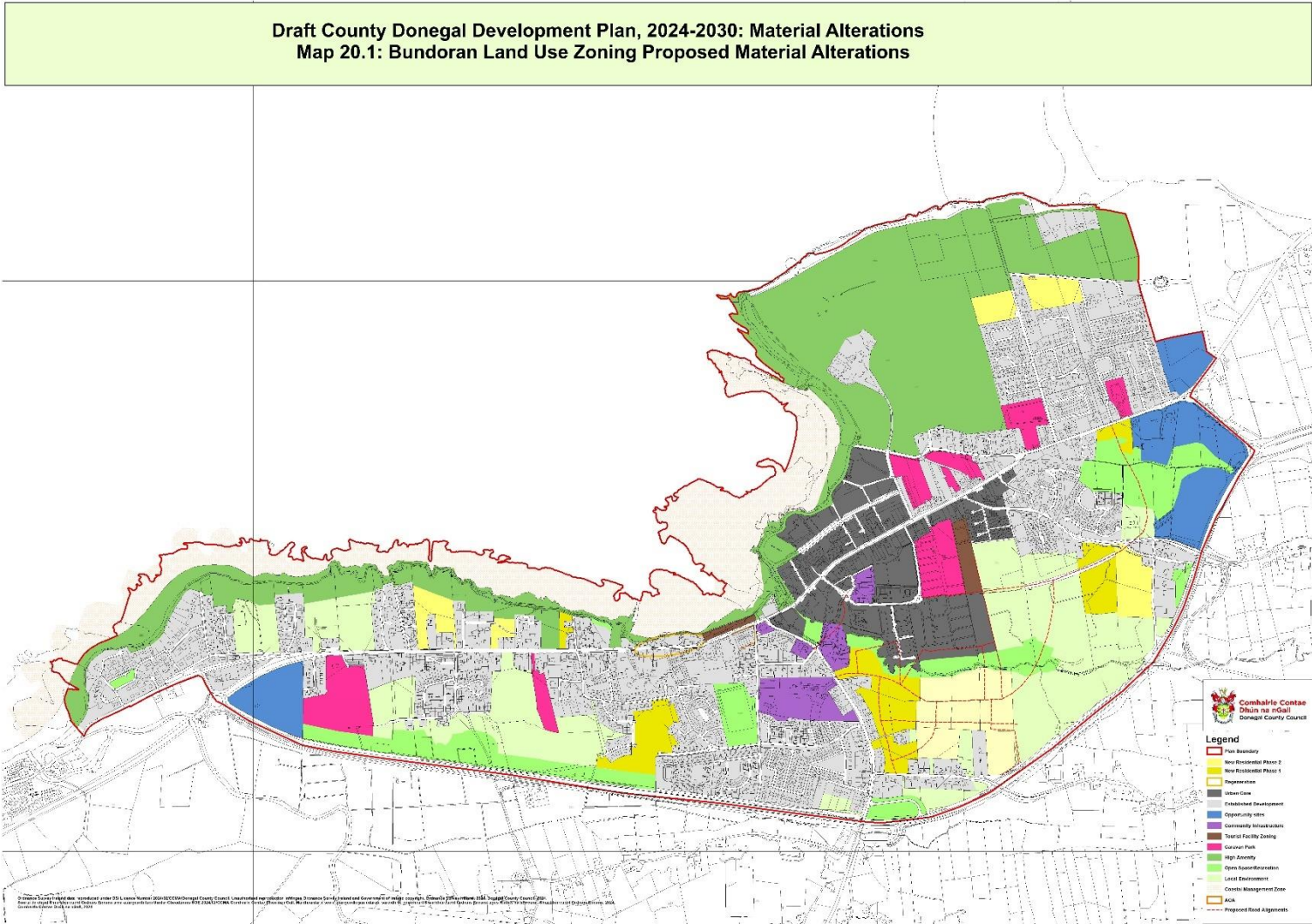


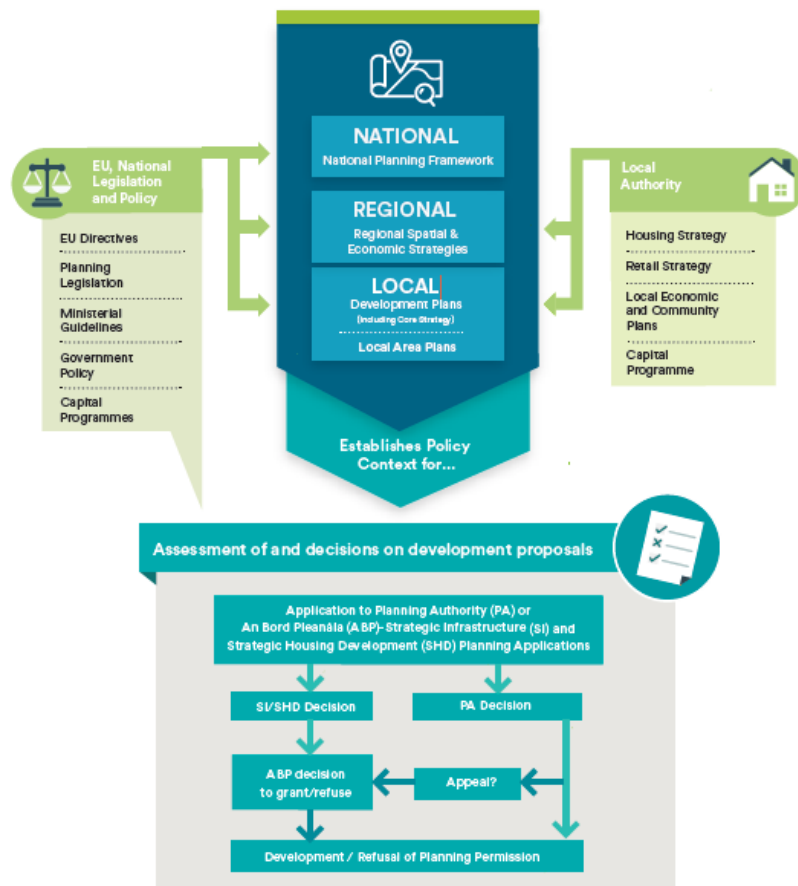
Figure 2.3 Land Use Zoning for the Bundoran Area Plan (including Proposed Material Alterations)

2.2 Relationship of the CDP 2024-2030 with Other Relevant Plans

The CDP 2024 fits within a wider framework of related National, Regional and Local land use plans including higher plans such as the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly (RSES NWRA), and lower plans such as the Draft Letterkenny Plan as detailed in Figure 2.2 (See below). The development objectives in a development plan are required to be consistent, as far as practicable with the development objectives set out in the NPF and the RSES¹. In addition, a Area Plan is required in turn to be consistent with the objectives of the Development Plan² The relationship of these wider land use plans with the CDP 2024 are explained in Sections 2.2.1 to 2.2.3 below.

In addition, as required by Schedule 2B(e) of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001(as amended) the Environmental Protection Objectives of a much broader range of plans and programmes relevant to the CDP are addressed in Section 6 and Appendix A of this report.

Figure 2.1 Irish Planning System (National Planning Framework)



¹ Section 10(1A) of the Planning and Development Act 2000(As Amended)

² Section 19(2) of the above Act.

2.2.1 Ireland 2040 Our Plan National Planning Framework (NPF)

The National Planning Framework (NPF), adopted in June 2018, is a high level strategic plan for shaping the growth and development of the state to 2040 intended to guide development and investment through a shared set of national objectives and principles. It is a framework document which more detailed planning documents such as Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSEs), County Development Plans and Area Plans must follow.

It is a region focused strategy for managing growth with a new major policy emphasis on compact growth and regeneration targeting infill and brownfield sites, renewing and developing existing settlements rather than continual expansion and sprawl of cities and towns, with a strengthened and more environmentally focused planning at local level. A key competent of the NPF is the redistribution of growth and so the regions away from Dublin achieve at least an equitable level of growth.

The NPF identifies a number of key National Strategic Outcomes that will be achieved by the implementation of its policy objectives including: compact growth, sustainable mobility, enhanced regional accessibility, a strong economy, strengthened rural economies and communities, enhanced amenity and heritage, transition to low carbon and climate resilient society, sustainable management of water, waste and other Environmental resources.

Specifically, in relation to Donegal the NPF:

- Acknowledges that Donegal is “spatially unique”, within the Island due to its extensive coastline and relationship in Ireland.
- Identifies enhanced connectivity as a key priority for the county.
- States that the North-West city region, focused on Derry City, Letterkenny and Strabane, is essential to achieving the potential of the North West and maximising its contribution to regional and all island economic growth
- States that the Atlantic Economic Corridor (stretching from Kerry to Donegal) has the potential to act as a key regional growth enabler.
- Identifies Letterkenny as a Regional Centre intended to lead the development of its region and its role in building accessible centres of scale.
- Recognises the need to strengthen Ireland’s overall urban structure including the regional centre of Letterkenny.
- Notes that Donegal’s offshore Islands are an integral part of the state’s heritage and culture.

2.2.2 Northern and Western Regional Assembly Spatial and Economic Strategy 2020-2032 (NWRA RSES)

The NWRA RSES, was made by the Northern and Western Regional Assembly in January 2020. The RSES provides a framework which County Development Plans and Area Plans must be consistent with. The objective of the RSES is to support the implementation of the NPF and provide a long-term planning and economic framework which shall be consistent with the NPF and the economic policies and objectives of the Government. It provides a structured hierarchy for integrated control of spatial development with a particular focus on ensuring that sustainable development is an integral element.

The RSES sets out 5 high level growth ambitions for the region including:

- Economy and Employment, - Vibrant Region.
- Environment – Natural Region.
- Connectivity – connected Region
- Quality of Life – Inclusive Region
- Infrastructure – Enabling Our Region.

The RSES details several Donegal specific Regional Planning Objectives (RPOs) and in this regard it:

- Seeks to ensure that at least 40% of new housing in Letterkenny and 30% of new homes within the settlements over 1,500 pop. built up urban footprint (RPO 3.2).

- Aims to grow Letterkenny to a Regional Centre to a minimum of 27,300 residents by 2040 (RPO 3.7.20).
- Seeks to upgrade the Wild Atlantic Way touring network and visitors' attractions (RPO 4.4) and expand accommodation and facilities in key tourism destination towns such as Letterkenny and Donegal (RPO 4.6).
- Support the development of secure, reliable and safe supplies of renewable energy (RPO 4.18) and offshore wind energy production through the provision of land based infrastructure (RPO 4.19).
- Seeks to protect, upgrade and expand the Key Fisheries Ports of Killybegs and Greencastle and develop Marine Resource Innovation Parks at these locations (RPO 4.31)
- Aims to promote, enhance and protect the linguistic cultural and heritage value of Gaeltacht communities (RPO 5.80).

2.2.3 The Letterkenny Plan and Local Transport Plan 2023-2029

The Letterkenny Plan is framed within and guided by the wider planning framework of the superior County Development Plan. Development proposals and public investment decisions within Letterkenny must accord not only with the location specific objectives, policies and land use zoning of said plan but also any relevant policies and objectives of the wider development plan (e.g. built heritage, residential, flooding, and community developments).

3 Relevant Aspects of the Current State of the Environment and Likely Evolution thereof without Implementation of the CDP 2024-2030

This section of the Environmental Report describes the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment within, and where relevant in the vicinity of, the County Donegal. The baseline environmental information of relevance is presented in Sections 3.1 to 3.9 and provides the environmental context for the CDP 2024-2030. In addition, Section 3.10 sets out the likely evolution of the environment without the implementation of the CDP 2024-2030 in the context of the current planning framework for Donegal contained with the CDP 2018-2024(as varied).

Section 5.2.2 of the Department SEA Guidelines indicates that Annex I(b) of the SEA Directive creates the following requirement:

- *A baseline description of the current environment in the area: with particular reference to those aspects of the environment that are experiencing plan-related problems (such as development pressures) at present, or are likely to be significantly affected by implementation of the plan;*

Furthermore, said guidelines states that the purpose of the baseline description is to identify the current state of the environment, against which the likely effects of implementing the plan can be assessed.

The current state of the environment is considered under the environmental headings as outlined in the SEA Directive, and includes any interrelationship between the following:

- Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora
- Population and Human Health
- Soil
- Water
- Air
- Climatic factors
- Material Assets
- Cultural heritage (including Architectural and Archaeological Heritage)
- Landscape and Visual.

3.1 Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

This section provides a description of the biodiversity, flora and fauna baseline information of relevance to the CDP 2024-2030 and its Zone of Influence.

The term Biodiversity is the biological variety and variability of life on Earth. Biodiversity is a measure of variation biological diversity at the genetic, species, and ecosystem level. Flora (the plant life in a particular region) and Fauna (the animal life in a particular region) are therefore inherently related to Biodiversity. Donegal contains a variety of biodiversity, flora and fauna including: habitats and species benefitting from European and National statutory protection (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas) and other national designations (e.g. Native Woodlands, Natural Heritage Areas and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas), animal and species protected under the Wildlife Act and other non designated habitats (e.g. woodlands, hedgerows, field boundaries, wetlands, streams, rivers and associated riparian zones).

3.1.1 Natura 2000/European Sites And Associated Species

The EU Habitats and Bird directives obliges Ireland to protect and conserve biodiversity and form the cornerstone of European Conservation Policy.

The **Habitats Directive** (EU Council Directive 92/43/EEC) aims to ensure the conservation of a wide range of rare, threatened or endemic **animal and plant species**. Article 1 of the Habitats Directive states that "*Conservation means a series of measures required to maintain or restore the natural habitats and the populations of species of wild fauna and flora at a favourable status...*" Article 3 required the setting up of a European Wide Network of **Special Areas of Conservation** (known as the Natura 2000 network) comprising of natural habitat types listed in Annex I and habitats of the species listed in Annex II of the directive. Article 6(3) of the Directive requires that any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on such a site must undergo an Appropriate Assessment in view of best scientific knowledge and the conservation objectives of the site and requires that competent national authorities shall only agree to the plan or project after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned. Consequently, a Natura Impact Report has been undertaken to inform the Appropriate Assessment of the plan.

The EU **Birds Directive** (Directive 2009/147/EC) aims to **protect** all of the 500 wild **bird species** naturally occurring the European Union. Article 4 of the directive required the setting up of **Special Protection Areas** for the protection of 194 species and sub-species which are particularly threatened and listed in Annex 1 of the Directive and for other migratory bird species and the paying of particular attention to the protection of wetlands in this regard. Article 4 further requires that in said areas members states take appropriate steps to avoid pollution or deterioration of habitats or any disturbance affecting the birds in so far as those would be significant and strive to avoid pollution or deterioration of habitats.

In Ireland, the Natura 2000 network of European sites comprises both Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) identified under the Habitats Directive, and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) identified under the Bird Directive. Generic and site-specific conservation objectives have been prepared for European sites to define the favourable conservation condition for habitats and species. These conservation objectives are set out to ensure that the Qualifying Interests (QI)/Special Conservation Interests (SCI) for which an SAC or SPA has been designated are maintained or restored to a favourable conservation condition.

There is a total of 73 Natura 2000 sites (both terrestrial and marine) within County Donegal comprising 47 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and 26 Special Protection Areas (SPA). In particular 41 Annex I Habitats (including 9 priority habitats) are represented within SAC's in Donegal. In addition, 17 Annex II species occur in Donegal. A full schedule of Natura Sites, together with information on their qualifying interests, conservation objectives, and threats to their integrity is provided in the Appropriate Assessment Natura Impact Report also prepared for the CDP 2024-2030.

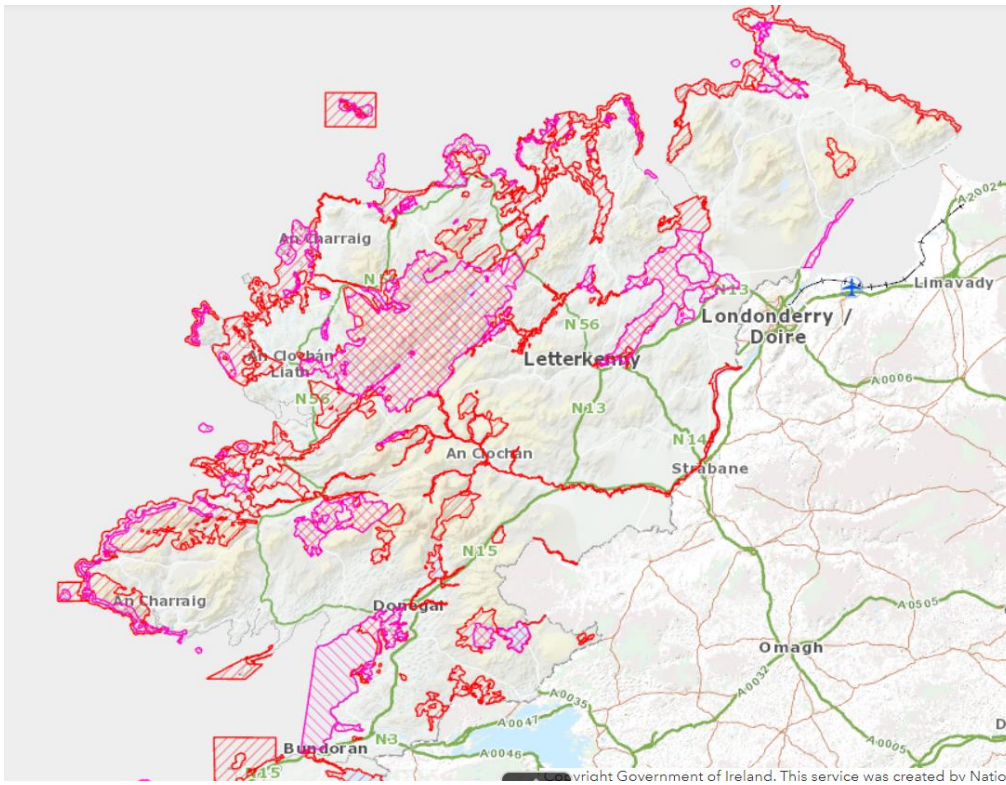


Figure 3.1 Natura 2000 Sites within County Donegal (Source: NPWS Map Viewer)

The current overall national status and trends of Annex I Habitats and Annex II Species present within SAC's in Donegal as identified in the 2019 NPWS Article 17 Report *The Status of EU Protected Habitats and Species in Ireland* is detailed in Figures 3.2 and 3.3 below.

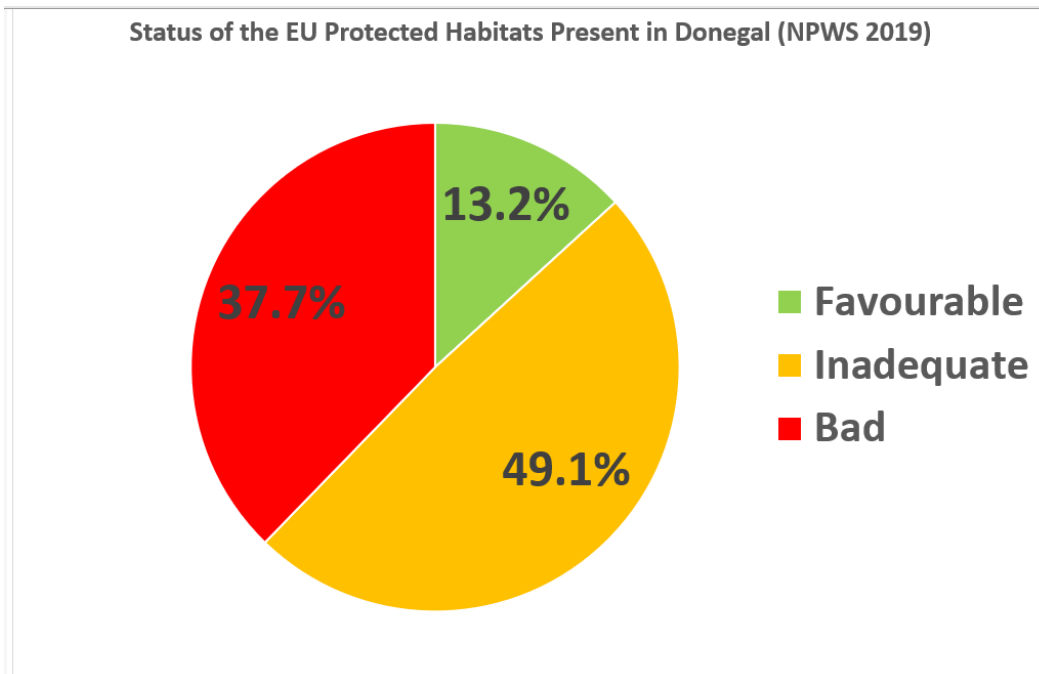


Figure 3.2 National Status of EU Protected Habitats Present in County Donegal

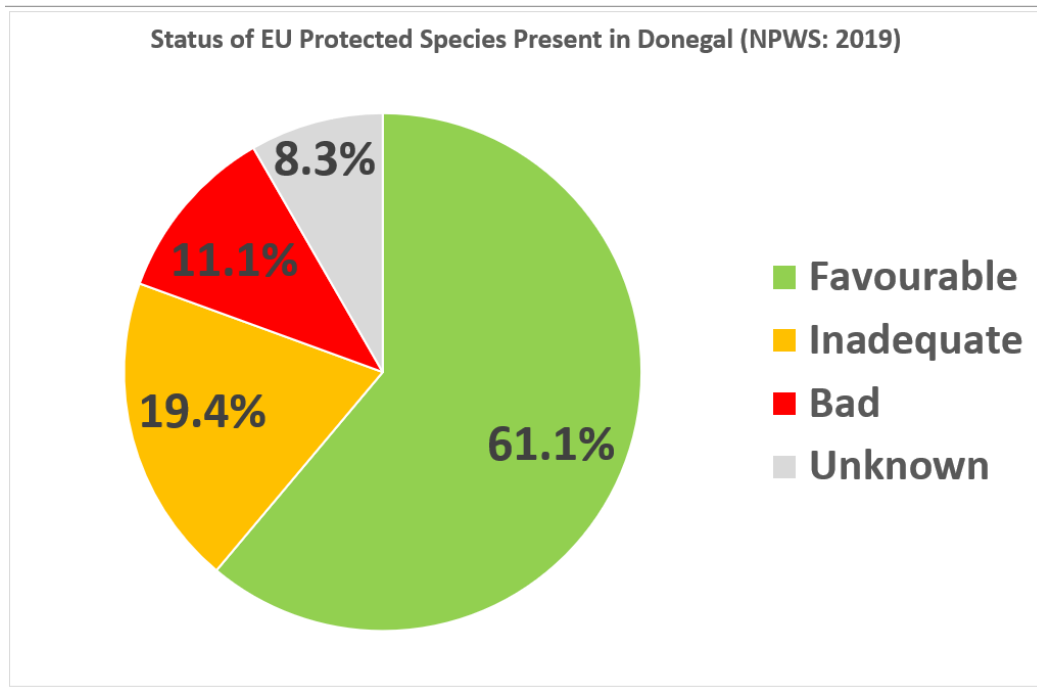


Figure 3.3 National Status of EU Protected Species Present in County Donegal

In addition, the national status and trends for individual Annex 1 Habitats and Annex II Species present within SAC’s in Donegal as also identified in said report is detailed in Tables 3.1 and 3.2 below.

Table 3.1 Status and Trends of Annex 1 Habitats Listed as Qualifying Interests of Donegal Specific Special Areas of Conservation (Source: NPWS 2019 Article 17 Report)

Code	Name	Status	Trend
1110	Sandbanks	Favourable	Stable
1130	Estuaries	Inadequate	Declining
1140	Tidal Mudflats and Sandflats	Inadequate	Declining
1150	Lagoons	Bad	Declining
1160	Large Shallow Inlets and Bays	Bad	Declining
1170	Reefs	Inadequate	Stable
1180	Submarine Structures Made By Leaking Gases	Favourable	Stable
1210	Drift Lines	Inadequate	Declining
1220	Vegetated Shingle	Inadequate	Stable
1230	Vegetated Sea Cliffs	Inadequate	Stable
1310	Salicornia Mud	Favourable	Stable
1330	Atlantic Salt Meadows	Inadequate	Declining
1410	Mediterranean Salt Meadows	Inadequate	Declining
2110	Embryonic Shifting Dunes	Inadequate	Stable
2120	Marram Dunes (White Dunes)	Inadequate	Stable
2130	Fixed Dunes (Grey Dunes)	Bad	Declining
2140	Decalcified Empetrum Dunes	Favourable	Stable
2150	Decalcified Dune Heath	Inadequate	Stable
2170	Dunes with Creeping Willow	Inadequate	Stable
2190	Dune Slack	Inadequate	Declining
21A0	Machair	Inadequate	Stable
3110	Oligotrophic Isoetid Lake Habitat	Bad	Stable

3130	Mixed Najas Flexilis Lake habitat	Inadequate	Declining
3140	Hard Water Lake Habiatat	Bad	Declining
3160	Acid Oligotrophic Lake Habitat	Inadequate	Stable
3180	Turloughs	Inadequate	Stable
3260	Vegetation of Flowing Waters	Inadequate	Declining
4010	Wet Heath	Bad	Declining
4030	Dry Heath	Bad	Stable
4060	Alpine and Subalpine Heath	Bad	Improving
5130	Juniper Scrub	Favourable	Stable
6130	Calaminarian Grassland	Inadequate	Declining
6210	Calcareous Grassland	Bad	Declining
6230	Species Rich Nadarus Grasslands	Bad	Declining
6410	Molina Meadows	Bad	Declining
6430	Hydrophilous Tall Herb Swamp	Bad	Declining
6510	Lowland Hay Meadows	Bad	Declining
7130	Blanket Bog (Active)	Bad	Declining
7140	Transition Mires	Bad	Stable
7150	Rhynchosporion Depressions	Bad	Declining
7210	Cladium Fens	Inadequate	Stable
7220	Petrifying Springs	Inadequate	Declining
7230	Alkaline Fens	Bad	Declining
8110	Siliceous Scree	Inadequate	Stable
8120	Calcareous Scree	Inadequate	Stable
8210	Calcareous Rocky Slopes	Inadequate	Stable
8220	Siliceous Rocky Slopes	Inadequate	Stable
8240	Limestone Pavement	Inadequate	Stable
8330	Sea Caves	Favourable	Stable
91A0	Old Oak Woodland	Bad	Declining
91DO	Bog Woodland	Favourable	Stable
91EO	Alluvial Woodland	Bad	Declining
91J0	Yew Woodland	Bad	Stable

Table 3.2 Status and Trends of Annex II Species Listed As Qualifying Interests of Donegal Specific Special Areas of Conservation (Source 2019: Article 17 Report)

Code	Name	Status	Trend
6985	Killarney Fern	Favourable	Stable
1833	Slender Naiad	Inadequate	Declining
6216	Slender Green Feather Moss	Favourable	Stable
1395	Petalwort	Favourable	Stable
1377	Maerl	Bad	Declining
1400	White Cushion	Favourable	Stable
1409	Sphagnum Species	Inadequate	Stable
1413	Lycopodium	Inadequate	Stable
1378	Cladonia	Inadequate	Stable
1013	Geyers Whorl Snail	Bad	Declining
1014	Narrow Mouthed Whorl Snail	Inadequate	Declining

1029	Freshwater Pearl Mussel	Bad	Declining
1092	White Clawed Crayfish	Bad	Declining
1065	Marsh Frithillary	Inadequate	Improving
1096	Brook Lamprey	Favourable	Stable
1106	Atlantic Salmon	Inadequate	Stable
1213	Common Frog	Favourable	Stable
1213	Leatherback Turtle	Unknown	Unknown
1309	Common Pipistrelle	Favourable	Improving
5009	Soprano Pipistrelle	Favourable	Improving
1317	Nathusius Pipistrelle	Unknown	Unknown
1322	Natterer's Bat	Favourable	Stable
1314	Daubenton's Bat	Favourable	Improving
1330	Whiskered Bat	Favourable	Stable
1326	Brown Long Eared Bat	Favourable	Stable
1331	Leisler's Bat	Favourable	Improving
1334	Mountain Hare	Favourable	Stable
1355	Otter	Favourable	Improving
1357	Pine Marten	Favourable	Improving
1364	Grey Seal	Favourable	Improving
1365	Common Seal	Favourable	Stable
1349	Bottlenose Dolphin	Favourable	Stable
1350	short Beaked Common Dolphin	Favourable	Stable
1351	Harbour Porpoise	Favourable	Stable
2027	Killer Whale	Unknown	Unknown
2618	Minke Whale	Favourable	Stable

The **Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS) Trends Report 1994/95 – 2019/2020³** coordinated by Bird Watch Ireland and funded by the NPWS provides long term counts for a variety of Bird species (including the species comprising the qualifying interests of SPAs) at number of site including in Donegal including the Lough Swilly SPA and the Donegal Bay SPA. Whilst these surveys indicate that many species are stable or increasing at these sites the following species are noted to be in intermediate, moderate, or large decline at these sites. In particular very significant 23 year tend declines were recorded for the Scaup (-88.3%) and Grey Plover (-74.9%) species in the Lough Swilly SPA.

Table 3.3 Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS) Trends Report 1994/95 – 2019/2020 Bird Species in Decline at Surveyed Sites in Donegal

Site	Intermediate Decline	Moderate Decline	Large Decline
Lough Swilly	Coot, Ringed Plover, Lapwing, Mallard	Dunlin, Golden, Plover, Great Crested Grebe, Curlew	Scaup, Grey Plover, Pochard, Golden Eye
Donegal Bay	Grey Plover		

³ https://birdwatchireland.ie/app/uploads/2022/04/iwebs_trends_report.html

Overall at a National Level data for long term breeding populations trends for Bird Species listed in Annex 1 of the Bird Directive available on the Europe Environment Agency Website⁴ indicates that whilst 59% of said species are increasing 23% of such species are decreasing (see extract below).

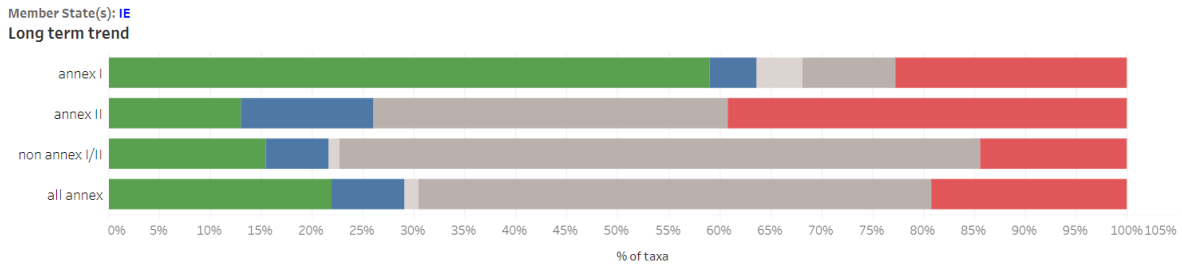


Figure 3.4 Long Term Breeding Population for Bird Species in Ireland.

In addition, at a National Level the Article 12 Report data for Ireland indicates that agriculture, forestry, and alien and problematic species are the main pressures on Annex I bird species in Ireland.

3.1.1 Corncrake

The Corncrake is a migratory bird and a summer visitor to Ireland being generally found in tall vegetation (20cm) in hay and silage fields, rough pastures, and stands of herbaceous species such as Yellow flag iris and nettle. Ireland’s population of Corncrake has declined by over 96% since the 1970’s is now classified as a Globally threatened species and is listed on Appendix II of the Bern Convention, Annex I of the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC). This steep decline has mainly been associated with the mechanisation of mowing and the switch from hay to silage making. In 2021 NPWS recorded 197 calling male Corncrakes in Ireland (Donegal, Mayo, Galway, Sligo and Kerry)⁵. In Donegal the species is located in pockets along Donegal’s northern and western Coastal fringes and on offshore islands. Donegal’s Corncrake population was estimated by the NPWS to be 110 in 2022. Overall Donegal’s Corncrake population increased from 14 to 101 calling males between 1993 and 2019.

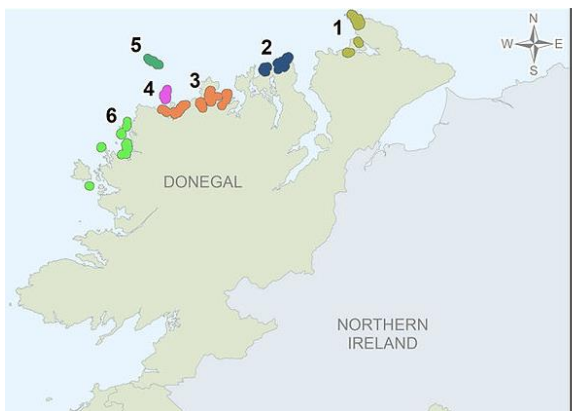


Figure 3.5 Map showing the Corncrake Life Project Areas in Donegal

⁴ <https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/biodiversity/state-of-nature-in-the-eu/article-12-national-summary-dashboards/breeding-population-and-distribution-trends>

⁵ <https://donegalnews.com/2022/09/donegals-corncrake-population-on-the-rise/#:~:text=Corncrakes%20were%20recorded%20in%20five.been%20the%20Corncrake%20LIFE%20project.>

3.1.2 Freshwater Pearl Mussel

The Freshwater Pearl Mussel (FPM) (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) is a filter feeder (filtering up to 50 litres of water per day) and is associated with salmonid waters but requiring a higher water quality than salmonids. The FPM is protected under Annex II and V of the Habitats Directive and is legally protected in Ireland under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife Act 1976 (as amended). There has been a considerable decline in species distribution and numbers of FPM in Ireland and across the EU.

In Donegal 3 Special Areas of Conservation have been listed for the protection of the species namely: Fawnboy Bog/Lough Naung SAC, Lough Eske SAC and Ardnamona Wood SAC, and the West of Ardara/Maas Road SAC. The European Communities Environmental Objectives (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) Regulations 2009 was enacted to support the achievement of favourable conservation status for FPMs and led to the development of sub basin management plans for 6 FPM catchments in Donegal. *Margaritifera* Sensitive Areas in Donegal including catchment of SAC FPM populations and other extant FPM populations are shown in Figure 3.6 below.

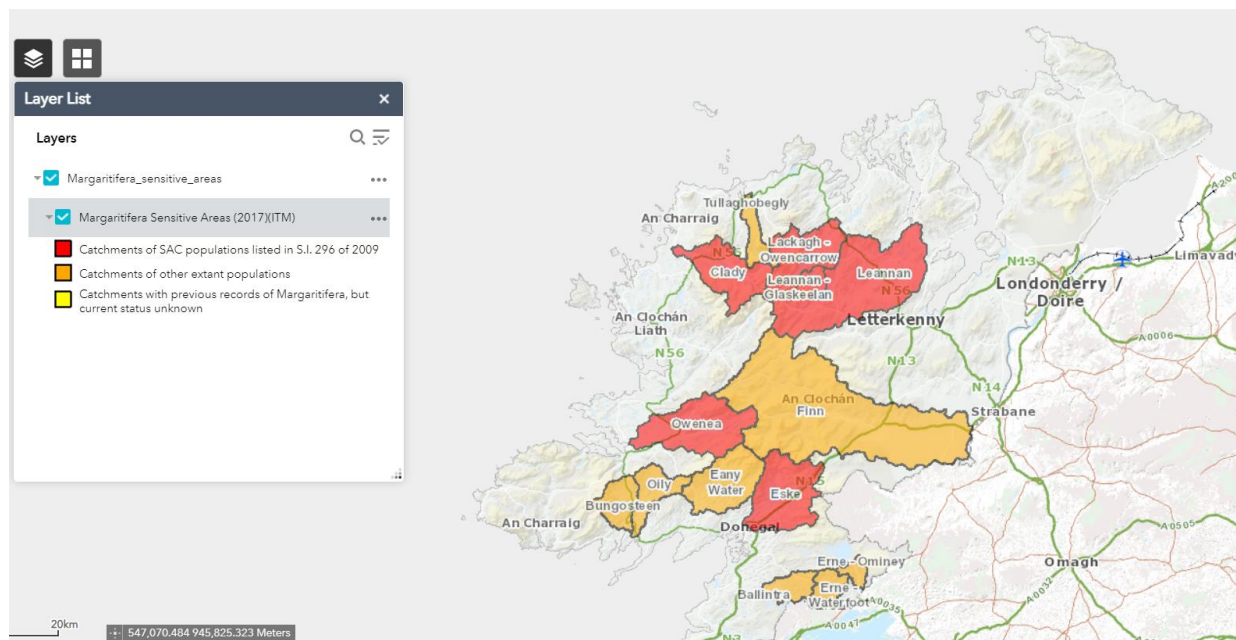


Figure 3.6 Margaritifera Sensitive Areas in Donegal (NPWS 2017)

Freshwater pearl mussels are widespread throughout County Donegal, with a total of fourteen populations listed in Table 1. Six of these populations found in Clady, Eske, Glaskeelin, Leannan, Owencarrow and Owenea Rivers are designed as SAC's. The Donegal population of adult mussels was estimated at approximately 550,000 in 2007, however, the same decline seen in other parts of the country is has also been recorded in the Donegal populations with the population estimated to have reduced by >30% by 2019.

The conservation condition for all the Donegal SAC populations is unfavourable – bad with no juvenile mussels present (small numbers of young mussels may occur) and most/all of habitat is in unfavourable (poor-bad) condition. The overall trend in condition was deteriorating and as a result several of these populations are predicted to go extinct over the short-to-medium-term, based small population size, absence of recruitment, rapid decline in adult numbers and bad habitat condition.

The mussel populations are being impacted by multiple catchment pressures, which on their or in combination are having a severely negative impact on their habitat. The pressures include extensive catchment level drainage for agriculture, forestry, and peat cutting activities resulting in hydrogeological changes as well as high sedimentation risk from direct drainage pathways into the river. There are also pressures from waste water treatment, electricity infrastructure, river engineering, housing, urban expansion and development and industry.

Table 3.4. Freshwater water pearl mussel populations estimates in Donegal and conservation condition.

No.	Name/Catchment	Adult population est. 2007	Adult population est. 2022	Conservation condition	Overall trend
1	Clady	250,000	185,000	Unfavourable - bad	Deteriorating
2	Eske	200,000	45,000	Unfavourable - bad	Deteriorating
3	Leannan	75,000	25,000	Unfavourable - bad	Deteriorating
4	Owenea	10,000	6,000	Unfavourable - bad	Deteriorating
5	Glaskeelan	10,000	7,000	Unfavourable - bad	Deteriorating
6	Lackagh-Owencarrow	10,000	6,000	Unfavourable - bad	Deteriorating
7	Tullaghobegly	No estimate available			
8	Finn				
9	Bungosteen				
10	Oily				
11	Eany Water				
12	Ballintra				
13	Erne-Waterfoot				
14	Ominey				
		550,000	274,000		

3.1.3 Natural Heritage Areas and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas

The Wildlife Amendment Act 2000 (as amended) provided the legal basis for the establishment of a national network of sites known as Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs). Natural Heritage Areas are areas considered important for habitats present or which holds species of plants and animals whose habitat needs protection. Most NHAs in Donegal have been designated as they contain upland and lowland blanket bog habitat and associated species.

Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHAs) of significance for wildlife and habitats were also published on a non-statutory basis in 1995. These pNHAs have not since been statutorily proposed or designated, but do have some protection under schemes such as Rural Environment Protection Scheme (REPS), Agri-Environmental Options Scheme (AEOS). Most pNHAs in Donegal are now also designated as SACs or SPAs. However, a number of pNHAs lie outside Natura 2000 sites (e.g. River Swilly Valley Woods, Leannan Valley Woods, Bulbin Mountain, Carricknahorna Lough And Lough Gorman). There are 14 NHAs and 78 proposed pNHAs in Donegal, the locations of which are illustrated below.

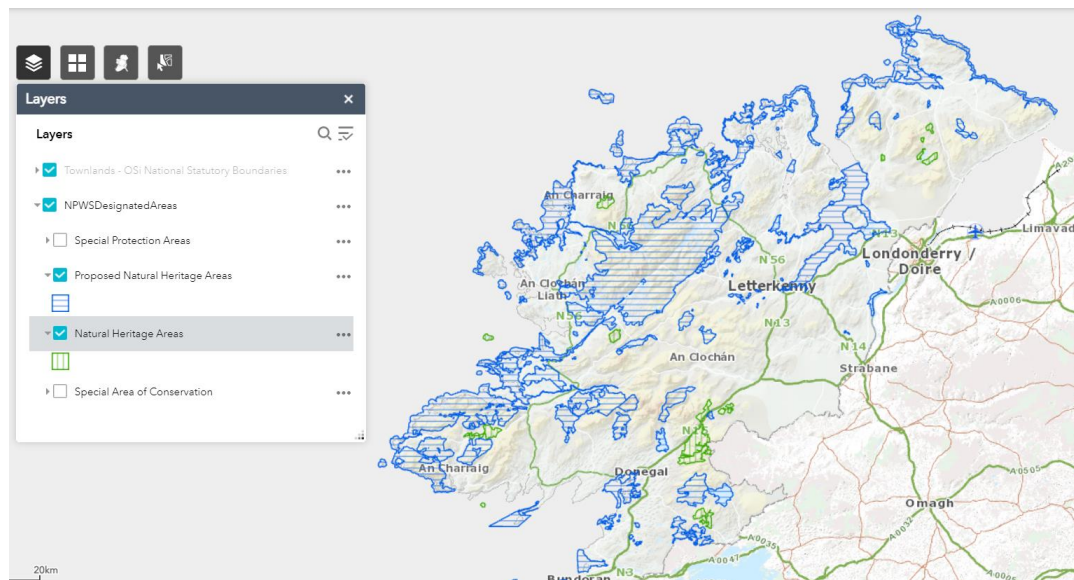


Figure 3.7 Natural Heritage Areas and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas in Donegal

3.1.4 Designated Shellfish Waters

The European Union Shellfish Waters Directive was designed to protect the aquatic habitat of bivalve and gastropod molluscs, including oysters, mussels, cockles, scallops and clams. The directive required all member states to designate waters to protect shellfish, sets requirements for said waters and provides for pollution reduction programmes for same. There are 12 'Shellfish Waters' within Donegal designated pursuant to Article 4 of the EU (Quality of Shellfish Waters) Regulations 2006. Since 2013, the Shellfish Waters Directive has been subsumed into the Water Framework Directive. Nevertheless, an extensive monitoring programme for chemical and microbiological parameters remains in place to ensure the quality of designated shellfish waters around the coast. Said Shellfish Waters range in from 'Good' to 'High WFD 2016-2021 Status.

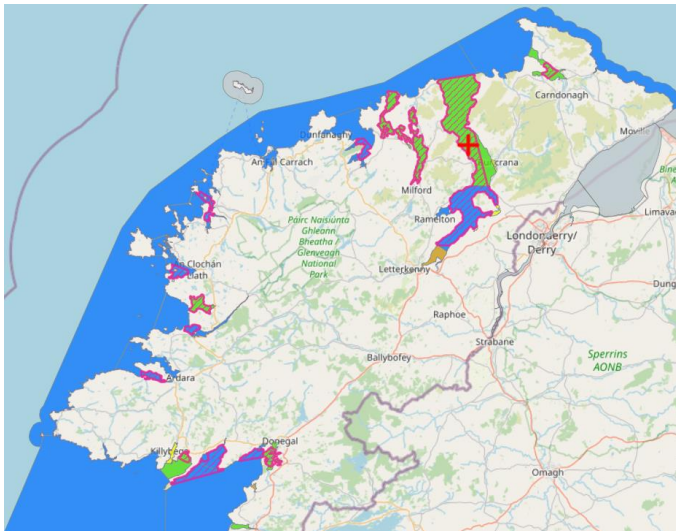


Figure 3.8 Designated Shellfish Waters and Associated WFD 2016-2021 Status

3.1.5 Ramsar Sites

The Convention of Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat, was established at Ramsar in 1971 and ratified by Ireland in 1984. The convention requires policy protection and management of designated wetlands, and formulation of policy and implementing planning so as to promote the conservation of designated wetlands and, as far as possible, the wise use of wetlands in its territory. Ramsar sites are designated as wetlands of significant value for nature. Four Ramsar sites have been identified in Donegal namely Lough Barra Bog (176) and Meenachullion Bog (194), as ecologically important and significant lowland blanket bog; Pettigo Plateau for ecologically important and significant highland Bog; and Trawbearga Bay an ecologically important sandy mud estuary. These sites cover a total area of 2,273 hectares⁶, and much of these are also designated as Natura 2000 sites.

⁶ https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris-search/?f%5B0%5D=regionCountry_en_ss%3AEurope&f%5B1%5D=regionCountry_en_ss%3AIreland

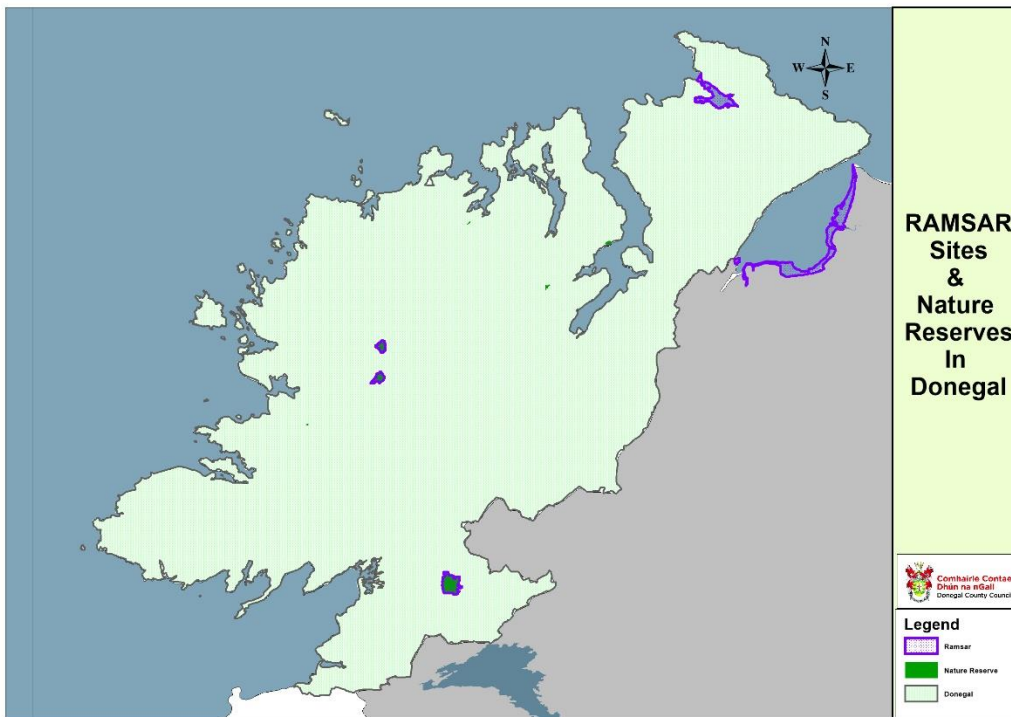


Figure 3.9 Ramsar Site and Nature Reserves in Donegal

3.1.6 Statutory Nature Reserves

Nature Reserves are areas of importance to wildlife that are protected under Ministerial Order. Most are state-owned however some are owned by organisations or private landowners. There are 10 Nature Reserves in the county covering in excess of 1,400 hectares⁷.

Table 3.5 Statutory Nature Reserves in Donegal

Ardnamona	Lough Barra Bog
Ballyarr Wood	Meenachullion
Derkmore Wood	Pettigo
Duntally Wood	Rathmullen
Inch Levels	Sheskinmore

3.1.7 Ancient Woodlands

Ancient Woodlands are defined as areas of woodland believed to have remained continuously wooded since 1660. Ancient woodlands are important in terms of their biological and cultural value, and may even form links with prehistoric wildwoods. Ancient woodland sites often contain communities of animals and plants which are confined to, and dependent for their existence upon, ancient semi-natural woodland. Ancient woodland can also contain historical landscape and archaeological features which are important in their own right.

5 sites in Donegal have identified by NPWS as containing Possible Ancient Woodlands (PAW) following desk-based research, namely: Ardnamona Wood; Ballyarr Wood; Feddyglass Wood; Keeloges; and Mullangore Wood. 4 of these are located within SACs, pNHAs and Nature Reserves.

⁷ [Nature Reserves in Ireland | National Parks & Wildlife Service \(npws.ie\)](https://www.npws.ie/nature-reserves)

3.1.8 Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna Outside of Designated Sites

A significant portion of Donegal's biodiversity is located in the wider countryside. This biodiversity is contained within natural heritage features as hedgerows/field boundaries, trees, woodlands, wetlands, and water bodies which collectively provide habitats for native wild flora (e.g. hawthorn, whitethorn, gorse, holly, ash, beech, birch, oak, rowan, willow, bramble, wild flowers and aquatic plants) and fauna (e.g. badgers, hedgehogs, hare deer, wild birds, fish and insects). These features act as vital ecological corridors for wildlife and species, collectively deliver crucial ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration/storage, nutrient cycling, water purification and flood attenuation, and represent key components of our rural landscapes and townscapes and thus represent essential components of our overall biodiversity. Moreover Article 10 of the Habitats directive implicitly recognises that certain landscape features by virtue of their linear and continuous structure (such as rivers with their banks or traditional system for marking field boundaries) or their function as stepping stones (such as ponds or small woods) are essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species and encourage member states to manage such features.

In addition, Donegal has extensive peatlands consisting of both upland and Atlantic blanket bog types. These peatlands act as a unique wetland habitat, contain a variety of plant and animal species (e.g. Hen Harrier, Red Grouse, Curlew, Greenland White-fronted Goose, sphagnum mosses, rushes and sedges, bog cotton, ling heather) and are a key component of Donegal's Biodiversity. They also provide other important ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration, flood attention, water filtration, and recreation.

Donegal specific data on the state of Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna outside of designated sites is limited. However, it is well recognised that Ireland is sharing in the Global Biodiversity Crisis. In this regard:

- Of the species that have been assessed in Ireland 20% are threatened with extinction.⁸
- 33% of bees are threatened with extinction.
- 25% of Irish birds show severe decline and an additional 37% showing moderate declines⁹
- 56% of Ireland's native plant species have declined in range and abundance or both¹⁰

Nevertheless, on a more positive note the Countryside Bird Survey monitor the status of common and widespread breeding bird populations in Ireland indicated an overall upward trend in Common and Farmland Bird Species. The EPA has noted that the key pressures on Ireland's nature included direct habitat damage from peat cutting, wetland drainage/reclamation, over and under-grazing, water pollution, unsustainable exploitation (e.g. over-fishing), recreational pressures, climate change and Invasive Alien Species.

3.1.9 Invasive Alien Species

Invasive alien species are animals, plants or pathogens that would not naturally occur in Ireland but are here because of human activity. When introduced, they survive and thrive to the point of negatively impacting on our wildlife, on the services nature provides, on our economy, and the way we live.

Invasive non-native plant and animal species are the second greatest threat to biodiversity worldwide after habitat destruction. Under the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011 it is an offence without a licence to plant, disperse, allow or cause to disperse, spread or otherwise cause to grow in any place, any invasive species listed in said regulations. The National Biodiversity Data Centre records: Giant Hogweed, American Mink, Japanese Knotweed, Rhododendron, Grey Squirrel, Asian Clam, Coypu, the American Skunk Cabbage, Himalayan Balsam on and the Greater White Toothed Shrew as the 10 most unwanted invasive species in Ireland. In particular it is noted that Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam and Rhododendron are all prevalent in Donegal. A full list of invasive species can be sourced from Invasive Species Ireland <http://www.invasivespeciesireland.com>, the National Biodiversity Data Centre www.biodiversityireland.ie and the Union List can be found on the NPWS website <https://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/files/Union%20list%20of%20IAS.pdf>.

⁸ <https://biodiversityireland.ie/ipbes-irelands-biodiversity-crisis/>

⁹ <https://birdwatchireland.ie/nearly-half-of-all-bird-species-in-decline-globally-but-63-of-irelands-bird-species-declining/>

¹⁰ <https://www.breakingnews.ie/ireland/more-than-half-of-britain-and-irelands-native-plants-in-decline-report-1443868.html>

3.2 Population and Human Health

Population and human health are broad topic areas within the assessment framework and encompass consideration of the distribution and growth of populations, their overall health, and their susceptibility to key environment pressures. The state of the environment directly and indirectly affects human health and is inextricably linked to the physical and mental wellbeing of people. In this regard poor air quality, low water quality, noise, traffic congestion, lack of recreational facilities, and a poor built environmental can all affect human health. In this regard the World Health Organisation estimates that environmental stressors are responsible for 12-18% of deaths in the 53 countries of the WHO Europe Region¹¹.

3.2.1 Population and Population Trends

Preliminary Census 2022 results indicates that Donegal now has a population of 166,231 an increase of 4.5% from the Census 2016 results (158,755 people) made up of 3,682 natural increase and 3,447 migration. This contrasts with a decrease a 6.5% decrease between Census 2011 and Census 2016 corresponding with a period of economic decline. Otherwise the Census 2016 population figures for key settlements are set out in the table below

Table 3.6: Population in County Donegal and in Key Settlements in Donegal 2011-2022

	Population 2011	Population 2016	% Change 2011-2016	Population 2022	% Change 2016-2022
County	161,137	158,755	-6.5%	166,321	+4.5%
Settlements					
Letterkenny		19,274		22,549	
Buncrana		6,785		6,971	
Ballybofey-Stranorlar		4,852		5,406	
Donegal Town		2,618		2,749	
Carndonagh		2,471		2,768	
Ballyshannon		2,299		2,246	
Bundoran		1,963		2,599	
Lifford		1,626		1,613	
Killybegs		1,236		1,258	
An Clochán Liath		1,164		1,247	

Census 2016 found that the average age in Donegal is 38.5 years, slightly higher than the national average of 37.4 years. It also recorded a total dependency ratio of 60.5%, compared to a national figure of 52.7%) for the county (Dependents are defined for statistical purposes as people outside the normal working age of 15-64). It also found that Donegal had an Old age dependency ratio of 35.3% which was significantly higher than the national figure of 20.4%.

Table 3.7: Age Dependency Ratio (Census 2016)

	0-14 Years	15-64 Years	Over 65 Years	Young Age Ratio (%)	Older Age Ratio (%)	Total Dependency Ratio (%)

11 <https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/human/intro>

Age Dependency	34,042	99,161	24,989	25.2%	35.3%	60.5%
----------------	--------	--------	--------	-------	-------	-------

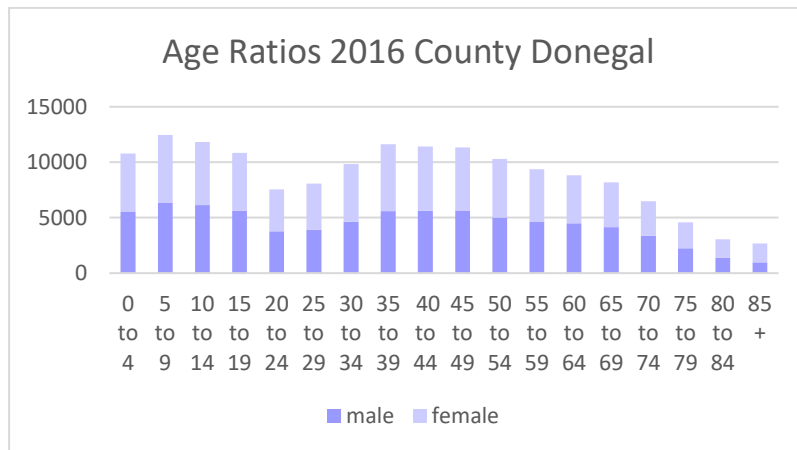


Figure 3.10: Age Ratios in Donegal (Census 2016)

3.2.2 Human Health

In terms of general health Census 2016 recoded that the substantial majority of the Donegal Population has either 'Very Good' or 'Good' health (See Figure 3.11 below). Whilst 22,995 persons were found to have a disability in the County (See Figure 3.X below).

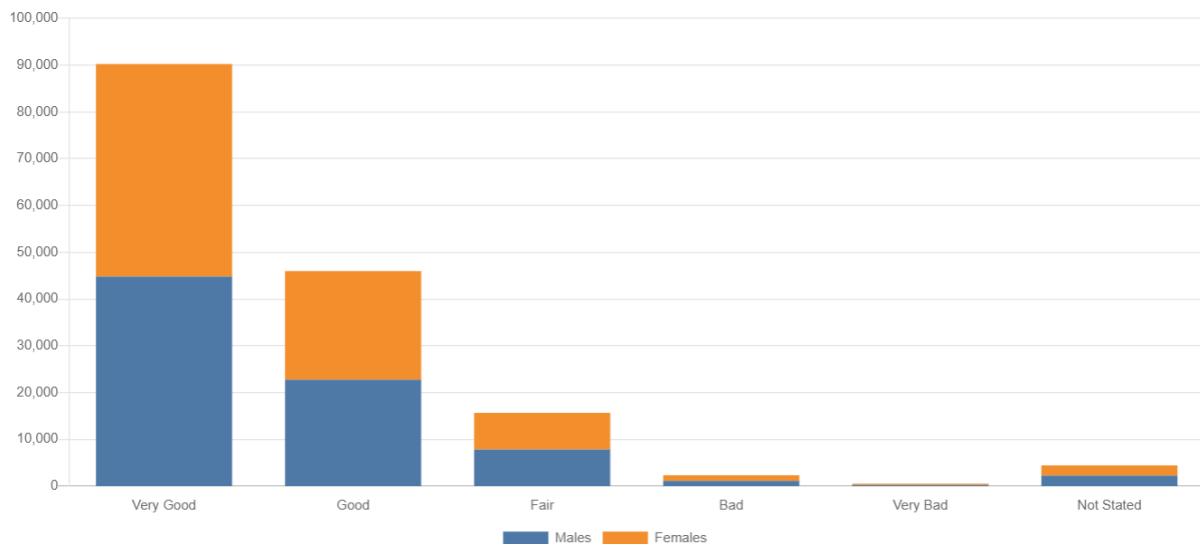


Figure 3.11 General Health of Population in Donegal (Census 2016)

Otherwise Donegal data from the National Cancer Registry Ireland indicates that Cancer Incidence Rates Per 100,000 (for all invasive Cancers) has increased marginally since 1994. (See Figure 3.12 Below). However

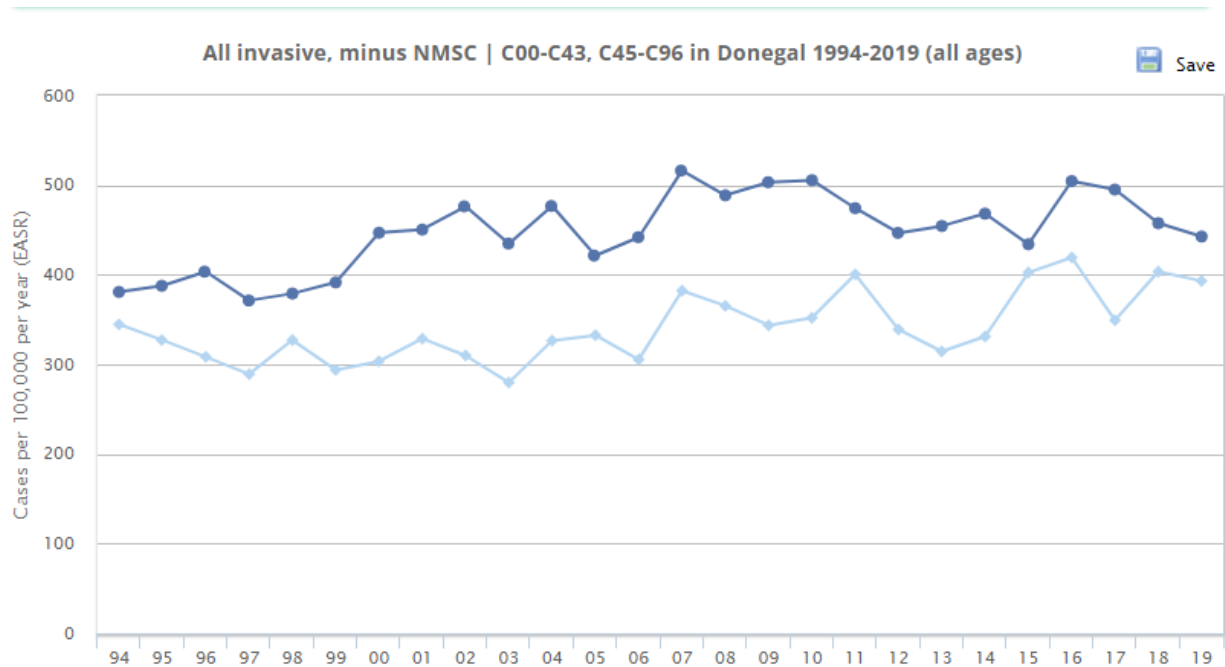


Figure 3.12 Cancer Incidence Rates Per 100,000 in Donegal 1994 to 2019

In addition, social deprivation is a key arbiter of human health. For example In Ireland life expectancy at birth for males living in the most deprived areas is 4.3 years less (73.7 years vs. 78 years) than that for males living in most affluent areas while life expectancy for females living in the most deprived areas is 2.7 years less (80 years vs. 82.7 years) than that for females living in the most affluent areas¹². The table below outlines key deprivation indicators for Donegal recorded in Census 2016.

Table 3.8 Deprivation Indices for Donegal (Census 2016)

Deprivation Indices and Key Components	Donegal	State
<i>Pobal HP Index 2016 Relative Deprivation Score</i>	-6.4	0.6
<i>Population Change 2016 (%)</i>	-1.20%	3.80%
<i>Age Dependency Rate</i>	37.7%	34.5%
<i>Lone parent ratio 2016 (%)</i>	20.9%	19.9%
<i>Primary Education 2016(%)</i>	21.6%	13.0%
<i>Third Level Education 2016 (%)</i>	28.3%	35.9%
<i>Professional Classes 2016(%)</i>	29.9%	36.2%
<i>Semi/Unskilled Class 2016 (%)</i>	21.0%	17.9%
<i>Unemployment rate - male 2016(%)</i>	20.2%	14.1%
<i>Unemployment rate - female 2016 (%)</i>	15.9%	12.2%
<i>LA Rented Housing 2016</i>	8.8%	8.7%
<i>Private Rented Housing 2016</i>	13.3%	19.4%

¹² Central Statistics Office, Mortality Differentials in Ireland 2010

3.3 Soil and Geology

Soil is the top layer of the earth's crust. It is formed by mineral particles, organic matter, water, air and living organisms. Soil can be considered as a non-renewable natural resource because it develops over very long timescales. It is an extremely complex, variable and living medium and performs many vital functions. These functions including food production through arable and pastoral agriculture, habitat provision for flora and fauna, flood attenuation through water absorption and storage, nutrient cycling of carbon, nitrogen and phosphorous essential for plant growth, water purification through physical and chemical filtration and biodegradation, carbon sequestration/storage via photosynthesis, and providing a building material and platform for construction. As such soil is worthy of protection because of its socio-economic and environmental importance.

In general the EU's Seventh Environmental Action Programme to 2020, recognises Ireland (therefore, Donegal) as a good quality. More specifically the Irish Soil Information System survey is based on existing information and data from previous soil survey work in Ireland augmented with new field surveys, and has resulted in the production of a new national soil map at a scale of 1:250,000. This map and associated soil classifications and descriptions are available through the EPA's map viewer <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/> and <http://gis.teagasc.ie/>. These datasets indicate the that the main soil types in Donegal are:

Table 3.9 Main Soil Type in Donegal (See Legend in Table Below)

Key Soil Type and Map Colour	Texture Substate Type	Drainage	Texture
NBP4 (0900NBP4):	Fine loamy over shale and slate bedrock	Well	Loamy
Ballywilliam	Coarse loamy drift with igneous and metamorphic stones	Poor	Course Loamy
Peat	Peat	Poor	Peat
River	River Alluvium	Poor	All
Carrigvahanagh	Peat over lithoskeletal acid igneous rock	Imperfectly	Peat
Rock	Rock	Other	Not stated
Brown sand/dune	Brown sand/dune	Other	Not Stated

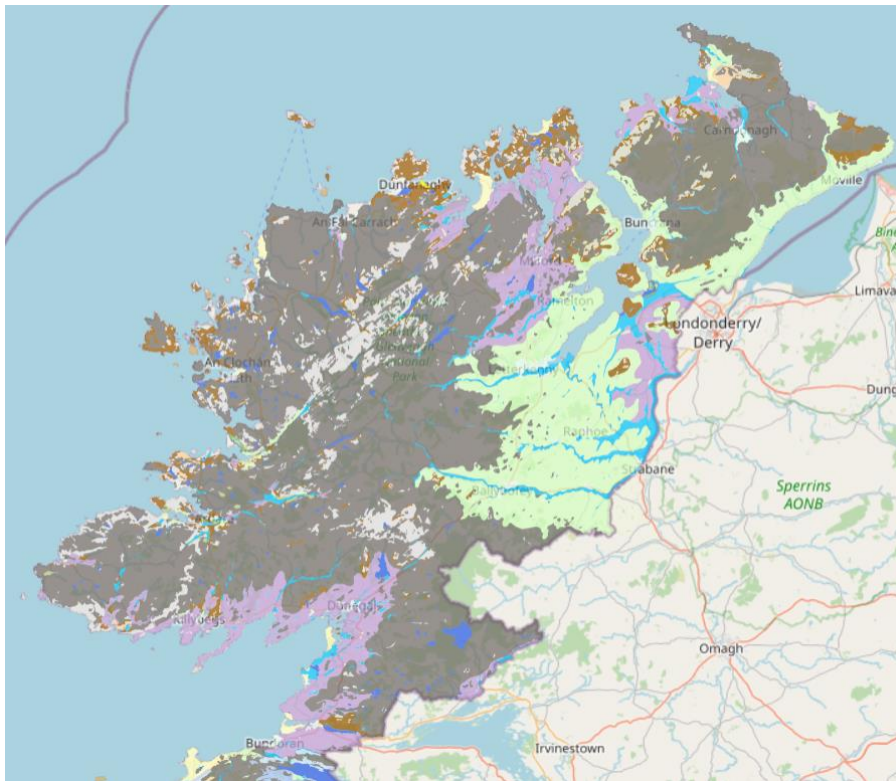
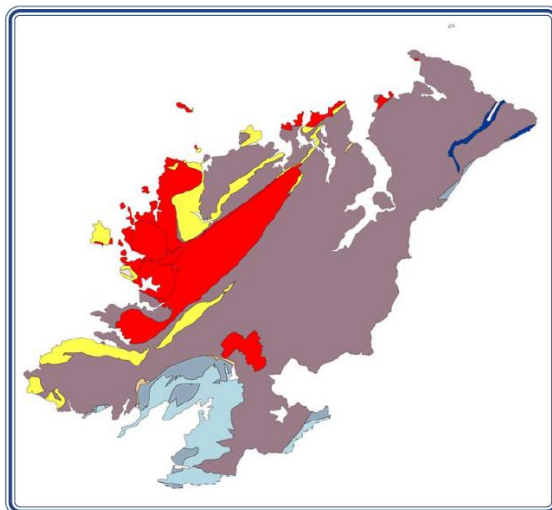


Figure 3.13 Main Soil Types in Donegal (Source: EPA Maps)

The underlying Geology in Donegal consists of Precambrian Dalradian Gneiss, Schists, quartzite (700 million years old approx.), granite (approximately 405 Ma approx.), Devonian sandstones, land over carboniferous sandstones and limestones (approximately 350 Ma approx.).



Geological Map of County Donegal

Pale Purple: Precambrian Dalradian rocks; **Bright blue:** Precambrian Gneiss and Schists; **Pale yellow:** Precambrian Quartzite; **Red:** Granite; **Beige:** Devonian sandstones; **Dark blue:** Lower Carboniferous sandstones; **Light blue:** Lower Carboniferous limestone.

Figure 3.14 Geology of Donegal (Source: County Geology of Ireland: Donegal GSI 2009)

The Donegal Geological Heritage Project was supported by the Geological Survey of Ireland, Donegal County Council and The Heritage Council and resulted in the 2019 Report "The Geological heritage of

Donegal". This report documents what are currently understood by the Irish Geological Heritage Programme (IGH) of Geological Survey Ireland to be the most important geological sites within Donegal. It proposes them as County Geological Sites (CGS), for inclusion within the Donegal County Development Plan (CDP). These sites are mapped below.

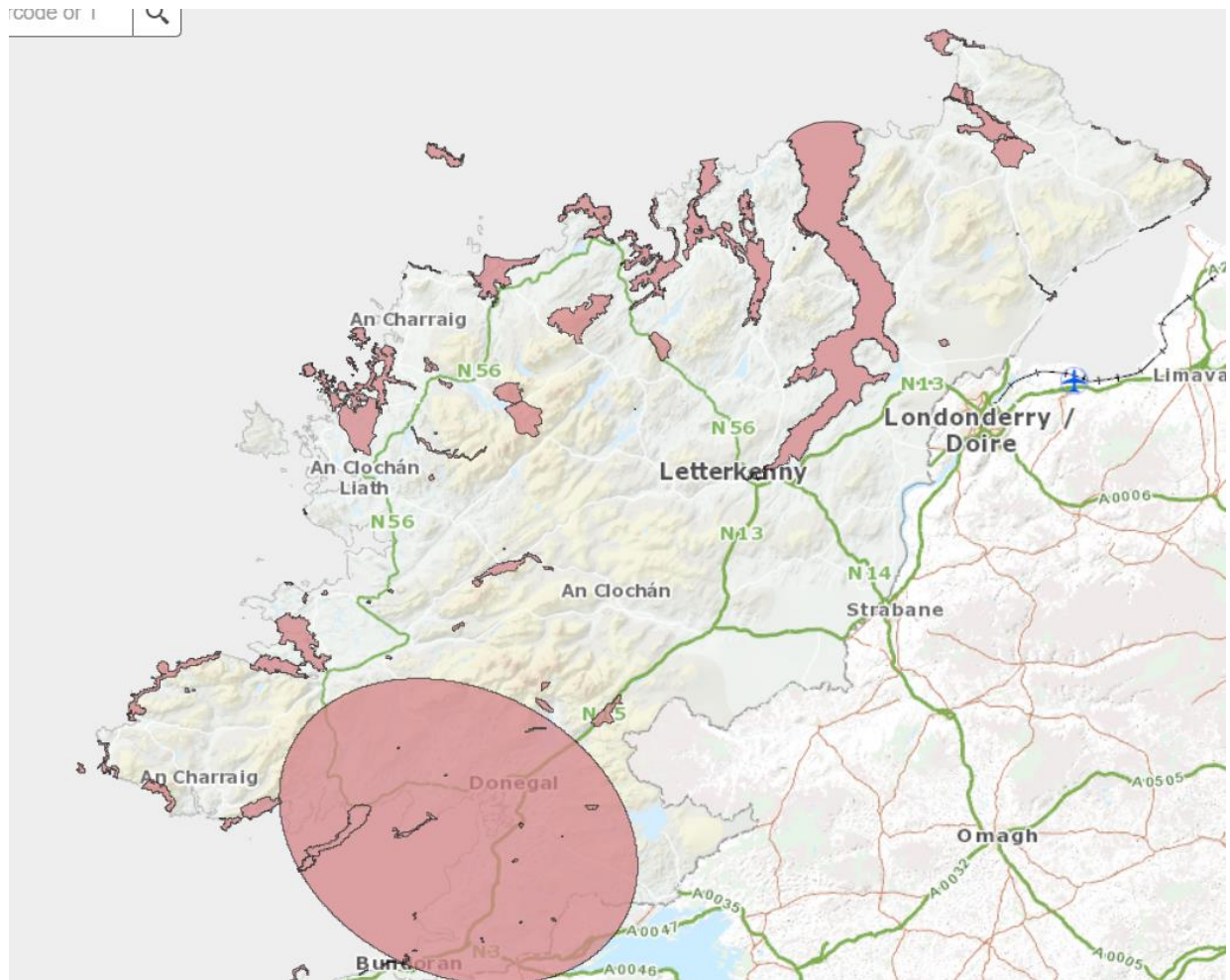


Figure 3.15 County Geological Sites in Donegal

The GSI's Landslide Susceptibility Map Viewer (see below) highlights potential areas of high and moderately high landslide susceptibility in Donegal most notably on steep mountainous slopes, peatlands and coastal cliffs.

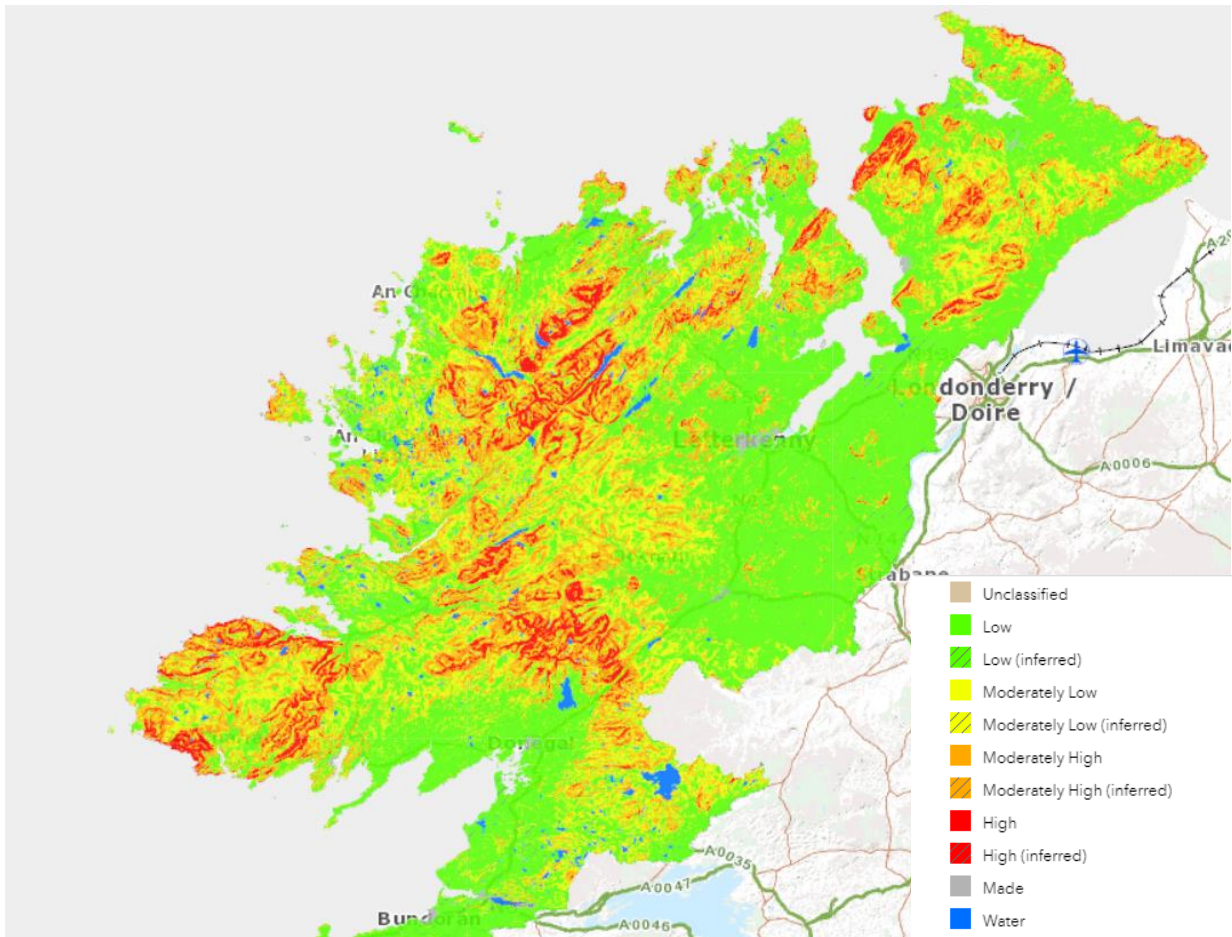


Figure 3.16 Landslide Susceptibility in Donegal (Extract from GSI Landslide Susceptibility Map Viewer)

3.4 Water

3.4.1 Waterbodies in Donegal, Environmental Pressures and the Water Framework Directive.

Donegal contains a significant number (468) and range of waterbodies including: surface water bodies such as rivers (e.g. Finn, Leannan, Gweebarra, Swilly, Eske), lakes (e.g. Loughs Eske, Fern, Derg, Gartan, Glen and Nacung), transitional (e.g. Foyle, Swilly, Estuary, Gweedore, Gweebarra, Owenea, Inner Donegal Bay), coastal (e.g. Lough Swilly, Lough Foyle, Sheephaven, Trawenagh Bay, Gweebarra Bay, Loughros, McSwines and Inver Bay) and ground water bodies.

Importantly 138 of such water bodies have been identified as Protected Areas in accordance with the EU Water Framework Directive including designated areas for/as:

- 1) Abstraction of water intended for human consumption under Article 7.
- 2) Protection of economically significant aquatic species.
- 3) Recreation, including areas designated as bathing waters under Directive 76/160/EEC.
- 4) Nutrient sensitive areas, including areas designated as vulnerable zones under Directive 91/676/EEC and areas designated as sensitive areas under Directive 91/271/EEC; and for the protection of habitats or species where the maintenance or improvement of the status of water is an important factor in their protection, including relevant Natura 200 sites designated under Directive 92/43/EEC (1) and Directive 79/409/EEC.

A further important sub-group is comprised of those identified as having High Status Waterbody Objectives. The second cycle River Basin Management Plan, 2018 (*) identified high status environmental objectives for 310 waterbodies in the country including 26 in Donegal. Finally, it should also be noted that there are 85 shared waterbodies between Donegal and Northern Ireland

Such Water bodies are subject to a range of environmental pressures including pollution from agriculture (e.g. farmyard wastes and land spreading of fertilisers), hydromorphology (i.e. physical modification to rivers banks, and shorelines), deficient municipal wastewater, forestry, domestic wastewater treatment systems, treatment plants, urban runoff, peat industries and quarries.

In particular the Water Framework Directive (WFD) aims at improving the aquatic environment and as such it applies to rivers, lakes, estuaries, coastal waters and groundwater. Under the WFD **Member states are required to achieve at least good status in all waters and must ensure that status does not deteriorate**, with a requirement for water quality management to be centred on river basin districts (RBDs). The 3rd Cycle Draft River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027 has now been published. Water Framework Directive Water Quality status is derived on the basis the measurement of a wide variety of variables as illustrated in Figure 3..17 below.

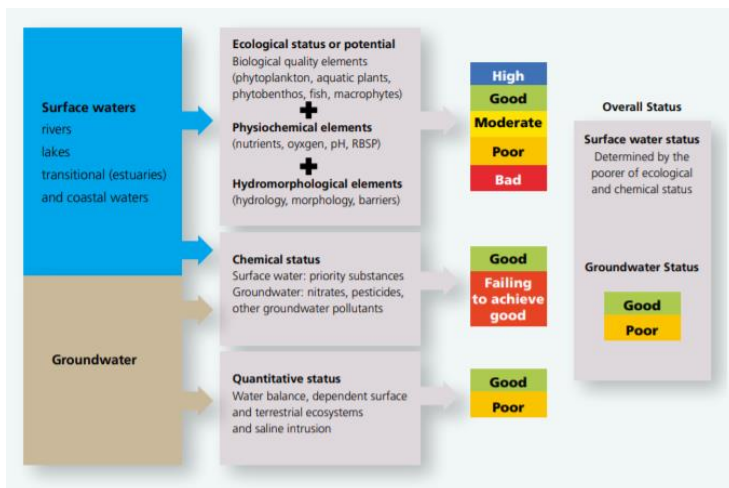


Figure 3.17 Schema Detailed How the WFD Water Quality Status is derived (Source: Water Quality in Ireland 2016-2021 EPA 2021)

3.4.2 Water Quality in Donegal

The WFD Water Quality Status for River, Lake Transitional and Coastal water bodies is available on EPA Map viewer and illustrated in Figure 3.18 below. This clearly indicates that a significant number of water bodies in parts of the east, northeast and west and south west of the County have a moderate or poor water quality status.

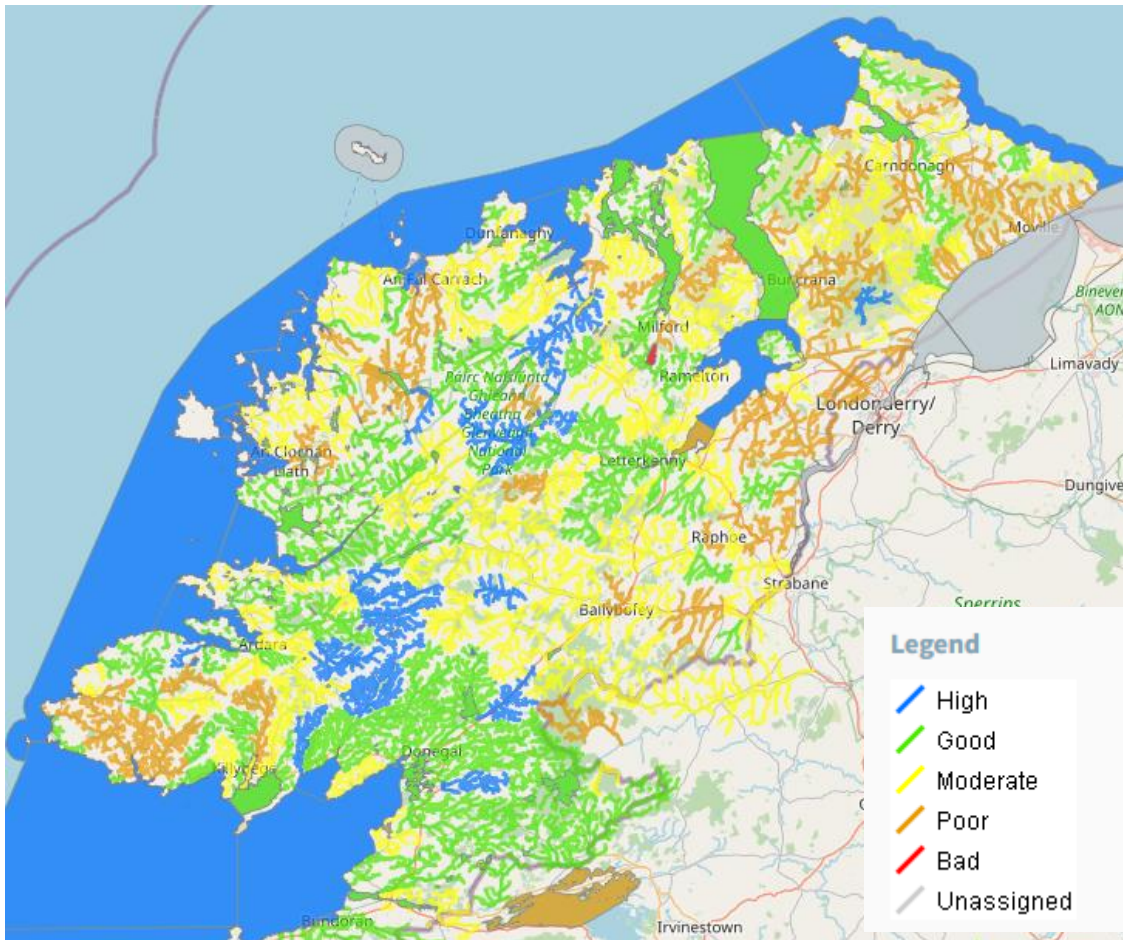


Figure 3.18 WFD Water Quality Status of Surface Waterbodies in Donegal

An assessment of Donegal specific waterbodies from the EPA Water quality in Ireland 2016-2021 reports indicates that the following overall picture for WFD Ecological Status of River Waterbodies in Donegal in the period 2016-2021. Overall, in terms of achieving WFD objectives this data indicates that 55.7% of monitored river bodies, 20.7% of lake water bodies, and 20.5% of Transitional and Coastal water bodies have a less than good status. However, all groundwater bodies were recorded as having good status in Donegal.

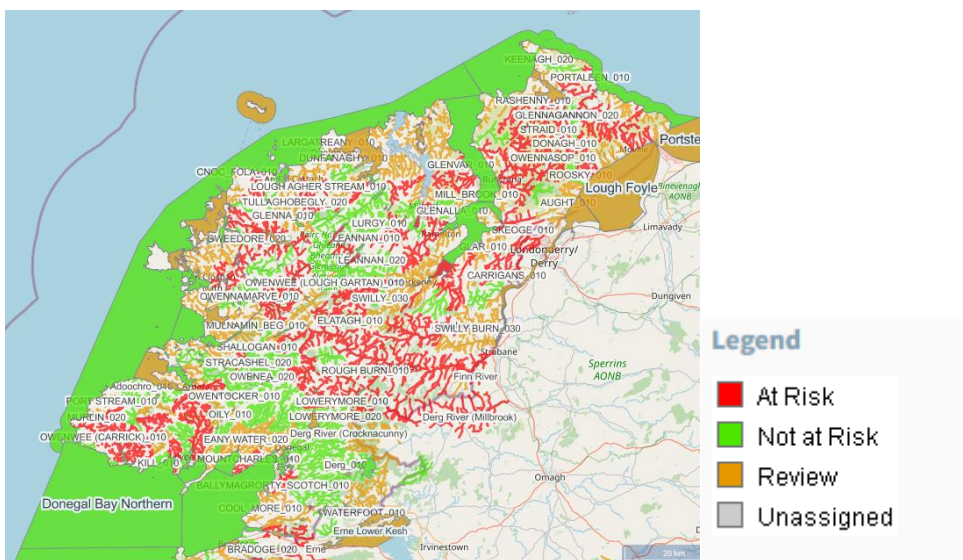


Figure 3.19 Status of WFD 'At Risk' Waterbodies in Donegal

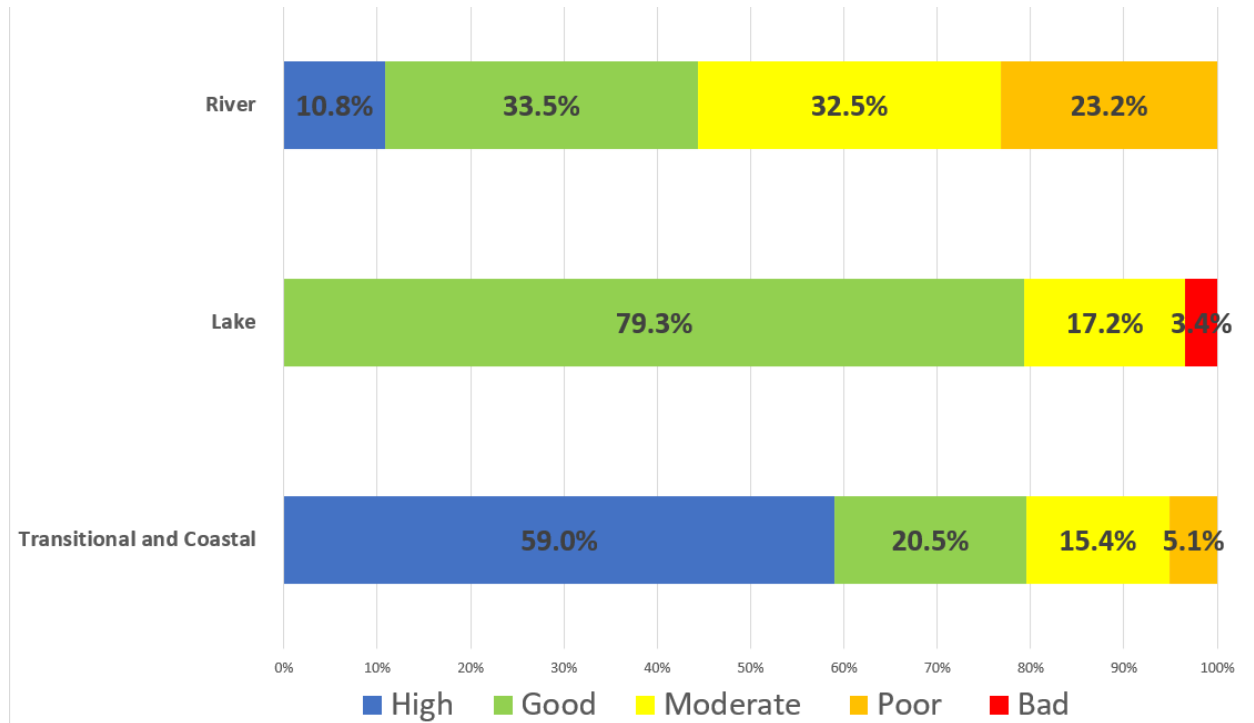


Figure 3.20 WFD Ecological Status of Water Bodies in Donegal 2016-2021

Furthermore, data for Donegal available on www.catchments.ie from the WFD 3rd Cycle Catchment level assessments indicate that agriculture, hydromorphology, forestry, anthropogenic pressures, urban wastewater and domestic wastewater are the most significant pressures affecting WFD 'At Risk' waterbodies in Donegal.

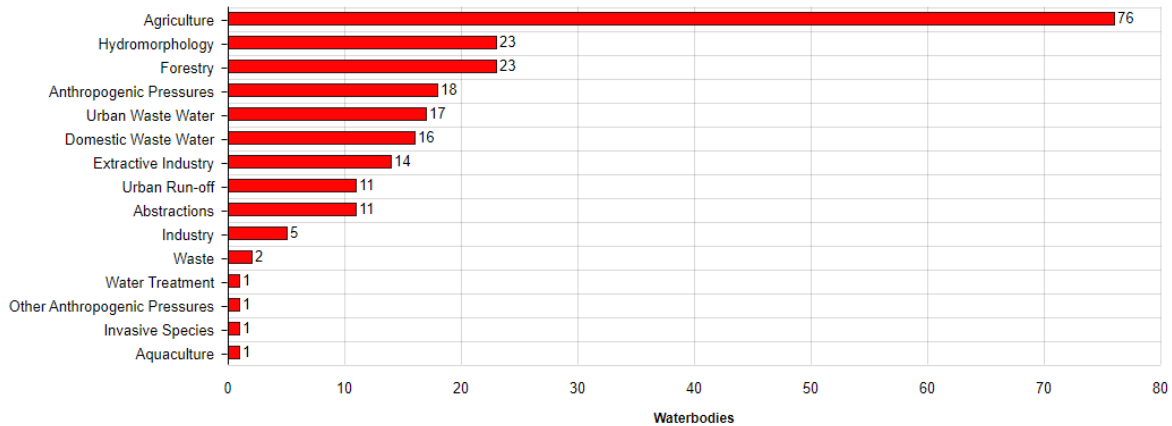


Figure 3.21 Significant Pressure Impacting At Risk Waterbodies in Donegal (Source: Catchments.ie)

3.4.3 Wastewater Treatment in Donegal

An analysis of the latest Irish Water Wastewater Treatment Register for 2021 indicates that 29 settlements in Donegal have no spare Wastewater Treatment Capacity either as a result of an overloaded or the absence of a municipal wastewater treatment plant

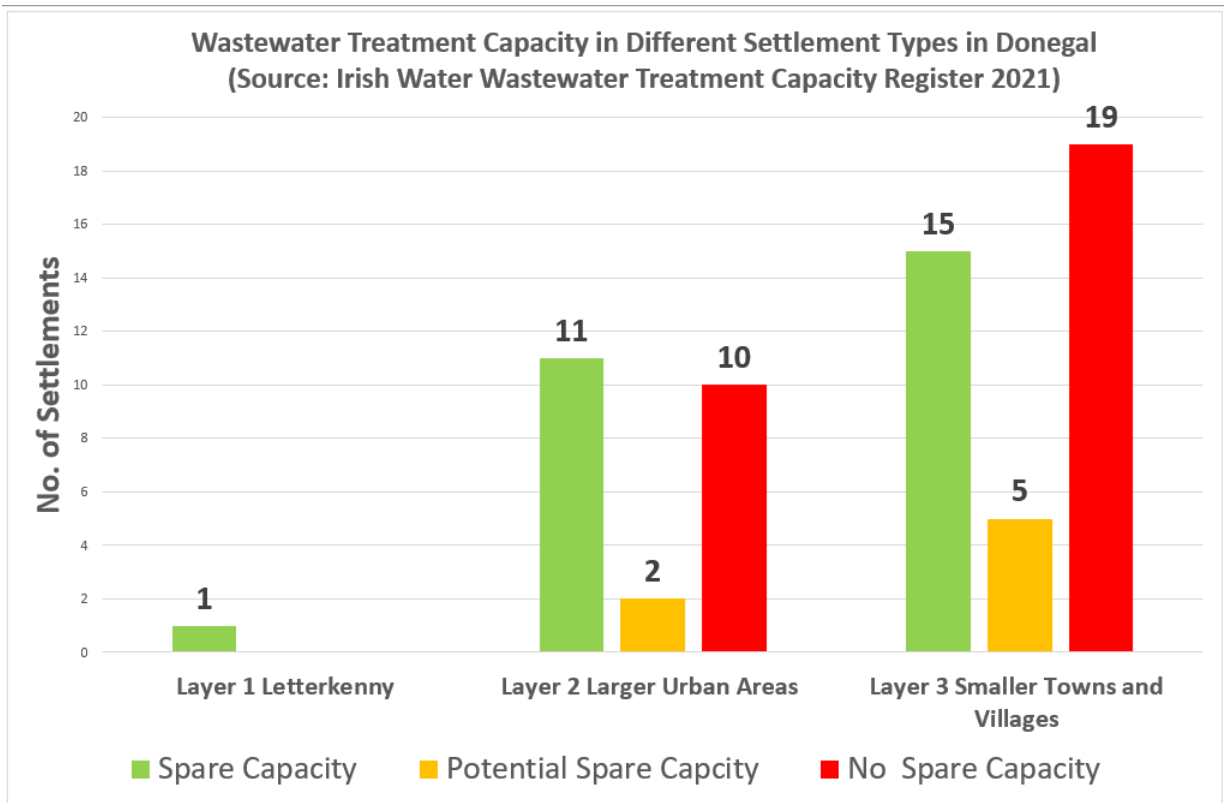


Figure 3.22 Wastewater Treatment Capacity in Settlement Layers in Donegal

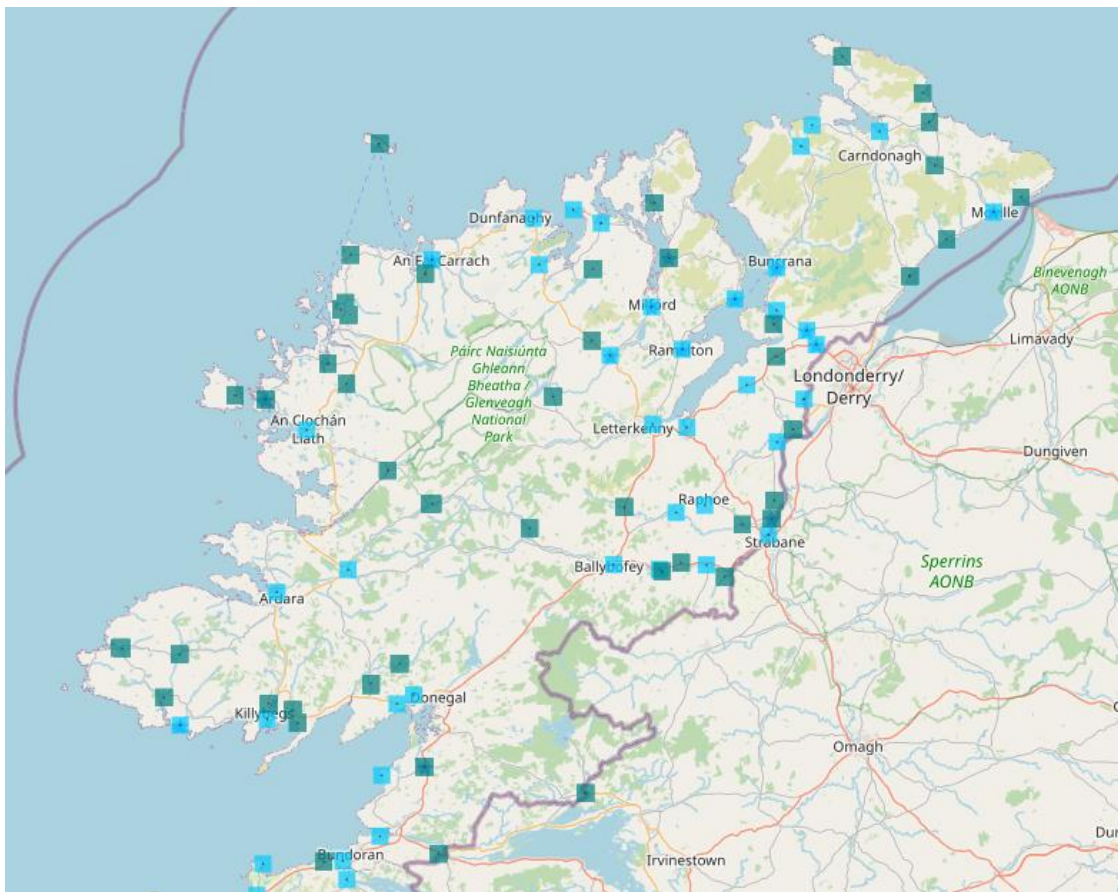


Figure 3.23 Irish Water Wastewater Treatment Plants in Donegal (Source: <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/SewageTreatment>)

Donegal also has a high and increasing reliance on individual domestic wastewater treatment systems in the county with 30,345 systems registered in the County in 2020¹³ and many commercial developments in unsewered areas also rely on individual treatment systems. In particular the EPA Report on Domestic WasteWater Treatment System Inspections 2021 found that 36% of the 121 systems inspected in Donegal failed and that lack of maintenance and desludging were key factors.

3.4.4 Drinking Water

There are 62 water treatment plants on the March 2021 Irish Water water supply capacity register. In addition, there are over 600 private group water schemes utilising both public and privately sourced water. Irish Water is responsible for the monitoring of public water supplies and the local authorities are responsible for monitoring of group water schemes and regulated small private supplies. Based on these monitoring results the EPA produces annual public and private drinking water supply reports.

The EPA’s Remedial Action List (RAL) is a priority list of at risk public drinking water supplies that require significant corrective action to ensure that drinking water is free of bacteria, protozoan, organisms, and chemical substances and water treatment plants are operated correctly. Said List for Q4 2022 indicate that the following upgrades are required at water treatment plants in Donegal:

Table 3.10 EPA Drinking Water (Public Supplies) Remedial Action List Q4 2022

Location	Population Served	Proposed Action Programme
Lettermacaward	2,266	Upgrade of Water Treatment Plant
Glenties-Ardara	3,518	Installation of membrane filtration system to address the raw water colour and organic content, and minimise THM formation.
Milford	2,560	To be submitted by Uisce Eireann

In relation to private drinking water supplies the EPA’s Report *Drinking Water Quality in Private Group Schemes and Private Supplies 2021* indicates that the Townawilly Private Drinking Water supply had a failure in relation in Trihalomethanes (THMs) but recorded no other failures for Donegal.

3.4.5 Bathing Water Quality

The EU Bathing Water Directive 2006 (implemented under the Bathing Waters Regulations 2008) requires Members States to monitor bathing waters at least monthly, classifies bathing waters as *poor, sufficient, good, or excellent*, sets *sufficient* as the minimum quality threshold and requires member states to undertake management measures where water is classified as poor. Based on local authority monitoring data the EPA classifies and produces reports on EPA Bathing Water Quality. The 2022 Report found that most bathing waters in Donegal had an excellent status, Rathmullan and Lisfannon Portnablugh and Portarthur had a Good status but Lady’s Bay Buncrana had a poor status (See Figure 3.22 below). Overall Bathing Water quality in Donegal has remained steady or improved between 2018 and 2022 with the exception of Buncrana which has disimproved from Good in 2018 to Poor in 2021 and 2022.

¹³ Source:
<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/dwwts/domesticwastewatertreatmentsystems2020>

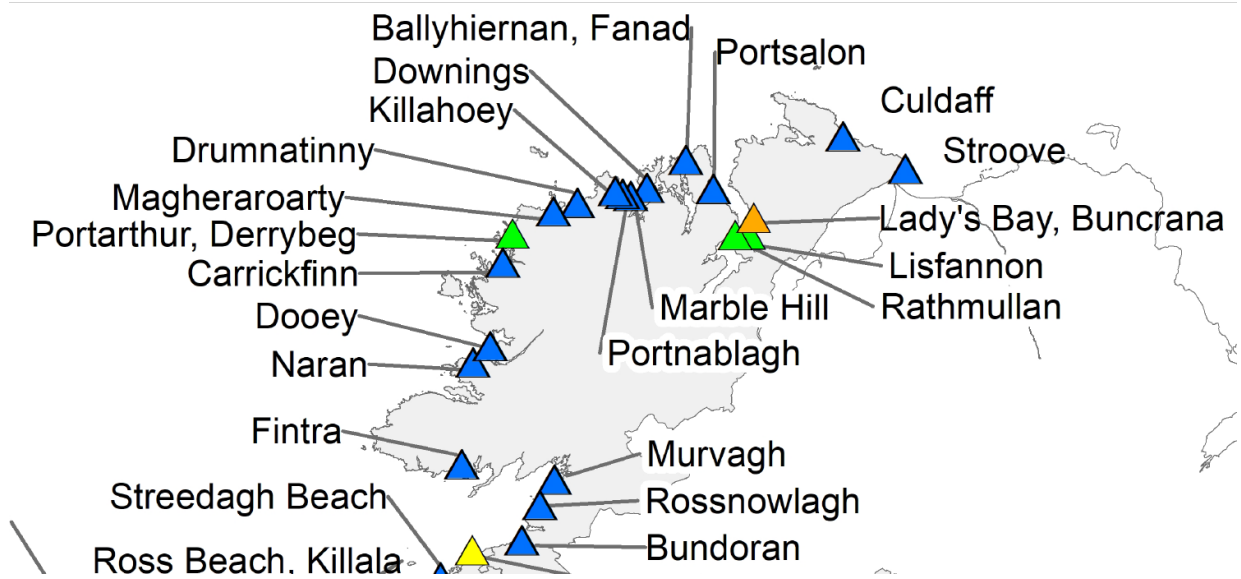


Figure 3.23: Bathing Water Quality Status in Donegal

Table 3. Bathwater Quality Trends in Donegal (Source: EPA 2022)

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Ballyhiernan Fanad	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Bundoran	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Carrickfinn	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Culdaff	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Dooley	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Downings	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Drumnatinny	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Fintra	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Killahoey	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Lady's Bay, Buncrana	Good	Good	Sufficient	Poor	Poor
Lisfannon	Sufficient	Good	Good	Good	Good
Magheraroarty	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Marble Hill	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Murvagh	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Naran	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Portarthur, Derrybeg	Good	Sufficient	Good	Good	Good
Portnablagh, Derrybeg	Good	Good	Good	Excellent	Good
Portsalon	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Rathmullan	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Rossnowlagh	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Stroove	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

3.5 Air Quality

Air pollution is the presence of substances in the atmosphere that are harmful to humans flora and fauna, climate or and materials. Air pollutants include gases such as: particulate matter (both organic and inorganic), nitrous oxides, sulphur dioxide, ammonia, carbon monoxide, methane, carbon dioxide and chlorofluorocarbons. Under the revised National Emissions Ceiling (NEC) Directive 2016 Ireland is required to limit the annual national emissions of the following transboundary pollutants: sulphur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO_x) volatile organic compounds (VOC), ammonia (NH₃) and fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}).

The EPA report 'Air Quality in Ireland 2021' indicates that air quality in Ireland is generally good but there are localised issues which impact air quality. The report identifies that fine Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}) mainly from the burning solid fuels in our homes and Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) mainly from road transport remain the main threats to good air quality. In this regard whilst EPA monitoring shows that PM_{2.5} and NO₂ levels in Ireland are within the current EU legal limits, these pollutants exceed the World Health Organisation (WHO) Air Quality guidelines (AQGs) for health. In addition the 2020 version of said report also specifically highlighted large spikes of SO₂ in Letterkenny during the winter heating season, that these spikes were likely to be related to the burning of solid fuel possibly with sulphur content in excess of the legal limit.

The above 2021 report also notes that Air pollution is a major environmental risk to our health, can increase the risk of stroke, heart disease, lung cancer and both chronic and acute respiratory diseases, including asthma, and that 1,300* premature deaths annually in Ireland due to poor air quality from fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}). The 2020 version of said report highlighted that high SO₂ concentrations can cause short term temporary breathing difficulties and aggravate cardiovascular disease and respiratory illness in the long term. The 2021 report also opines that Ireland should move towards achieving the new WHO air quality guidelines but this will be challenging.

In addition consultations with the DCC Environmental Section indicate that PM_{2.5} PM₁₀ and SO₂ pollution is predominately related to the burning of fossil fuels, there were compliance issues with the smoky coal ban and that such pollution in Letterkenny was exacerbated by the local topographical conditions which creates a down slope temperature inversion on cold nights thereby trapping pollution.

The Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive 2008 and the new WHO Air Quality Guidelines set out the following limit values/guidelines for the abovementioned pollutants:

Table 3.11: Limit Values and Guidelines for Specific Air Pollutants set out in the Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air for Europe (CAFE) Directive (2008/50/EC) and 2021 WHO Air Quality Guidelines

	CAFE Limit Value Annual Mean µg/m ³	CAFE Limit Value Daily (24hr) Mean µg/m ³	WHO Air Quality Guidelines Annual Mean µg/m ³	WHO Air Quality Guidelines Daily (24hr) Mean µg/m ³	CAFE Limit Value 1 hour
PM _{2.5}	25 (Stage 1)		5	15	
PM ₁₀	40		15	45	
NO ₂	40		10	25	200
SO ₂		125		40	350

Air quality monitoring data for PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, and SO₂ is available for the Letterkenny Air Quality Monitoring Station for 2021. This information is summarised in Table 3.12 and graphed in Figures 3.24 to 3.26

Table 3.12 Summary of Letterkenny Air Quality Monitoring Data 2021 Vis-à-vis WHO and CAFE Air Quality Limits.

Air Pollutant	
PM2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 64 exceedances of the new tougher WHO Air Quality Guidelines Daily (24hr) Mean of 15µg/m³. These exceedances were most prevalent in the winter months. The average annual PM_{2.5} level of 11.25 significantly exceeded the new tougher WHO Air Quality Guidelines Annual Mean of 5µg/m³ but did not exceed the CAFE Limit Value Annual mean of 25µg/m³
PM10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 exceedances of the new tougher WHO Air Quality Guidelines Daily (24hr) Mean of 45µg/m³. These exceedances were most prevalent in the winter months. The average annual PM₁₀ level of 14.68 was marginally below the new tougher WHO Air Quality Guidelines Annual Mean of 15µg/m³ but did not exceed the CAFE Limit Value Annual mean of 40µg/m³
SO2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 exceedances of the new tougher WHO Air Quality Guidelines Daily (24hr) Mean of 40µg/m³. These exceedances were most prevalent in the winter months

Whilst it is noted that air quality data is only available for Letterkenny it is rationale to assume that the PM2.5, PM10 and SO2 air pollution also occurs in other urban areas of Donegal where solid fuel is burned for home heating.

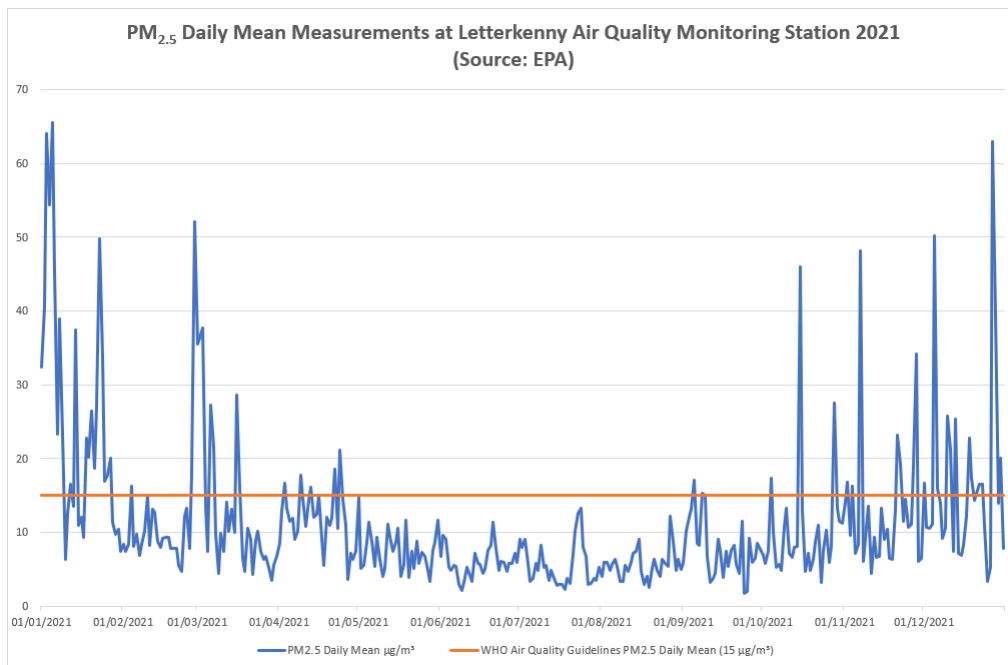


Figure 3.24 PM_{2.5} Measurements at Letterkenny Air Quality Monitoring Station 2021 (Source: EPA)

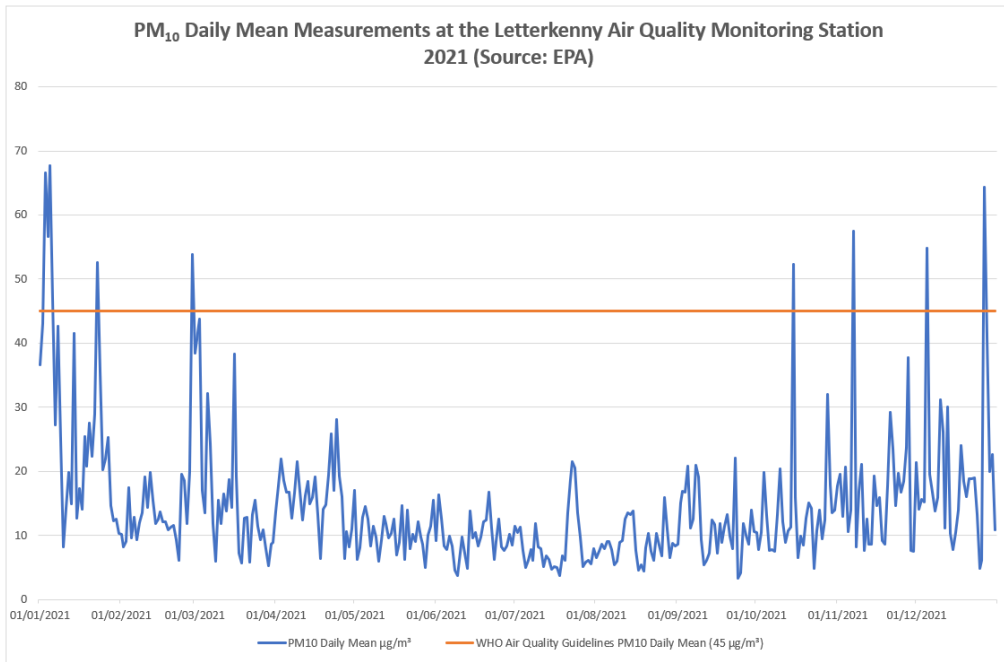


Figure 3.25 PM10 Measurements at Letterkenny Air Quality Monitoring Station 2021 (Source: EPA)

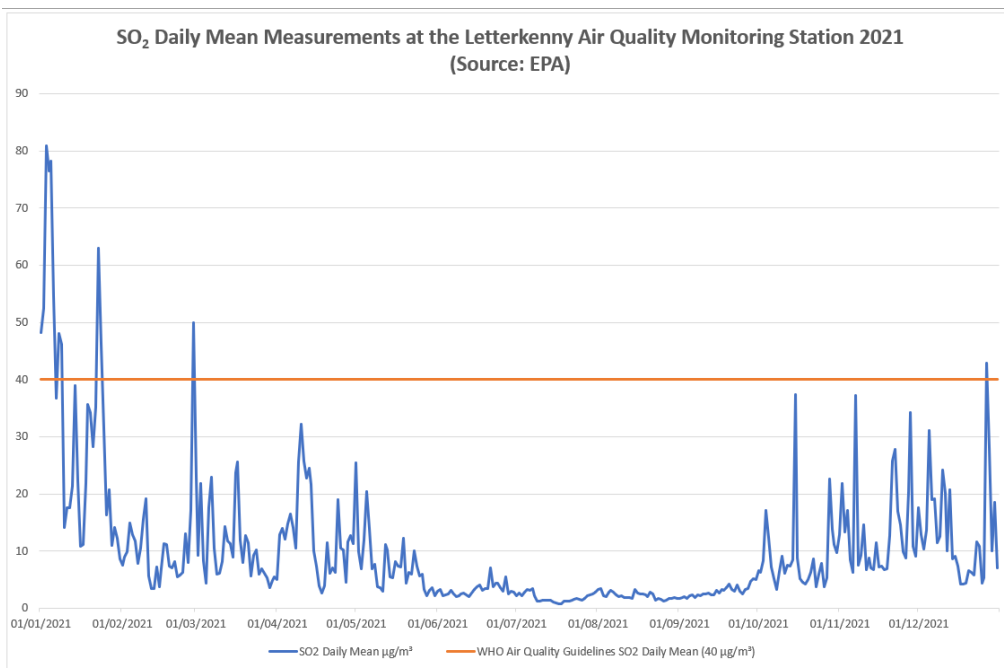


Figure 3.26 SO₂ Measurements at Letterkenny Air Quality Monitoring Station 2021 (Source: EPA)

In relation to NO₂ a small EPA dataset is also available for Letterkenny for part of 2009. Whilst it is acknowledged that this is an historical dataset this indicates that that the average NO₂ recording for this period of time (12.02 µg/m³) was significantly below the CAFE annual mean limit value of 40 µg/m³ and there were also no exceedances of the 1CAFE 1 hour limit value of 200 µg/m³.

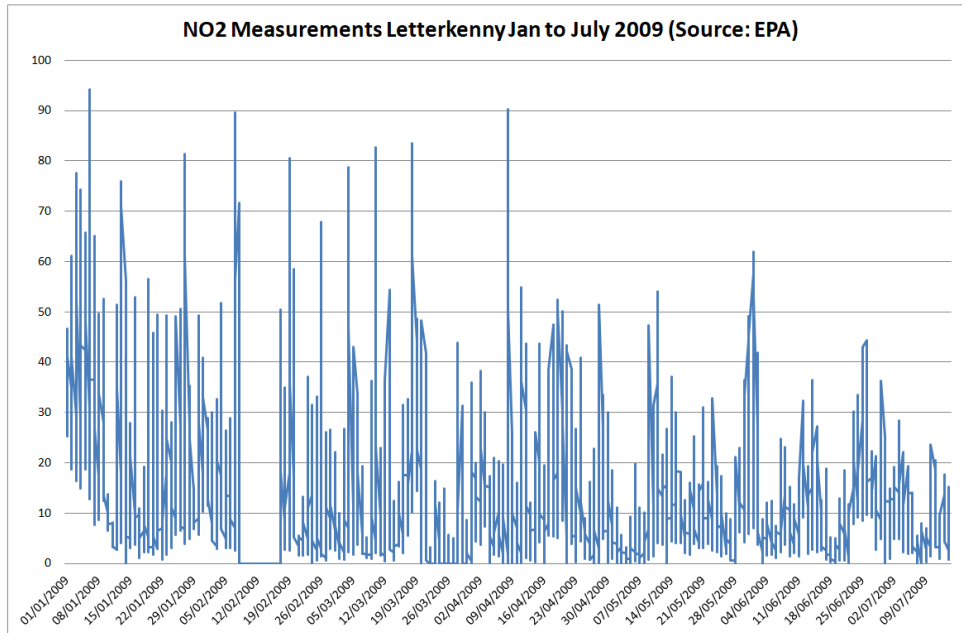


Figure 3.27 NO₂ Measurements at Letterkenny Air Quality Monitoring Station 2020 (Source: EPA)

3.6 Climate Change

3.6.1 Current and Future Climate Trends

Human related green house gas emissions (e.g. Carbon Dioxide (CO₂), Methane (CH₄) and Nitrous Oxide (N₂O)) are causing global warming through an artificial greenhouse effect and said warming is impacting the climate system. Atmospheric concentrations of: CO₂ have increase by 50% from pre-industrial levels to 419ppm, CH₄ has increased by 170% from pre-preindustrial levels to 1940ppb, and N₂O has increased by 20% to 330ppb¹⁴. In 2020 Global temperatures were 1.2oC higher than pre-industrial levels. Future climate change scenarios vary depending on future greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions. However global surface temperature could increase (relative to preindustrial levels) by 1c in a low emissions scenario to 4c in a high emissions growth scenario by 2100¹⁵. Sea levels may rise by between 0.26 and 0.55 in a low emission scenario to between 0.45 to 0.82m in a high emission scenario by 2100.

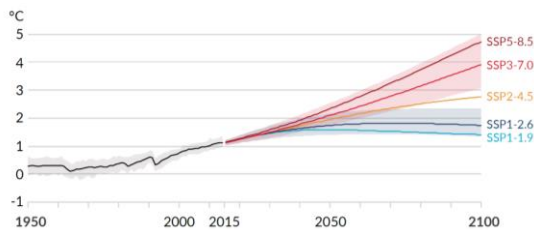


Figure 3.28 Global Surface Temperature Change (Relative to 1850-1900)

¹⁴ Walther C.A. Cámaro García and Ned Dwyer, 2020, The Status of Ireland’s Climate 2020, EPA

¹⁵ IPCC, 2021, Climate Change 2021 The Physical Science Basics Summary for Policy Makers.

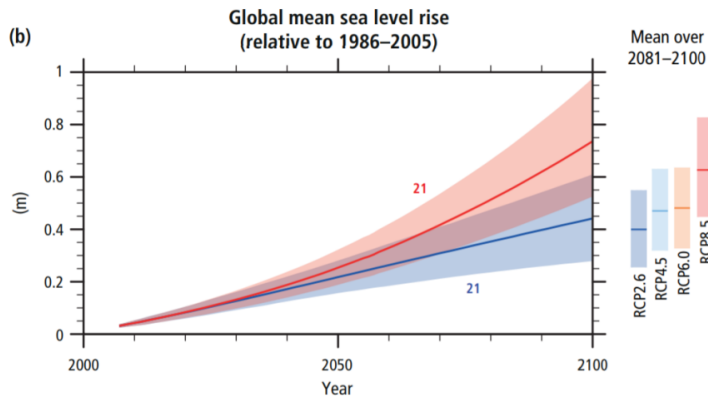


Figure 3.29 Global Sea Level Rise Projections

In Ireland the air temperature has risen by 0.9c over the last 120 years, annual precipitation was 6% higher in the period 1989 to 2018 (compared to 1961 to 1990), the sea level has risen by approximately 2-3mm/year since the early 1990s. In addition, the abovementioned Global Warming scenarios are likely to also result in a number of significant climate impacts in Ireland including¹⁶:

- Temperature increases of 1–1.6°C compared with the baseline period (1981–2000), with the largest increases in the east.
- Enhanced warming at the extremes (i.e. hot days and cold nights), with summer daytime and winter night-time temperatures projected to increase by 1–2.4°C;
- Substantial decrease in the number of frost and ice days of approximately 50%
- More frequent summer heat wave events with the largest increases in the south.
- More variable precipitation, with substantial projected increases in the occurrence of both dry periods and heavy precipitation events with the large increases in dry events in the summer and largest increase in heavy precipitation events in the autumn and winter.
- Substantial decrease in snowfall by the middle of the century (over 50%)
- Decrease in the energy content of the 120 m (turbine height) wind for all seasons with the largest decreases noted for summer.
- An increase in the length of the growing season by between 12% and 16%.

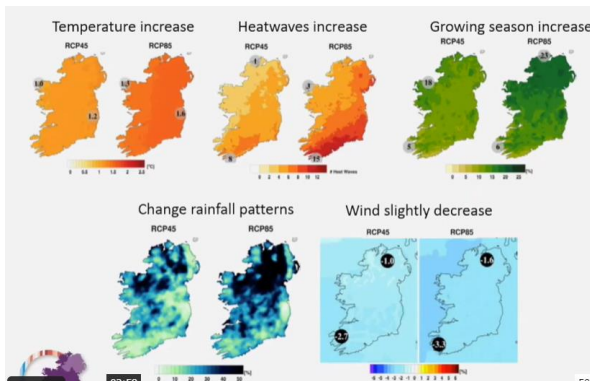


Figure 3.30 Key Impacts of Climate Change on Ireland

In Donegal the average sea surface temperature at Malin Head between 2009 and 2018 was 0.47°C above the 1981-2010 mean¹⁷. In addition analysis of Met Eireann annual temperate data for Malin Head also shows a steady increase between 1956 and 2022 (See Figure 3.X below).

¹⁶ Paul Nolan and Jason Flanagan, 2020, High Resolution Climate Projections for Ireland, A Multi-model Ensemble Approach, EPA
¹⁷ Walther C.A. Cámaro García and Ned Dwyer, 2020 The Status of Ireland Climate, EPA and others

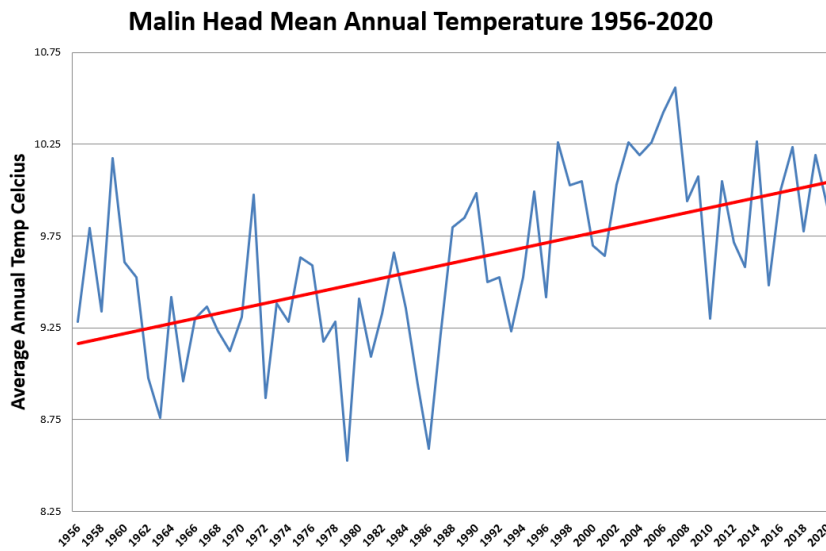


Figure 3.31 Mean Annual Temperature Malin Head 1956-2020

In Donegal a number of extreme rainfall events have occurred over the past decade. In July 2013 Flooding of Letterkenny University Hospital which caused extensive damage including to the new accident and emergency department costing almost €40m in repairs. Flooding in Inishowen in 2017, wherein 63mm of rain was recorded at Malin Head within a six-hour period, caused localised landslides, the damage destruction of local bridges and roads and extensive damage to Swan Park Buncrana. Whilst it is difficult to attribute single events to climate change the frequency and intensity of such precipitation events are likely to increase with climate change.

Satellite indications that sea levels around Ireland are generally rising. However north eastern Ireland has also been rising over recent millennia due to post glacial isostatic uplift (i.e. the gradual rising of the land after the last ice age due to the melting of the overlying ice sheet) and this process may attenuate the relative sea level rise. However the most recent academic analysis¹⁸ of the Malin Head sea level data indicates that the smoothed data trends '*could suggest that recent and near-future RSLC trends may be moving from the overall falling linear trend estimate, and that long-term trends may be moving into a positive (rising RSL) mode*'. In other words global climate related sea level rise may be starting to outstrip the abovementioned post glacial rebound and we may therefore be moving from a relative falling to a relative rising sea level trend in North Donegal. In this regard the High End Future Scenario Flood Risk Mapping contained in the SFRA of this plan indicates that many low lying coastal areas around Donegal would experience significant flooding (e.g. upper Lough Swilly and Lough Foyle, Sheepaven Bay, Ballyness Bay, Naran/Portnoo, and part of Donegal Bay).

3.6.2 Ireland’s Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Current and Future Trends

In 2021 Ireland Ireland’s Greenhouse gas emissions were estimated to be 61.53kt CO₂ equivalent of which carbon dioxide (CO₂) accounted for 61.0%, methane (CH₄) accounted for 27.9% and Nitrous Oxide (N₂O) accounted for and 9.9% respectively¹⁹. Taking a longer term view Ireland’s greenhouse gas emission reached a peak during the economic boom of the mid 2000’s, declined during the subsequent recession and increased slightly again in recent years although a decline was recorded in 2019 relative to 2018²⁰.

¹⁸ Julian D Oxford, Joanne Murdyand Robert Freel, 2006, Developing Constraints on the Relative Sea Level Curve for the North East of Ireland from the mid-holocene to the Present Day, Philosophical Transactions of The Royal Society 364, P.857-866

¹⁹ <https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/climate-change/ghg/summary-by-gas/#d.en.84355>

²⁰ <https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/climate-change/ghg/summary-by-gas/#d.en.84355>

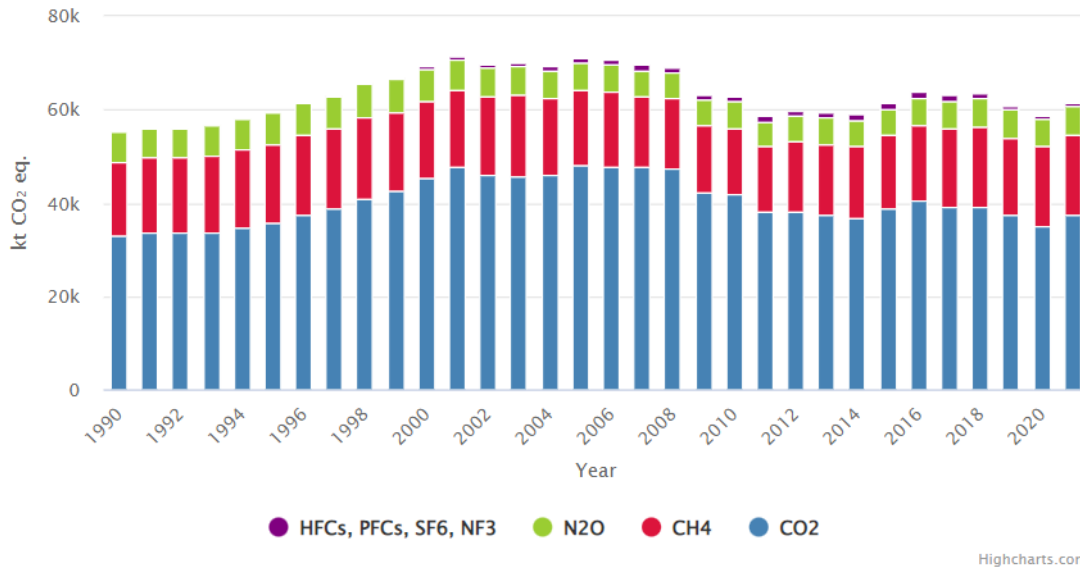


Figure 3.32 Ireland’s Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2021

In this regard the EPA estimates that Ireland missed its 2020 greenhouse gas emissions target to achieve a 20% reduction of non-Emissions Trading Scheme emissions (i.e. for agriculture, transport, residential, commercial, waste and non-energy intensive industry sector) relative to 2005 levels set under the EU’s Effort Sharing Decision (Decision No 406/2009/EC).

On a sectoral basis the largest emitters of Greenhouse Gases in Ireland in 2021 were: agriculture at 37.5% (arising primarily from methane from livestock, manure management, and nitrogen application to soils), transport at 17.7% (arising primarily from road transport), energy industries 16.7% (arising primarily from electricity generation) and residential at 11.4% (arising primarily from burning oil, gas, coal and peat for home heating and hot water)²¹.

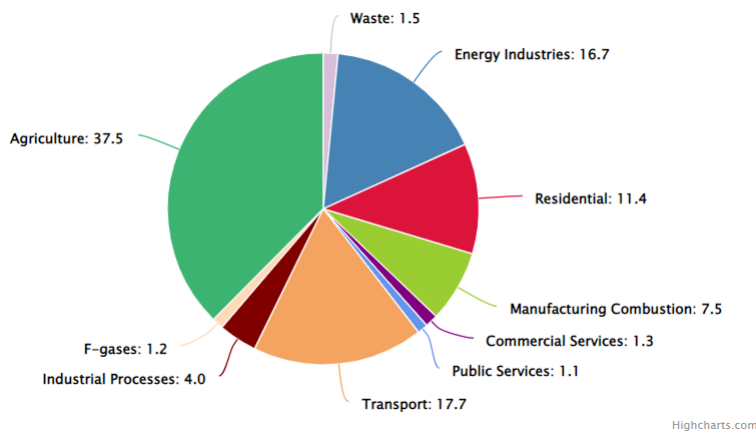


Figure 3.33 Ireland’s Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Sector in 2021

Furthermore the EPA Report *'Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections 2021-2040'* indicates that even with implementation of additional measures set out in government plans (including those set out in the Climate Action Plan 2021) (see below) Ireland’s total Greenhouse Gas Emissions will only decrease

²¹ <https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/climate-change/ghg/latest-emissions-data/>

by 28% (relative to 2018) by 2030. (See Graph below). In particular this report estimates that with said additional measures by 2030 (compared to 2018 emissions):

- Agricultural emissions are expected to decrease by 22.4%.
- Transport emissions are expected to decrease by 39.3%.
- Energy emissions are expected to decrease by 58.1%.
- Residential Emissions are expected to decrease by 41.5%.

Otherwise the report estimates that in a 'with existing measures' (WEM) scenario a much smaller reduction in Greenhouse Gas emissions is predicted.

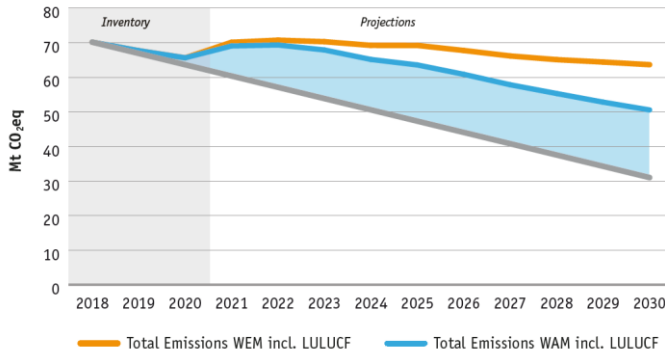


Figure 3.34 Ireland’s Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections to 2030 under With Existing Measures and with Additional Measures Scenarios

In this regard in a 2021 Press release²² the EPA indicated that order to achieve a 51 per cent emissions reduction by 2030 (i.e. the reduction target in the 2021 Climate Action Act) significant new measures will need to be identified and implemented across all sectors.

3.6.3 Climate Change Targets and Actions

The 2015 Paris Climate Change Agreement contains a long-term goal of keeping the increase in global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, aiming to limit the increase to 1.5°C and stating the need for global emissions to peak as soon as possible.

The European Green Deal and the Climate Target Plan the European Commission aims to: achieve net GHG emissions by 2050, reduce net GHG emissions by at least 55% below 1990 levels by 2030, and to make Europe a climate-resilient society by 2050.

At a **National** level the following key climate related targets and actions can be identified in the following documents:

- **National Planning Framework Project Ireland 2040** establishes the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society as a national strategic outcome.
- **Climate Adaption Framework** set out a number of key actions including the: formulation of sectoral adaption plans (e.g. flooding transport, electricity and gas), adoption of Local Authority Adoption Strategies, establishment of regional climate action offices, and integration of climate adaption within all relevant national policy/legislation.
- **Programme for Government** commits to an average **7% per annum reduction in overall greenhouse gas emissions from 2021 to 2030 (a 51% reduction over the decade)** and to achieving net zero emissions by 2050.
- **Low Carbon and Climate Change Act 2021** inter alia: establishes in law a 'national climate objective', which commits to pursue and achieve no later than 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity-rich, environmentally-sustainable and climate-neutral economy, and requires: government to adopt a series of economy-wide five-year carbon budgets including sector specific

²² <https://www.epa.ie/news-releases/news-releases-2021/ireland-will-not-meet-its-2020-greenhouse-gas-emissions-reduction-targets-action-is-needed-now-to-meet-2030-eu-targets.php>

targets, the preparation of a Climate Action Plan including sectoral actions, the preparation a national long term climate action strategy, and requires that the first two five year carbon budgets should result in a **51% reduction in Greenhouse gases by 2030 (relative to 2018 emissions)**

- **Carbon Budgets** were adopted in April 2022 pursuant to the above Act namely:
 - 2021-2025 Average reduction of 4.8% PA.
 - 2026-2030 Average reduction of 8.3% PA
- **Climate Action Plan 2023 contains the following key sectoral targets:**
 - **Public Sector:** Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the public sector by 51% and Increase the improvement in energy efficiency in the public sector from the 33% target in 2020 to 50% by 2030
 - **Electricity:** 75% Reduction in emissions by 2030 and 80% of all electricity be generated from renewable sources by 2030.
 - **Industry:** 35% reductions in emissions by 2030.
 - **Built Environment:**
 - All new dwellings designed and constructed to Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) standard by 2025, and Zero Emission Building (ZEB) standard by 2030
 - Equivalent of 120,000 dwellings retrofitted to BER B2 or cost optimal equivalent by 2025, and 500,000 dwellings to said standard by 2030
 - **Transport:** 50% reduction in emission by 2030, 20% reduction in total vehicle kilometres, a reduction in fuel usage, and significant increases to sustainable transport trips and modal share.
 - **Agriculture:** 25% reduction in emissions by 2030.

At the local level Donegal County Council's 'Climate Adaptation Strategy' (published in 2019) contains several planning related actions including:

- Continue to integrate climate change and the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy into the County Development and Area Plans, and apply planning policies to reduce the vulnerability of County Donegal to the impacts of climate change;
- Support national reviews of design requirements of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) and consider their inclusion in future reviews of the County Development and Area Plans;
- Ensure new developments are considered in the context of best practice as it relates to flood risk management.
- Develop sustainable land use planning policies which facilitates transportation efficiency, economic returns on transport investment, minimisation of environmental impacts and a general shift towards the use of low carbon public, transportation throughout the county.


3.7 Material Assets

Annex I(f) of the directive requires that the information on likely significant effects include 'material assets'. However, what constitutes material assets is not clearly defined in legislation or guidance and therefore open to interpretation. The Scottish EPA's document *Guidance Note 4 Guidance On Consideration Of Material Assets In Strategic Environmental Assessment* indicates that material assets broadly includes built assets such as energy/heat infrastructure, heat/energy efficiency management, flood protection, water supply, wastewater, transport, telecommunications, waste management, housing, healthcare facilities, schools, greenspace, paths etc and natural assets such as minerals, watercourses, natural flood management processes, forestry and woodlands, and agricultural land. On a related topic Table 3.1 of the EPA guidance document *Guidelines On The Information To Be Contained In Environmental Impact Assessment Reports* lists the following sub topics under Material Assets: Roads and Traffic and Built Services including electricity, telecommunications, gas, water supply and sewerage.

Material assets can therefore be broadly interpreted to mean built or natural assets to enable a society to function, live and work including: transport, energy, water and wastewater and waste infrastructure, housing, healthcare facilities, and green infrastructure and natural assets such as quarries, flood

defences, green spaces and agricultural lands. The table below sets out the key material assets in Donegal. Cultural and built heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage are dealt with separately in this report.

Table 3.13 Key Material Assets in Donegal


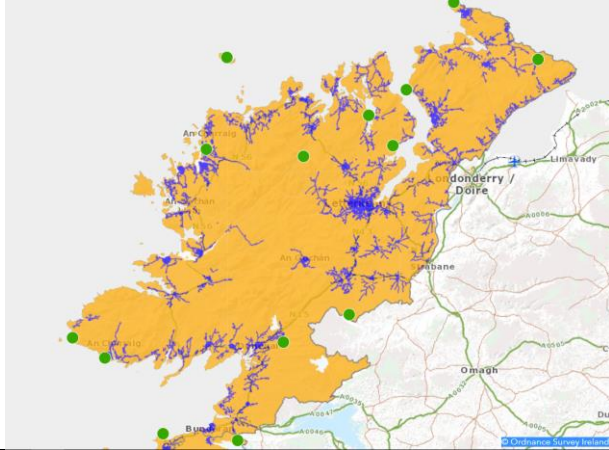
Material Asset Type	Description
<p>Transport</p>	<p>Donegal’s road transport network consists of the National and Regional Road network detailed on the map below and an extensive network of smaller local roads.</p> 
<p>Housing</p>	<p>Housing Stock: 86,489 (Census 2022 preliminary results) Vacant Housing Stock: 9851 (Census 2022 preliminary results) Occupancy Rate: Q4 2022 79.6%²³ (lowest in state) Holiday Homes Q4 2022: 11.0%²⁴ (Highest in state) Vacancy Rate Q4 2022: 9.4%²⁵</p>
<p>Commercial buildings</p>	<p>Total Commercial Buildings: 6381 Commercial Vacancy Rate Q4 2022: 17.5%²⁶</p>
<p>Energy Infrastructure</p>	<p>Wind energy total installed capacity: Insert Figure here. Hydro energy total installed capacity: 59.65MW</p>
<p>Wastewater</p>	<p>Public Wastewater Treatment Plants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Irish Water Register 2021 (issued in June 2022) indicates that there are 56 public wastewater treatment plants having a total treatment capacity of 138,252 population equivalent. Most settlements in Donegal have a wastewater collection network <p>Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems CSO figures indicates that there are 31,269 such systems in Donegal in 2022.</p>
<p>Water</p>	<p>Irish Water maintain an extensive water supply and treatment network throughout the County covering 62 water resource zones.</p>

²³ GeoDirectory Residential Buildings Report Q4 2022

²⁴ As above

²⁵ As above

²⁶ GeoDirectory Commercial Buildings Report Q4 2022

<p>Electricity Transmission Infrastructure</p>	 <p>Donegal’s electricity transmission infrastructure consists of a main backbone of 110kv lines as shown on the map above. However there are no 220kv or 400kv lines located in the county.</p>									
<p>Telecoms</p>	<p>The National Broadband Map²⁷ indicates that the many urban areas and their hinterlands are covered by high speed fixed broadband but many rural areas currently have no such service.</p> 									
<p>Schools</p>	<p>Primary and Secondary School Facilities in Donegal</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Level</th> <th>No. of Schools</th> <th>Total Enrolments 2022</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Primary</td> <td>175</td> <td>18533</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secondary</td> <td>27</td> <td>13611</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>3rd Level Education: ATU Donegal Campus in Lettekenny contains over over 18,000m2 of educational and support accommodation with specialised teaching and research facilities for a total enrolment of almost 5,000 students.</p>	Level	No. of Schools	Total Enrolments 2022	Primary	175	18533	Secondary	27	13611
Level	No. of Schools	Total Enrolments 2022								
Primary	175	18533								
Secondary	27	13611								
<p>Healthcare Facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letterkenny University Hospital, located on the Circular Road Letterkenny is a 302 bedded General Hospital, which provides a wide range of acute hospital services on an in-patient, day-case and out-patient basis, services include Intensive Care, Coronary Care, General Medicine, Geriatric care, Renal Dialysis, General Surgical and Urology, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Paediatric care (including a Neo-Natal Unit), Orthopaedics and most recently Consultant-led Oncology and Haematology Services. • There are 45 GP practices currently operational in Donegal. 									

²⁷ <https://dcenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=99c229dc4c414971afc50818b25337ef>

3.8 Cultural, Archaeological and Architectural Heritage

Heritage is described by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) as “our legacy from the past, what we live with today and what we pass on to future generations”. Cultural Heritage refers to monuments, groups of buildings and sites with historical, aesthetic, archaeological, scientific, ethnological or anthropological value.

Architectural Heritage

At a European level the 1985 ‘European Convention on the Protection Heritage’ (Granada Convention), ratified by Ireland 1997, obliges Ireland to take statutory measures to protect architectural heritage.

The Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended) requires local authorities produce and maintain a **Record of Protected Structures (RPS)** consisting of structures, or parts of structures “*which form part of the architectural heritage and which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.*” The act only provides for exempted development works which would not materially affect the character of the RPS structure and prohibits the granting of permission for the demolition of RPS structures save in exceptional circumstances. The Record of Protected Structures for Donegal 2023 contains **480** structures in total and is available on <https://www.donegalcoco.ie/culture/heritage/builtheritage/recordofprotectedstructures/>

Said Act also provides for the designation of **Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)**, restricts exempted developments provisions in ACAs and obliges planning authorities to take into account the effect proposed developments would be likely to have on their character. The CDP 2024-2030 provides for **7 ACAs** in the following settlements: **Ardara, Ballyshannon, Buncrana, Letterkenny, Ramelton, Raphoe, and Merville.**

The **National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)** is an inventory of architectural heritage compiled by the Department of Culture Heritage and the Environment to identify, record, and evaluate the post-1700 architectural heritage of Ireland, uniformly and consistently as an aid in the protection and conservation of the built heritage (NIAH handbook 2017). There are a significant number and variety of structures listed on the NIAH in Donegal which are viewable via: <https://www.buildingsofireland.ie/> website and viewable on the Historic Environment Viewer <https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/>

Other cultural heritage features include remnants of historic railway lines and the a wide array of vernacular structures including: linear cottages, farmsteads, limekilns, mills, forges, piers/quays and other built evidence of lifestyles in years past.

Archaeological Heritage

Archaeology is the study of past societies through the material remains left by those societies and the evidence of their environment. Examples of archaeological monuments in Letterkenny include souterrains (stone passages), cashels, enclosures, and churches. Archaeology in Ireland is protected framework of International conventions and national laws and planning policies.

The 1992 European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (the ‘Valletta Convention’) was ratified by Ireland in 1997. The aim of the Convention is to ‘protect the archaeological heritage as a source of the European collective memory and as an instrument for historical and scientific study’ (Article 1). The Convention places certain obligations on Ireland including providing for statutory protection measures, including the maintenance of an inventory of the archaeological heritage and the designation of protected monuments and areas. Ireland is also a party to the UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation) Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (the ‘World Heritage Convention’) which requires Ireland to take the appropriate legal, scientific, technical, administrative and financial measures for, inter alia, the identification and protection of the cultural heritage

The government guidance *Framework and Principles for the protection of the Archaeological Heritage*, (Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands 1999) emphasises that archaeological heritage is a non-renewable resource and that the resource formed by the archaeological heritage requires careful and responsible management.

Under Irish legislation there are 3 key categories of archaeological protection:

- **Record of Monuments and Places (RMP):** This record comprises a list of recorded monuments and places and an accompanying map for each county which are designated under the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 and is the most common type of archaeological protection. Monuments on the RMP are known as '**Recorded Monuments**'. There are a significant number and variety of structures on the RMP in Donegal including Ringforts, standing tones, passage tombs, megalithic tombs, cashels, bullaun stones, souterrains, ecclesiastical remains, castles, friaries, enclosures etc. These are available on the <https://www.archaeology.ie/publications-forms-legislation/record-of-monuments-and-places> website and viewable on the Historic Environment Viewer <https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/>
- **Register of Historic Monuments (RHM):** This register is a list of historic monuments which are designed under the National Monuments (Amendment Act) 1987. Monuments on the RHM are known as '**Registered Monuments**'. There are **34** historic **monuments** in Donegal including: ringforts, standing stones, megalithic tomb, standing stones, graveyards etc. The list of historic monuments in Donegal is available on: <https://www.donegalcoco.ie/culture/heritage/archaeologicalheritage/registerofhistoricmonuments/>
- **National Monuments in ownership or guardianship of the Minister or local authority:** A National Monument is defined under the National Monuments Act 1930 as a monument 'the preservation of which is a matter of national importance by reason of the historical, architectural, traditional, artistic or archaeological interest attaching thereto' and can be in the ownership or guardianship of the state or Local Authority. There are 17 National monuments in Donegal including Grianan Na Aileach, Doe Castle, and Donegal Castle and the full list is available on: <https://www.donegalcoco.ie/culture/heritage/archaeologicalheritage/nationalmonuments/>

Historic Graveyards are also an important element of Donegal's Archaeological Heritage. There are **50** historic graveyards in the guardianship of Donegal County Council the vast majority of which are also listed on the RMP. The full list of said historic graveyards is available on: <https://www.donegalcoco.ie/culture/heritage/historicgraveyards/>

In addition to the above there may be other archaeological structures artefacts and sites in the plan not listed in any of the above categories or not yet discovered.

In addition to this architectural and archaeological heritage the Donegal Gaeltacht is a integral part of Donegal's cultural heritage, is the second largest in Ireland, covers 26% of the County (1502km²), and contains a population of 23,346 which equates to 14.7% of Donegal's population and 23.4% of the state's entire Gaeltacht population (Census 2016). It covers large areas of the west of the County including 6 inhabited islands of Aranmore, Tory, Inishboffin, Inishfree Upper, Island Roy and Gola.

3.9 Landscape and Visual

This section outlines the baseline information regarding landscape and visual features of relevance to the CDP 2024-2030

Landscape can be defined as 'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors' (European Landscape Convention, Council of Europe 2000). Landscape covers natural, urban, peri-urban and rural areas, encompassing land, inland waters, coastal and marine areas. In addition townscape is a subset of landscape and can be defined 'landscape within the built-up urban area, including the buildings, the relationship between them, the different types of urban open spaces, including green spaces and the relationship between buildings and open spaces' (LI/IEMA, 2013).

Landscape Character Assessment Donegal

A Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) for Donegal, containing landscape, seascape and settlement character assessments, was prepared and endorsed by Donegal County Council in 2016. The LCA provides an analysis, characterisation and narrative of the component parts of Donegal’s landscape to provide an evidence base to assist in consistent decisions making to achieve a balance between the protection, management and planning of the landscape in line with the National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015-2025. The LCA and associated interactive mapping is available on:

<https://www.donegalcoco.ie/services/planning/planningpolicy/landscape%20character%20assessment%20of%20county%20donegal/>

The Landscape Character Assessment identifies:

- **23 Landscape Character Types** in Donegal as detailed in the map below.

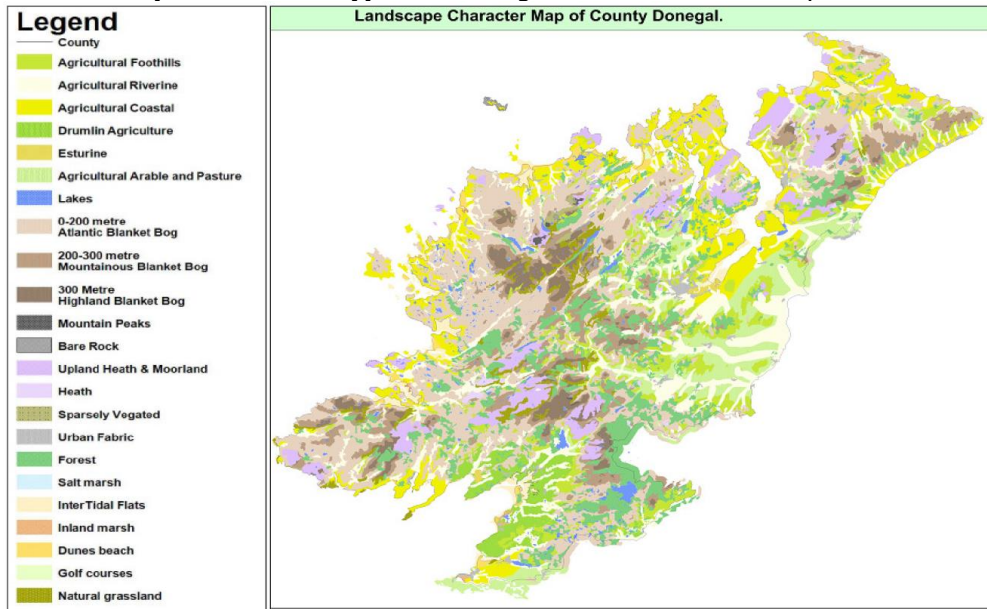


Figure 3.35 Landscape Character Types in Donegal (Donegal Landscape Character Assessment 2016)

- **44 individual Landscape Character Areas** in Donegal. The LCA includes a description summarising the components and characteristics within each area that make it unique and contribute to its character.

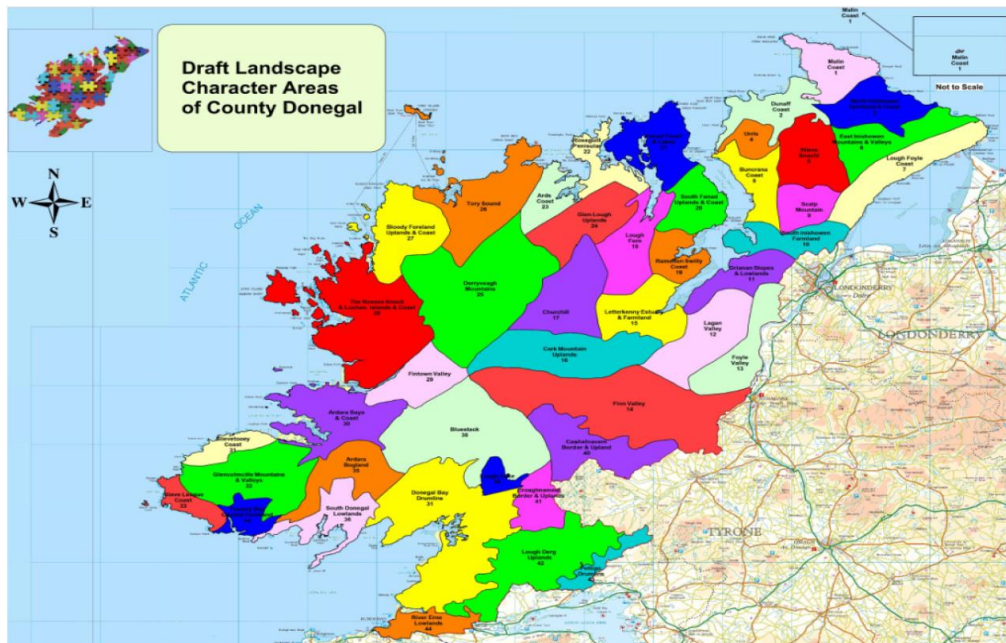


Figure 3.36 Landscape Character Areas in Donegal (Donegal Landscape Character Assessment 2016)

Whilst the Landscape Character Assessment does not ascribe a sensitivity rating to the landscape it identifies a number of *forces for change* in each Landscape Character Area. The frequency at which said Forces For Change are cited across all Landscape Character Areas is summarised in the graph below. (Note: Certain similar Forces for Change categories have been amalgamated to aid this analysis).

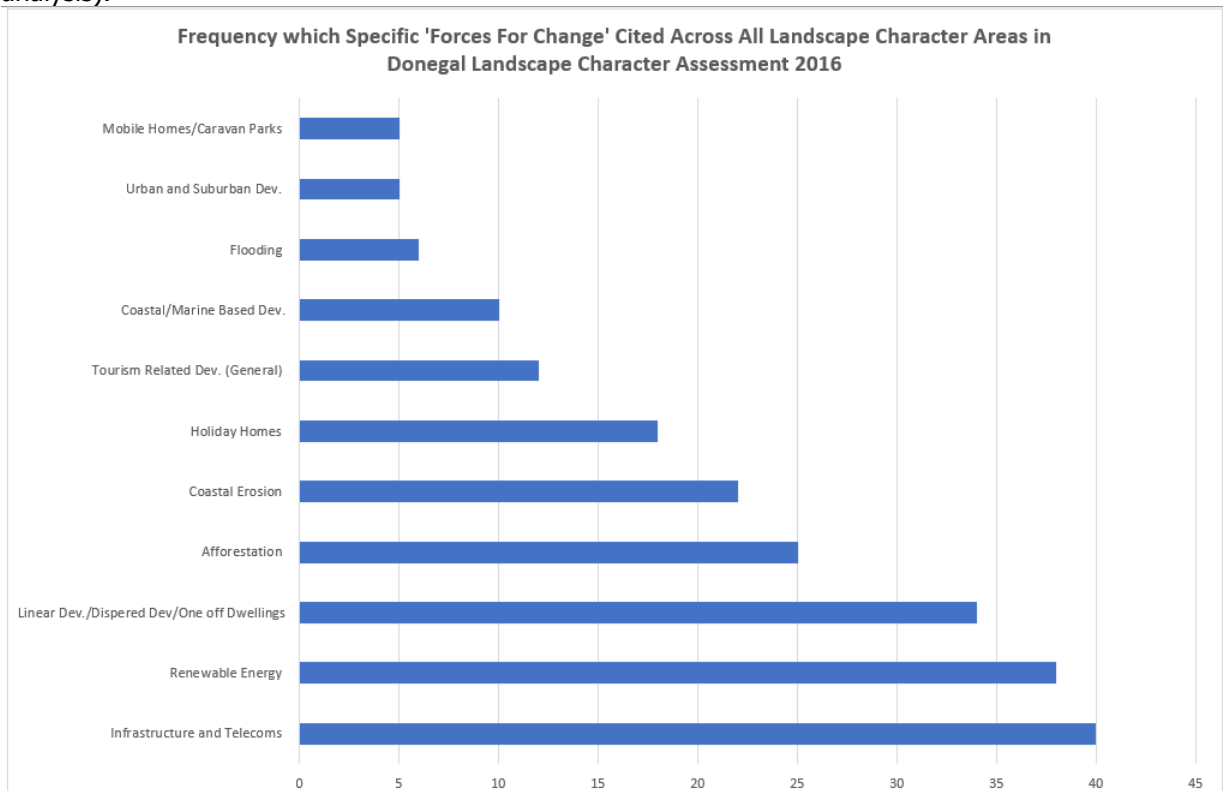


Figure 3.37 Frequency Which Specific Forces For Change Categories Are Cited Across All Landscape Category Areas In The Donegal Landscape Character Assessment

Scenic Amenity Areas and Designated Views and Prospects

The CDP 2024-2030 identifies and protects 3 landscape/scenic amenity designations in Donegal as set out below and illustrated in Figure 3.36 below

- **Areas of Especially High Scenic Amenity:** These are sublime natural landscapes of the highest quality that are synonymous with the identity of County Donegal. These areas have extremely limited capacity to assimilate additional development.
- **Areas of High Scenic Amenity:** These are landscapes of significant aesthetic, cultural, heritage and environmental quality that are unique to their locality and form a fundamental element of the landscape and identity of County Donegal. These areas have the capacity to absorb sensitively located development of scale, design and use that will enable assimilation into the receiving landscape and which does not detract from the quality of the landscape, subject to compliance with all other objectives and policies of the plan.
- **Areas of Moderate Scenic Amenity:** These are primarily landscapes outside Area Plan Boundaries and Settlement framework boundaries, that have a unique, rural and generally agricultural quality. These areas have the capacity to absorb additional development that is suitably located, sited and designed subject to compliance with all other objectives and policies of the Plan.

In addition, the CDP 2024 also identifies and seeks to preserve through policy views and prospects of natural beauty over seascapes and the rural landscape as also illustrated in Figure 3.36 below.

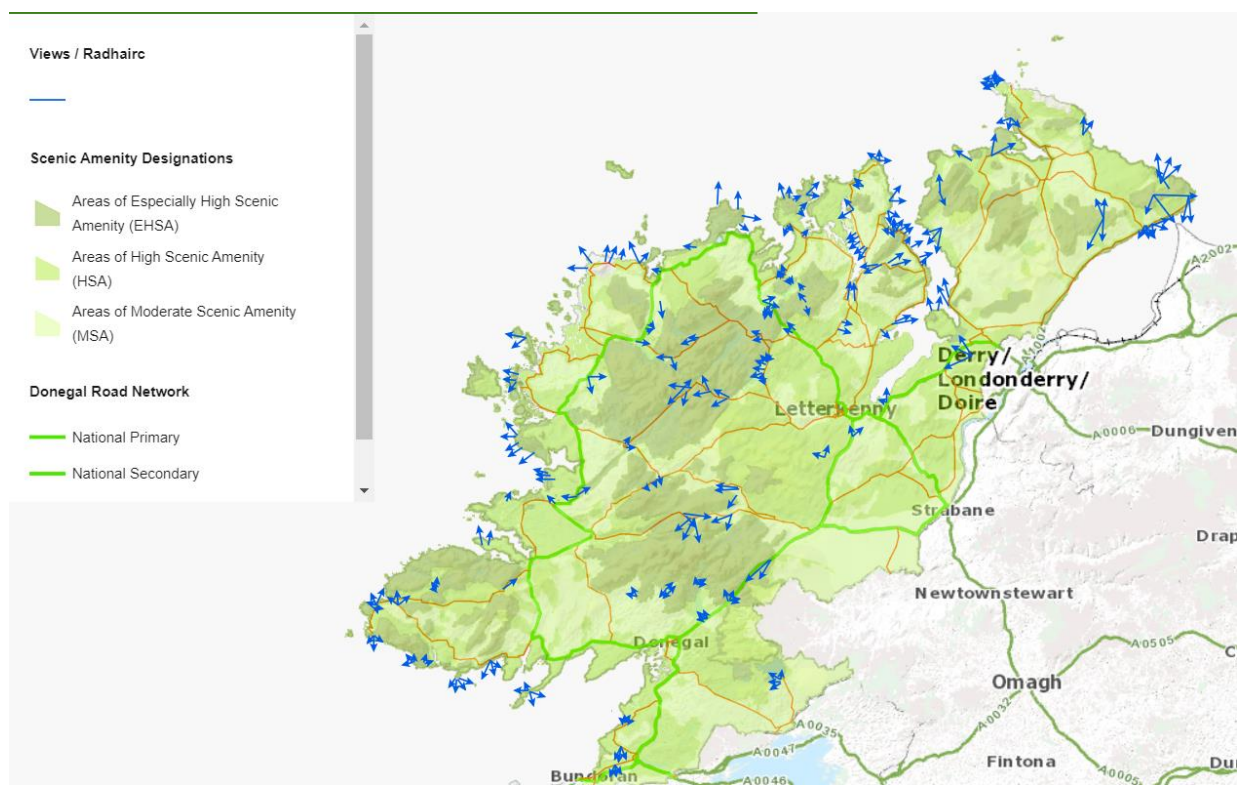


Figure 3.38 Scenic Amenity Designations and Designated Views and Prospects in the CDP 2024-2030

Table 5.1 highlights a number of development pressures which resulted in impacts on landscape and visual assets in recent years including: in particular cumulative growth of one off housing in the hinterlands of towns and village and certain coastal areas, non-sequential linear development on the immediate edges of towns and villages, and cumulative growth of wind energy developments.

3.10 Likely Evolution of the Environment without the Implementation of the CDP 2024-2030

Annex 1 (b) of The SEA Directive also requires the environmental report to assess the likely evolution of the environment in the absence of the implementation of the subject plan. In this regard the SEA Guidelines states that the report should provide a:

- a "do-nothing" scenario: an estimate of how current environmental conditions would change over time without implementation of the draft plan; and

Said SEA guidelines further:

- State that the "do-nothing" scenario represents a continuation of present trends - as if the current plan were to continue - without any policy changes, environmental interventions or infrastructural improvements which may be proposed in the draft plan (P.39 refers).
- Clarify that there is no "no plan" scenario for Development plan as the new plan will be taking over from an existing plan (P.39 refers).
- Recommend that the "Do Nothing" Scenario should describe:
 - Any ongoing trends, for instance decreases in carbon emissions, increases in flood frequency, decreases in biodiversity, increase in vacancy/dereliction levels; and
 - Any projects or plans that are expected to take place regardless of the plan in question, for example, expected new roads or flood protection works, projects with planning approval. (P.39 refers).

In this regard in the absence of the preparation of the CDP 2024-2030 the specific policies, objectives and land use zonings of the CDP 2018-2024(as varied) and the provision of the Seven Strategic Towns Area Plan 2018-2024 (in relation to Ballybofey/Stranorlar) would remain in effect and would continue to form the key basis for future planning and development decisions in Donegal. The likely evolution of the environment with the continued implementation of these plans is assessed below.

Table 3.14 Likely Evolution of the Environment without the Implementation of The CDP 2024-2030 (i.e. With the Implementation of the CDP 2018-2024).

Key Issue	Likely Evolution of the Environment
Biodiversity, Flora & Fauna	<p>The current CDP 2018-2024(as varied) effectively does not facilitate any significant development within key biodiversity assets namely Natura 2000 sites, Natural Heritage Areas, Ramsar Sites, and Nature Reserves (Policy NH-P-1 refers). Consequently, if said plan was to continue in operation it is likely that there would not be any significant direct loss or fragmentation of habitat in said protected biodiversity sites. Nevertheless, said sites may be negatively impacted by water pollution or disturbance to species arising from development in adjacent urban and rural areas.</p> <p>Specifically, the current CDP 2024-2030 and the Seven Strategic Towns LAP 2018-2024 is unlikely to result in significant direct loss or fragmentation of habitat in key environmentally sensitive areas in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buncrana: As the development plan zones the Lough Swilly SAC as a Coastal Protection Area. • Ballybofey/Stranorlar: As said LAP zones Drumboe Woods and Dunwiley Woods as Recreation and Amenity which does not facilitate significant development. • Bundoran: As the Donegal Bay SPA lies outside any development zoning. <p>However, if the current CDP 2018 -2024 was to continue in operation, Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna in the open countryside (outside of designated sites) or within aquatic environment would continue to face a number of development pressures which is likely to result in negative impacts on said environmental receptors including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct loss or fragmentation of habitat as a result of one-off housing and other commercial development including loss of hedgerows or pockets of deciduous

Key Issue	Likely Evolution of the Environment
	<p>woodlands. In this regard 2,148 one off houses have been granted in Donegal between 2018 and the end of Q3 2022.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disturbance to species (e.g. birds, mammals) as a result of construction or operational phase (e.g. traffic, noise etc) impacts from such developments in rural areas. • Deterioration in water quality as a result of poorly installed or maintained individual residential or commercial wastewater treatment system.
<p>Population/ Human Health</p>	<p>The current CDP 2018-2024(as varied) and the Seven Strategic Towns LAP 2018-2024 provisions for Ballybofey/Stranorlar facilities a range of objectives, policies and land use zonings which are likely to facilitate population growth and maintain and enhance human health including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of 137.87ha of land zoned primarily residential and 54ha of other lands (e.g. Opportunity Sites) to facilitate housing. • The provision of a significant quantum of lands zoned town centre, general employment and opportunity sites to facilitate economic development. • The reservation of lands for transport infrastructure (e.g. the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal strategic roads project and other road schemes). • The zoning of lands as Open Space for amenity purposes and to facilitate new recreation, leisure and community facilities. • The zoning of lands as strategic, community and opportunity to facilitate health, education and social/community developments. <p>Otherwise achieving further population growth and tackling health problems associated with social deprivation will be largely dependent on economic growth and employment generation, infrastructure investment, and social, community and educational interventions to tackle social deprivation and are therefore difficult to predict in the medium to long term.</p>
<p>Soil</p>	<p>The current CDP 2018-2024(as varied) and the Seven Strategic Towns Area Plan 2018-2024 provisions for Ballybofey/Stranorlar facilitates development on a range of greenfield sites at both urban and rural locations (e.g. multiple residential development, one off housing, commercial, agricultural, wind energy) on a variety of undisturbed soil types.</p> <p>It is likely that the abovementioned development would cause the overbuilding and sealing (e.g. through construction of buildings and hard surfaces) and in some instances the partial removal of soil. This in turn is likely to lead to a loss or reduction in certain soil functionality including food production/agriculture, habitats provision, flood attenuation, nutrient cycling, water purification, and carbon sequestration. In particular it is noted that peat soil types can be particularly vulnerable during the construction phase of developments due to their saturated nature. Nevertheless, the impacts on soil overall are likely to be small given the overall spatial extent of development vis-à-vis the overall extent of the soil types affected.</p> <p>Development on the abovementioned sites is also likely to have some impacts on Geology through for example the excavation of rock to accommodate building and roads. However, said impacts are likely to be insignificant given the overall extent of the rock types affected.</p>
<p>Water</p>	<p>Section 3.4 provides an analysis of the current water quality in Donegal including WFD water quality status and development pressures. Overall, this indicates that many water bodies in Donegal have a less than good status and that there are a number of significant development related pressures (e.g. urban waste water, domestic waste water, extractive etc) impacting on 'At Risk' Waterbodies.</p>

Key Issue	Likely Evolution of the Environment
	<p>The CDP 2018-2024(As Varied) facilitates a range of development in urban and rural developments (e.g. residential, commercial, one-off housing, extractive) which may negatively impact on water quality through inter alia inadequate wastewater treatment, sedimentation during construction, urban run-off etc. Quantifying these impacts is difficult as the exact impact may depend on a number of variables, for example: the correction installation and maintenance of independent wastewater treatments systems or the carrying environmentally friendly construction management practices (e.g. stockpiling of spoil material, control of surface water runoff, storage of hydrocarbons etc).</p> <p>Nevertheless, it also must be stated that the CDP 2018-2024 does not generally facilitate development to connect public wastewater treatment systems with inadequate wastewater treatment capacity and otherwise facilitates the provision of new or the upgrading of existing wastewater treatment plants which would have a positive impact on water quality.</p> <p>Consequently, the continuation of the current plan would likely result in both negative and positive impacts on water quality.</p>
Air	<p>Section 3.6 provides an analysis of the current ambient air quality in Donegal based on EPA Air Quality monitoring data in Letterkenny. This indicates that the most significant form of air pollution in Letterkenny is Particulate Matter pollution linked to the burning of solid fuels for home heating rather than transport or industrial air pollution. Such PM pollution is likely to also occur in other urban areas of Donegal where solid fuel is burned for home heating purposes</p> <p>Consultations with the DCC Environment Section indicate that there are compliance issues with the solid fuel regulations in Letterkenny (restricting the retail, online and commercial sale of smoky fuels, including smoky coal, turf and wet wood) prior to the extension of said regulations nationwide in October 2022. Consequently, PM pollution is likely to continue in urban areas of Donegal in the short to medium term until a more rigorous compliance of said regulations can be achieved.</p> <p>The current CDP 2018-2024 provides for a significant quantum and range of additional development (including residential, retail, commercial, and dispersed development), which will result in additional transport and heating demands and may therefore result in additional air pollution including PM and NOx.</p>
Climate	<p>Section provides an overview of the current state of the environment related to climate. In the absence of the CDP 2018-2024 global warming and associated impacts on the climate system would continue. The scale of this warming and the severity of these impacts over the medium to long terms will be largely dictated by the global success or otherwise of reducing greenhouse gas emissions including achieving 2030 greenhouse gas emission targets and achieving net zero emissions by 2050.</p> <p>The current CDP 2018-2024 provides for a significant residential and commercial development and associated population growth (e.g. 137.87ha primarily residential zonings, one-off housing development etc). This development and growth would in turn create the potential for additional greenhouse gas emissions (e.g. through construction, non renewable electricity demand, traffic related emissions etc).</p> <p>The EPA predicts that even with the additional measures set out the Government’s Climate Action Plan 2021 Ireland will continue to emit significant volumes of Greenhouse gases across a range of sectors by 2030 including in areas related to such growth and development (e.g. energy, transport, commercial and public services). Consequently, in line with these projections the growth and development provided for in Donegal under</p>

Key Issue	Likely Evolution of the Environment
	<p>the current CDP 2018-2024 would be likely to result in significant additional greenhouse emissions.</p>
<p>Material Assets</p>	<p>The current objectives and policies of the CDP 2018-2024(as varied) and the SST LAP 2018 provisions for Ballybofey/Stranorlar would facilitate both the redevelopment/regeneration and protection of existing material assets (including the existing built environment and infrastructure) as well as the provision of range of new material assets including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing: The provision of new multiple residential development within Buncrana, Bundoran, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and other settlements. • Retail: The redevelopment of existing and the provision of new retail development within sites zoned town centre at other locations subject to the retail sequential test (e.g. neighbourhood level retail developments). • Commercial/Industrial: The provision of a wide range of new commercial and industrial development within settlements and in certain circumstances within rural areas. • Education: The expansion of existing and the provision of new education facilities. • Social/Community: The provision of new healthcare, recreational and sporting facilities. • Environmental Assets: The protection of amenity lands within Buncrana and Bundoran and within settlements • Transport Infrastructure: TEN-T PRIPD strategic roads project and other road schemes. • Wastewater Infrastructure: The upgrading of existing, and the provision of new, Wastewater Treatment Plants. •
<p>Cultural Heritage</p>	<p>Cultural heritage would continue to be protected by the statutory protections and the objectives and policies of the current CDP Plan 2018-2024(as varied). In this regard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architectural Heritage on the Record of Protected Structures and within ACA’s would continue to be protected by the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended) and the objectives and policies within current development plan whilst vernacular and/or historic structures (e.g. structures on the NIAH) may also be protected by objectives and policies in said plan. • Archaeological Heritage on the Record of Monuments and Places and National Monuments would continue to be protected by statutory provisions of the National Monuments Acts and the objectives and policies in the CDP 2018-2024. <p>However, notwithstanding the above-mentioned statutory protections, it is likely that the physical condition of some of the architectural heritage in Donegal would deteriorate as a result of vacancy, dereliction, or neglect. Furthermore, deliberate damage to such heritage has occurred within the County and cannot therefore be ruled out in the future</p>
<p>Landscape and Visual</p>	<p>The current CDP 2018-2024 facilitates the provision of residential, commercial, renewable energy, extractive developments etc which may have landscape and visual impacts. In particular it is noted that the rural hinterland of key settlements and many coastal areas have experienced significant one-off housing development in recent years which has impacted on landscape character and visual amenities of said areas. Between 2018 and Q3 2022 2,148 one off houses were granted in Donegal. In addition, a significant number of renewable energy developments have been granted in upland areas and recent variation to the plan may facilitate further such developments. Consequently, the continuation implementation of the CDP 2018 is likely to result in further cumulative landscape and visual impacts.</p>

4 Environmental Characteristics of the Areas Likely to be Significantly Affected by the CDP 2024

Specific geographical areas in Donegal may be significantly affected due to the specific location, nature, type of development facilitated by the plan and/or the sensitivity of the affected area. The purpose of this Section is to describe the environmental characteristics of said areas in accordance with Annex I(c) of the SEA Directive.

The SEA Guidelines recommends that the Environmental Reports should **focus in** on such **areas** by:

- *determining **where significant** (scale and/or type) development is likely to take place during the life of the plan; **what kind** of development will it be; and **what impact** is it likely to have on the environment; and*
- *determining whether there are parts of the area (such as **protected sites**, areas with vulnerable water courses, or high amenity areas) which are more sensitive to development than others; and how such areas are likely to be affected by the plan.*

Consequently, based on the above approach and the purpose of this section Table 4.1 below details:

- The location, nature and type, of significant development likely to be facilitated by the plan having regard to the objectives, policies and land use zonings of the plan.
- The likely significant effects of such development having regard to current state of the environment and sensitivity of key environmental receptors.
- The parts of said areas/or adjacent areas which are more sensitive to development and how such areas are likely to be affected.

In turn the environmental categories of the broad areas which may be significantly affected by the plan (e.g. urban, rural high scenic amenity landscapes, waterbodies, Natura 2000 sites) are outlined in Table 4.2.

Table 4.1 Identification of Areas Likely to be Significantly Affected

Location of Likely Significant Development	Nature/Type of said Development	Likely Significant Effects Arising	Associated Sensitive/Designated Areas
Buncrana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential Retail Commercial Community Transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss/fragmentation of habitats with rural hinterlands of settlements. Disturbance to Species Noise Pollution and associated impacts on human health. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lough Swilly SAC Lough Swilly SPA
Ballybofey/ Stranorlar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential Retail Commercial Community Transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disturbance, depletion, loss of soil functionality and soil contamination on greenfield sites. Water Pollution to adjacent waterbodies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> River Finn SAC
Bundoran	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential Retail Commercial Community Transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of new material assets (e.g. residential, commercial, retail, transport). Transport and construction related greenhouse gas emissions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lough Melvin Special Area of Conservation Donegal Bay SPA
Other Urban Settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential Retail Commercial Community Transport 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various Special Areas of Conservation (See Appendix B). Various Special Protection Areas (See Appendix B). High Status and 'At Risk' WFD Water Bodies
Open Countryside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-Off Rural housing Agricultural developments Quarries Transport Renewable Energy (e.g. Wind, Solar Energy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss/fragmentation of habitats in rural areas. Disturbance to Species in rural areas. Noise Pollution and associated impacts on human health. Disturbance, depletion, loss of soil functionality and soil contamination. Water Pollution. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agricultural developments (e.g. slurry spreading and associated Nitrogen/phosphorous pollution). Inadequate/the lack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various Special Areas of Conservation (See Appendix B). Various Special Protection Areas (See Appendix B). 'At Risk' WFD Waterbodies (Particularly rivers in the East, North East and South West of the County, certain lakes (e.g. Lough Fern, Lough Annure), Transitional water bodies (e.g. Lough Swilly, Gweebarra Estuary). Waterbodies with less than Good WFD Status (Throughout County). Area of Especially High Scenic Amenity (EHSA) Areas of High Scenic Amenity (HSA)

Location of Likely Significant Development	Nature/Type of said Development	Likely Significant Effects Arising	Associated Sensitive/Designated Areas
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ of wastewater treatment in urban areas. ○ Ineffective wastewater treatment systems in rural areas. ○ Diffuse urban run-off (e.g. grease, oils, hydrocarbons). ● Creation of new material assets (e.g. agricultural, renewable energy and transport). ● Agricultural, transport and construction related greenhouse gas emissions. 	
<p>Upland and Lowland Atlantic Boglands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wind Energy ● One off rural housing ● Extractive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Loss of/fragmentation of habitats ● Disturbance to species arising from noise and traffic impacts during the construction and operational phases of development. ● Water pollution arising from sedimentation or contamination of surface water runoff during construction. 	<p>Various Natura 2000 sites, FPM catchment with downstream hydrological links to new Wind Energy, extractive or residential developments may be at risk from such developments.</p>

Table 4.2 Environmental Characteristics of Areas Likely to Be Significantly Affected

Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Bundoran and Smaller Settlements
<p>The development will facilitate residential, commercial, economic and community development on lands within the immediate hinterlands of the above towns and smaller settlements.</p> <p>In Buncrana significant development is likely to occur on brownfield industrial estates (e.g. Old Fruit of the Loom site) which are characterized by yards and industrial buildings, urban brownfield/infill sites which are typified by a variety of open yards, semi mature vegetation and small fields) and greenfield sites in the rural hinterland typified by undulating agricultural pasture lands with mature hedgerows and field boundaries within a wider environment of scattered one-off housing development and pockets of multiple residential development.</p> <p>Within Ballybofey/Stranorlar significant development is likely to place on either brownfield/infill urban sites (Finn Harps Community Stadium site, existing car park and yard for Ballybofey Shopping arcade, existing school sites) and agricultural pasture lands on the edge of the urban footprint consisting of undulating fields, hedgerows and mature field boundaries which are adjacent to existing built up urban footprint and multiple residential developments.</p> <p>In Bundoran the areas identified for significant development are typified by agricultural pasture lands (with both improved and semi improved grasslands) with hedgerows and mature field boundaries on the edge of the built-up urban footprint.</p> <p>The plan will also facilitate development (e.g. residential and commercial) in many other smaller towns and villages (outside of those covered by the Seven Strategic Towns Area Plan) on either urban brownfield sites or greenfield adjacent to the existing built up urban footprint collectively typified by agricultural fields, field boundaries and semi-mature vegetation.</p>
Rural Areas
<p>The Development plan will facilitate a range of development within rural areas (outside of designated sites) including one off housing, agricultural, extractive, and renewable energy developments which may individually or cumulatively have significant effects on such areas. The general characteristics of these rural detailed below:</p> <p>Landcover: Said rural areas (outside of protected sites) contain a very wide variety of 2018 Corine landcover types including agricultural pasture land, heterogenous agricultural areas, moors and heathlands, coniferous forests, transitional woodland scrub, sparsely vegetated areas, sand dunes etc.</p> <p>Biodiversity: Said rural areas contain a wide variety of biodiversity important habitats (e.g. deciduous woodlands, hedgerows, mature field boundaries, riparian habitats, wetlands etc) which contain a broad spectrum of mammals (e.g. badgers, red squirrel, voles, hedgehogs, rabbits hares, shrews, bats (e.g. Soprano pipistrelle, Daubenton's bats), foxes, otters, pine martens, stoats, deer), bird species (e.g. blackbird, blue tit, bullfinch, buzzard, chaffinch, cornrake, cuckoo, heron, crow, kestrel, owl, magpie, mallard, thrush, wagtail, raven robin, rook, song thrush, sparrow hawk, swift, tree sparrow, wood pigeons, and wrens), and trees species (e.g. oak, ash, hazel, birch, Scots pine, rowan and willow) and a wide variety of insects.</p> <p>Development: These are characterised by a scattering of one off rural houses (with significant agglomerations of rural housing close to urban areas and coastal areas), agricultural buildings, and an extensive road network.</p> <p>Soil: The SIS National Soils maps indicates that such rural areas are characterised by the following soil types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NBP4 Soils: Fine loamy over shale and slate bedrock in parts of the east and north east.

- Ballywilliam Soils: In part of the east of the county around Donegal Bay and Mulroy.
- Carrigvahanagh: In certain parts of coastal north Donegal and west Donegal
- Peat: Over significant parts of the remainder of the county

Water: Such areas contain a range of waterbodies including larger rivers (e.g. Finn, Deele, Swilly, Eske, Gweebarra etc), small streams, lakes (e.g. Lough Eske, lough Gartan, Lough Fern) and transitional water bodies (e.g. Lough Swilly, Lough Foyle, Mulroy Bay, Sheephaven, Gweedore Harbour, Trawenagh, Gweebarra Estuary, Donegal Bay etc). The water quality of such waterbodies is detailed in Section 3.4.2.

Cultural Heritage: Such areas contain a wide variety of architectural and the archaeological features including structures on the Record of Protected Structure (RPS), National Inventory Architectural Heritage (NIAH), Records of Monuments and Places (RMP) and National Monuments.

Landscape: These area are characterised by a wide variety of landscape character types (e.g. North Inishowen Farmland and Coast, Finn Valley, South Donegal Lowlands) which have been described in detail in the Landscape Character Assessment of County Donegal. However in general they are characterised by an undulating agricultural landscape with improved and semi improved grasslands with mature field boundaries and hedgerows with scattered agricultural and one-off rural housing.

Natura 2000 sites

Donegal contains a variety of both Special Areas of Conservation (designated under the EU Habitats Directive) and Special Protection Areas (designated under the EU Birds Directive) which may be affected by the CDP 2024.

The plan effectively precludes significant development within such sites and will not therefore lead to the direct loss or fragmentation of habitats. However the plan may indirectly affect such sites arising from indirect effects such as negative impacts on water quality in downstream SAC/SPA's arising from contaminated surface water runoff from developments, disturbance to species in adjacent SAC/SPAs arising from construction and operational noise, and interference with migratory paths for bird species. Consequently, on the basis of a preliminary analysis, a wide variety of Natura sites may be significantly affected by the plan. In addition the plan may also result in ex situ effects on qualifying interests (e.g. species) located outside of designated Natura 2000 sites. A more detailed analysis of the likely significant effects of the plan is contained within Section 7 and the associated Natura Impact Report of the Plan.

Collectively, the environmental characteristics of these sites include a very wide variety of:

- **Habitats:** For example: mudflats/sandflats, coastal dunes, machairs, european dry heaths, estuaries, Atlantic Salt Meadows, Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters, Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp, Large shallow inlets and bays, Shifting dunes along the shoreline, Decalcified fixed dunes, Alpine and Boreal heaths, Vegetated sea cliffs, Alpine and Boreal heaths, Coastal lagoons, Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix, and Blanket bogs
- **Species: For example:** Freshwater Pearl Mussel, Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail, Otter, Slender Naiad, Petalwort, Marsh Fritillary, Geyer's Whorl Snail, Grey Seal, Harbour Seal, Otter, Salmon, Killarney Fern, White-clawed Crayfish,
- **Bird Species:** Including those set out in Appendix B and highly threatened species such as the Corncrake and the Curlew.

Appendix B outlines a more detailed list of the key environmental characteristics of these Natura 2000 sites in the form of their qualifying interests.

Water Bodies

Donegal contains a wider variety of river, lake, transitional, and coastal waterbodies which may be significantly affected by development facilitated by the plan in adjacent urban and rural locations (e.g. residential, commercial, retail, industrial, extractive and renewable energy development).

Section 3 details the environmental quality of these waterbodies in which regard the following points are specifically noteworthy:

- Rivers: A large number of water bodies in the County have a less than good WFD status particularly in the East, North East and part of the South West of the County.
- Lakes: Lake water bodies generally had a good WFD status however Glen Lough and Lough Fern had a Moderate and Bad WFD status respectively.
- Transitional: The Swilly Estuary had a poor WFD status, whilst Inch Lough, Blanket Nook Lough and Crana Estuary had a moderate WFD status.
- Coastal: Killybegs Harbour had a moderate WFD status.

Designated Scenic Areas

The plan will facilitate a range of development in rural and coastal areas which are designated as High Scenic Amenity (e.g. one-off rural housing, wind energy, agricultural, extractive and transport) and Especially High Scenic amenity (e.g. one off housing, agricultural). These scenic areas contain a range of Corine landcover types including agricultural pasture lands, heterogenous agricultural areas, forest and semi natural areas, and peat bogs. These areas are described in the CDP 2024.

Areas of Especially High Scenic Amenity (EHSA)

Areas of **Especially High Scenic Amenity** are sublime natural landscapes of the highest quality that are synonymous with the identity of County Donegal. These areas have extremely limited capacity to assimilate additional development.

Areas of High Scenic Amenity (HSA)

Areas of **High Scenic Amenity** are landscapes of significant aesthetic, cultural, heritage and environmental quality that are unique to their locality and are a fundamental element of the landscape and identity of County Donegal. These areas have the capacity to absorb sensitively located development of scale, design and use that will enable assimilation into the receiving landscape and which does not detract from the quality of the landscape, subject to compliance with all other objectives and policies of the plan.

Atlantic and Mountain Boglands.

Significant parts of Donegal are covered by Atlantic and Mountain Blanket bogs. The plan will facilitate a range of development (e.g. one off rural housing generally outside of Natura 2000 sites and extractive and wind energy developments outside of EHSA areas and Natura 2000 sites) in, and therefore may have a significant effect on, such distinctive areas.

Atlantic Blanket Bogs: These are generally located in western parts of the county up to an elevation of 200m, experience significant rainfall, contain acid peat substrate ranging from 2 to 7m deep. Atlantic blanket bog vegetation has a characteristic grassy appearance due to the occurrence of purple moor grass (*Molinia caerulea*) and black bog rush (*Schoenus nigricans*). Patterned surfaces of pools, flat and sloped areas, flushes and swallow holes are also important features of blanket bogs.

Upland Blanket Bogs: These are generally located at elevation in excess of 200m, are fed by high precipitation, have acidic peat conditions and are characterised by characterised by the presence of ericoid shrubs and in particular Ling Heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), Crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*) and bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) and contain water bodies such as natural drains, lakes and flushes.

Collectively blanket bogs contain a wide range of bird and animal species including Hen Harriers, Merlins, waders, red grouse, skylark and meadow pipit, deers, frogs, and hares.

5 Existing Environmental Problems of Relevance to the CDP 2024-2030

Section 3 (Relevant Aspects of the Current State of the Environment) has in effect already detailed many of the existing environmental problems which are relevant to the CDP 2024 across a wide range of environmental topics. Relevant environmental problems are also set out in the section below as required by A.13N and Schedule B of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001(As Amended).

Table 5.1 Environmental Problems Relevant to The CDP 2024

Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cumulative direct loss and fragmentation of habitats (e.g. loss of woodland, field boundaries, hedgerows, riparian habitats, wetlands and peatlands) and an associated loss of biodiversity, flora, and fauna arising from both dispersed development in the wider countryside and within and adjacent to urban areas (e.g. rural one-off housing, agricultural, multiple residential development, roads infrastructure and tourism related developments). • Disturbance to species during the construction and operational phases of developments in the wider countryside and urban areas (e.g. construction traffic noise, arising from one-off housing, multiple residential development, quarries etc). • Threats to biodiversity flora and fauna due to poor water quality arising from various development related water pollution issues (See section on water below). • Spread of invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam and Japanese knotweed which are now prevalent throughout the county.
Population and Human Health
<p>Population and Human Health related problems in Donegal currently include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate new housing completions and high vacancy rate (11.4%²⁸) in recent years which has led to upward pressures on residential property prices and rental costs. • Relatively high social deprivation rates in rural and peripheral parts of the County arising from high employment rates, social housing dependency, and low educational attainment levels (e.g. Doochary and Árainn Mhór) . • Urban sprawl/dispersed development pattern resulting in a spatial dislocation between the residential development and key services (e.g. education, recreational, retail, and commercial) and resulting in high car dependency, traffic congestion, difficulty in accessing services/quality of life impacts and poor social connectivity. • Substandard strategic roads provision (e.g. N15/N13 at Ballybofey/Stranorlar, N13/N56 Letterkenny and N14 Letterkenny to Lifford) leading to traffic congestion and noise impacts in urban areas, traffic safety issues, increased journey times, and a loss of quality of life. • Substandard public transport provision in both urban and rural areas leading to car dependency, poor access to essential services (e.g. retail, healthcare), and restricted social connectivity particularly for marginalised groups (e.g. elderly, disabled and economically disadvantaged). • Substandard active travel provision (e.g. continuous footpaths, pedestrian crossing and cycleways) in both urban and rural areas which hinders uptake of healthier active travel modes

²⁸ <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cpr/censusofpopulation2022-preliminaryresults/housing/>

- Lack of wastewater network and capacity in many towns and villages resulting in an over-reliance on individual private and commercial wastewater treatment systems, substandard effluent treatment and resultant impacts on water quality.

Soil

A significant amount of residential and commercial development in the County has occurred on greenfield sites (both urban and rural) in recent decades and this is likely to have resulted in the following soil related environmental problems:

- Disturbance and depletion of the overall soil resource arising from construction.
- Loss of soil functionality including food production, habitat provision, flood attenuation, nutrient cycling, water purification, and carbon sequestration arising from the overbuilding of soils.
- Soil contamination arising from sewage pollution associated with malfunctioning/defective individual waste water treatment systems.²⁹

Water

- Water pollution/poor WFD water quality status in rivers, lakes, transitional and coastal waters arising from:
 - Agricultural developments (e.g. slurry spreading and associated Nitrogen/phosphorous pollution). Agriculture was identified as a significant pressure in 81 WFD "At Risk" water bodies in Donegal³⁰.
 - Inadequate/the lack of wastewater treatment in urban areas. Urban waste water was identified by the EPA as a significant pressure in 20 WFD "At Risk" water bodies in Donegal³¹.
 - Ineffective wastewater treatment systems in rural areas. Domestic wastewater was identified as significant pressure on 18 WFD "At Risk" water bodies in Donegal³².
 - Diffuse urban run-off (e.g. grease, oils, hydrocarbons). Identified as a significant pressure on 13 WFD "At Risk" water bodies in Donegal³³.

Air

As detailed in Section 3.6 the most significant environmental problems related to Air Quality in Donegal relate to Particulate Matter (PM) and SO₂ pollution in town and villages predominately linked to the burning of fossil fuels for home heating.

Climate

- Extreme pluvial weather events whose frequency or severity may be related to climate change (see material assets section below).
- Increasing vulnerability of rural and urban areas in Donegal to climate change related:
 - Fluvial flood events arising from increased intensity and frequency of extreme rainfall events (e.g. River Finn and River Leannan).
 - Coastal flooding arising from rising sea levels and enhanced storm surges (e.g. Letterkenny/lower Lough Swilly, Inch levels, and Donegal Bay)
- Dispersed/low density development patterns (including residential, commercial and community development), leading to high car dependency, low levels of sustainable travel mobility and longer journey times and resultant transport related greenhouse gas emissions.

²⁹ 36% of Septic Tanks inspected in Donegal under the National Inspection Plan failed the inspection.

³⁰ https://www.catchments.ie/data/#/dashboard/pressure?_k=tjxwqx

³¹ As above

³² As above

³³ As above

- Inadequate local public transport system and poor active travel infrastructure resulting in car dependency and associated transport greenhouse gas emissions.

Material Assets

- Poor quality urban environment, and high levels vacancy and dereliction in many towns and villages. In this regard Donegal had the joint 2nd highest commercial vacancy rate (17.2%) nationally and Ballybofey had the highest commercial vacancy rate (30.2%) of any urban area nationally in Q2 2022.³⁴
- A number of flood events have occurred in Donegal in recent years which have affected key built material assets including:

- The July 2013 Flooding of Letterkenny University Hospital which caused extensive damage to the hospital including the new accident and emergency department costing almost €40m in repairs arising from a significant pluvial flood event causing the overflowing of the Sprackburn stream.
- Flooding in the vicinity of the Aura Leisure Centre Letterkenny and adjoining lands in November 2015 which caused extensive flooding to the centre's sports facilities.



- Flooding in Inishowen in August 2017 which resulted in significant damage to roads and bridges, residential areas and community infrastructure.
- A significant number of properties (both residential and commercial) have been are likely to be affected by defective blocks containing excessive levels of Mica/Pyrrhotite. This is likely to result in a significant number of properties requiring either partial or complete rebuilding depending on the level of damage.

Cultural Heritage

In recent decades a significant amount of Donegal's architectural heritage including RPS, NIAH and vernacular buildings has been lost as a result of neglect or unauthorised redevelopment/demolition. In certain cases, this has resulted in the total loss of such built heritage. In addition, many existing vernacular buildings in town and villages suffer from significant vacancy and dereliction particularly on upper floors.

Landscape and Visual

Development pressures in recent years have resulted in impacts on landscape and visual assets, for example:

- The cumulative growth in one off rural housing particularly in the hinterlands of town and villages and certain coastal areas (including the suburbanisation of certain areas) has significantly impacted on the rural character of such areas.

³⁴ GeoDirectory Commercial Buildings Report Q2 2022



NE of Letterkenny



SW of Buncrana

- The proliferation in second homes in coastal areas in recent decades has impacted on the rural and scenic character and visual amenity of these areas. These impacts are particularly apparent in locations such as Portnablagh/Dunfanaghy, Fintra, and Shroove/Greencastle.



Portnablagh



Fintra

- Non sequential development (including residential and commercial developments) on the edge of towns and villages has eroded the urban/rural landscape definition and resulted in a visually disorderly development pattern which detracts from both the urban form and rural character (e.g. Ballyliffin, Carndonagh)



- Cumulative growth of Wind Energy developments has impacted on the character of landscape and visual amenities in certain areas as a result of:
 - Landscape sensitivity: the susceptibility (ability to accommodate further change) and value of the host landscape.
 - Magnitude of landscape change: arising from cumulative scale and geographical extent of wind energy developments.

6 Environmental Protection Objectives of Relevance to the County Donegal Development Plan 2024-2030

6.1 Environmental Protection Objectives in other Plans, Programmes and Policies relevant to the CDP 2024-2030

Article 5(1) of the SEA Directive requires that an Environmental Report includes the information contained in Annex I of said directive and in turn Annex 1(e) requires that the report provides the following information:

(f) the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;

There are a wide range of environmental protection objectives contained within a wide variety of International Conventions, EU and Irish legislation, EU and Irish level strategic plans, sectoral plans, management plans etc across a range of environmental topics (e.g. Biodiversity, Human Health, Air, Water, Climate, Landscape, and Land Use Planning) which are relevant to the CDP 2024-2030.

The relevant Environmental Protection Objectives, the convention/legislation/plan in which they originate from, the way in which those objectives and any other environmental considerations have been taken into consideration during the preparation of the CDP 2024-2030 are all detailed in Table B1 of Appendix A of this report.

7 Assessment of Likely Significant Effects on the Environment of Implementing the CDP 2024-2030

7.1 Assessment Methodology

7.1.1 Legislative Requirements in relation to the assessment of 'Likely Significant Effects'

Article 5 of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) requires the preparation of an Environmental Report in which the *'likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme..... taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described, and evaluated'*.

Specifically **Annex 1(f)** of said Directive further defines the **range of environmental aspects** which should be considered when assessing the likely significant effects namely *'biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors'*. Annex 1(f) also lists the **types of effects** which should be assessed namely: *'secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.'*

Furthermore **Article 5** of said Directive broadly sets out what is the appropriate **level of assessment** for the Environmental Report stating that it shall include *'the information that may reasonably be required taking into account current knowledge and methods of assessment, the contents and level of detail in the plan or programme, its stage in the decision-making process and the extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that process in order to avoid duplication of the assessment.'* In this regard as the CDP 2024-2030 is a strategic land use plan the assessment of the likely significant effects of the plan has been conducted at a strategic level and said assessment does not attempt to replicate the more detailed project level assessment of individual projects/developments which will occur as part of the normal development management process.

The requirements of the SEA Directive in relation to 'likely significant effects' have been transposed into and further replicated in Irish Legislation including, inter alia:

- Schedule 2B(f) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) which requires that the Environmental Report includes an assessment of the *'likely significant effects on the environment'* across the range of environmental aspects listed in Annex 1(f).
- A.14D(1) of said regulations which requires that an Environmental Report in respect of a Area Plan *'shall identify, describe, and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan'*.
- A.14D(2) of said regulations reiterates the requirements of Article 5 of the SEA Directive in relation to the level of assessment required.

7.1.2 Guidance in Relation to the Assessment of Likely Significant Effects on the Environment in the Environmental Report.

A range of guidance exists on how to assess the likely significant effects on the Environment of a particular plan within the SEA process.

At the European level the publication 'Implementation of the Directive 2001/42 on the assessment of certain plans and programmes on the Environment' inter alia:

- Emphasises the importance of concentrating on issues related to the significant effect on the environment of the plan. (Para 5.19 refers).
- States that Environmentally related health issues such as exposure to traffic noise or air pollutants are obvious aspects to study, and emphasises the need for broad and comprehensive information on environmental factors and their interrelationship (Para 5.26 refers)
- Notes that a description of positive effects is essential in order to show the contribution of the plan to environmental protection. (Para 5.26 refers).

At the Irish level the departmental guidelines advises inter alia that:

- The Environmental Protection Objectives (EPOs) may be used to inform the development of Strategic Environmental Objectives ('SEOs') that may be used as assessment criteria in Environmental Reports,
- The ER should: identify relevant SEOs, adapt them to the local circumstances, avoid use of generic SEOs and provide more detailed SEOs at lower planning tiers.
- The assessment of likely significant effects should be carried out on an iterative basis and may involve external specialist advice where appropriate.
- The effects of the plan, objectives, policies and standards are normally against the SEOs, this is termed an objective led assessment and is most frequent SEA method in Ireland. However an assessment on environmental baseline data may be useful.
- Reporting the result of the assessment of significant effects has often relied on a matrix based approach using symbols or shading to depict positive, negative or neutral impacts but such matrixes may benefit from supporting text.
- The SEA Directive also requires positive effects to be identified as well.
- Significant effects may be assessment in terms of the type/scale of development envisaged by the plan and the sensitivity of the receiving environment.
- The environmental report should explain why certain impacts have been considered to be 'significant' or 'insignificant' and the geographical scale of such impact should be identified

In addition to the above departmental guidance the EPA publication '*Strategic Environmental Assessment Resource Manual for Planning Authorities*' also advises the following in relation to the assessment of the likely significant effects within the SEA process.

- That whilst the abovementioned Department Guidance promotes and objectives led assessment it is also possible to conduct an assessment led by the environmental problems identified in the baseline (i.e. current state of the environment section). However, if the baseline and the environmental protection objectives are intrinsically linked an objectives led assessment will be effective.
- That types of environmental effects which should be considered are outlined in the SEA Directive – **secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects**, the interrelationship between effects should also be considered.

7.1.3 Assessment Methodology Employed to Assess the Likely Significant Effects

Based on the abovementioned legislative requirements and best practice guidance the following methodology has been employed vis-a-vis the assessment of likely significant effects in this environmental report:

- Each objective, policy and the key land use planning frameworks in the CDP 2024-2030 were assessed vis-vis the Strategic Environmental Objectives (detailed in Table 7.1 below) covering all of the environmental aspects identified in Annex 1 of the SEA Directive. These SEOs are derived from the relevant Environmental Protection Objectives (EPOs) established at International, European Union or National Level (listed in Table B.2 of Appendix A of this report) and adapted to the local level. In this regard these SEOs provide a more manageable consolidated assessment criteria than the wide variety of said EPOs. In this way the assessment in the ER is directly linked to, and based upon, the relevant EPOs identified in Appendix A. Moreover, as the SEOs are therefore intrinsically linked to the environmental issues in the baseline it is considered that an objective led assessment will be effective.
- The abovementioned assessment comprises both a **summary assessment matrix** wherein the plan's development **objectives** are listed **on one axis** and the various **strategic environmental objectives** (e.g. Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna, Population, Air, Water, Climate etc) are **listed on the other and** a detailed and comprehensive **written assessment** which underpins this matrix.
- The **summary assessment matrix categorises the impact** of each development objective, policy and land use framework (including associated land use objective) as follows: significant positive effect, uncertain effect, significant adverse effect, no relationship or insignificant effect.
- The **written assessment** provides a **rationale** for this categorisation and an analysis of the **type of effect** associated with said objectives policies and land use zonings (e.g.: temporary, short-term, medium-term long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects) where appropriate. This assessment takes into account the current state of the environment in, local environment characteristics of and specific environmental problems for, Donegal (e.g. water pollution) detailed in the preceding sections.
- The descriptive terminology used in said assessments is based on the terminology set out in Table 3.4 of the publication Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EPA, 2022).
- The significance of effects is based on inter alia: the specific nature type and location of development facilitated, the sensitivity and importance of the receiving environmental receptors likely to be affected, existing environmental problems and trends, the probability, duration, frequency, reversibility, cumulative nature and spatial extent of the effects, risks to human health, the value and vulnerability of areas likely to be affected, and likelihood that relevant thresholds/targets will be exceeded.
- **Measures to prevent and reduce the significant adverse environmental effects have been factored into the assessment** where appropriate.
- The intra plan cumulative effects (including additive and synergistic) of all of the individual objectives, policies and zonings have also been factored into the **overall** assessment.
- The assessment has been conducted on the basis of the full implementation/**achievement** of the policy/**objective** rather than any likelihood/possibility that the policy/**objective** may be under or not implemented/**achieved and on a relative basis vis-à-vis a scenario where no such policy/objective otherwise exists.** -
- As stated above this assessment has been conducted at a strategic level and said assessment does not attempt to replicate the more detailed project level assessment which will be required for individual projects/developments facilitated by the plan.
- The methodology for the assessment of cumulative effects is detailed in Section 7.4.

Table 7.1 Strategic Environmental Objectives

Environmental Component	SEO code:	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicator	Targets
Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	BFF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conserve, protect, maintain, and where appropriate restore biodiversity, flora and fauna, natural habitats, and associated ecosystems particularly International and EU designated sites and protected species. Ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of any European site, with regard to its qualifying interests, associated conservation status, structure and function. Conserve and protect Nature Conservation sites of National Importance including NHAs, pNHAs National Parks, Nature Reserves, Wildfowl Reserves and species protected under National Legislation (e.g. Wildlife Act) Safeguard biodiversity features in both designated sites and the wider environment which function as stepping stones for migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of wild species. Conserve and restore biodiversity in the wider countryside. Limit the spread, dispersal and growth of invasive species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation status and trends of Status and Trends of Annex 1 Habitats and Annex II Species as detailed in the NPWS Article 17 Habitat Directive Reports including maintaining or improvement on numbers and / or range within the county. Breeding population and distribution trends and winter populations trends for Bird Species in Article 12 Birds Directive Reports. Number and overall trends of Bird Species in Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS) reports. Integrity of Biodiversity Sites of National Importance (e.g. NHA, pNHAs, National Parks and Nature Reserves) WFD Water Quality Status in rivers, lakes, transitional and coastal water bodies especially the biota index and Q values. Growth of key invasive species 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Favourable conservation status and stable or improving trends for Annex 1 Habitats and Annex II Species. Improving population and distribution and winter populations trends for Bird Species in Article 12 Birds Directive Reports. Improving number and overall trends of Bird Species in Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS) reports particularly for species in moderate and severe decline. Preserving the integrity of Nature Conservation sites of National Importance. Achievement of good status in all WFD water bodies waters, ensuring status does not deteriorate, and maintaining no. of high status water bodes. Maintaining and enhancing biodiversity in the wider environment. Limiting the spread of, and where possible eradicating, invasive species.
Population and Human Health	PHH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a development and infrastructural framework which encourages economic prosperity/employment growth, adequate housing provision, balanced population growth and a socially inclusive society with lower socio-economic disadvantage. Safeguard the Donegal’s citizens from environment-related pressures and risks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Census/CSO data for: Donegal including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population growth in both urban and rural areas. General health in Donegal. Age dependency. Education levels. Unemployment rates Number of people commuting using active travel modes. Delivery of key infrastructural infrastructure needed to promote economic growth (e.g. Strategic roads projects, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieving NPF Implementation Roadmap population target of 179,5000-183,5000 of 179,5000-183,5000 by 2031. Achieving the population and housing targets detailed in the Core Strategy of the plan. Increase in the percentage of the population reporting as having “Very Good” or “Good” health in Census 2027. Decrease in CSO recorded unemployment rates. Improvement in social deprivation indices.

Environmental Component	SEO code:	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicator	Targets
		<p>to health and well-being including air, water and noise pollution, climate change and flooding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an environment increases the number of Donegal’s citizens who are healthy at all stages of life, and promotes an active and high quality lifestyle in Donegal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air Quality Monitoring Data for the Letterkenny and Buncrana monitoring Stations. WFD Water Quality status for rivers, lakes, transitional, coastal and ground waterbodies. Bathing Water Quality. Provision of new, upgrading of existing Wastewater Treatment Plants. Population, infrastructure, and properties affected by climate change related flooding. Provision of infrastructural project outlined in the plan related positive human health outcomes (e.g. primary healthcare facilities, green/recreational infrastructure, sporting facilities etc). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in educational attainment levels. Increase in number of Number of people commuting using active travel modes. Delivering the economic development framework set out in the economic development section of the plan. Achieving air quality levels in accordance with CAFE and WHO Air Quality thresholds and guidelines. Achievement of good status in all WFD water bodies waters, ensuring status does not deteriorate, and maintaining no. of high status water bodes. Achievement at least 'Sufficient' water quality in all designated bathing waters. Delivery of new, upgrading of existing wastewater treatment plant in accordance with Irish Water Capital Plan. Delivery of key infrastructure project related to human health outlined in the plan.
Soil (Including Minerals)	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect soils against pollution, and prevent degradation of the soil resource and associated ecosystem services Safeguard areas of prime agricultural land and designated geological sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of development occurring on Brownfield and Infill land compared to greenfield land. No. of new rural housing completions. Number and extent of planning consents for extractive industries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieving RSEES RPO 3.2 namely that at least 30% of all new homes in settlements over 1,500 population are must be delivered within the existing built-up footprints. Compliance with the rural housing targets contained within the Core Strategy of the Plan.
Water	W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect, avoid deterioration of and, as appropriate, restore/enhance the quality of surface, ground and marine waters and their associated ecosystems including limiting the input of pollutants. Ensure the sustainable use and protection of water resources. Protect the coastal environment based on an ecosystem approach and taking ecological responsible coastal protection measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WFD Water quality status in rivers, lakes, transitional, coastal and ground waters. Bathing water quality in designated bathing and shellfish waters. Abstraction water quality monitoring status No. of developments granted in settlements with adequate Wastewater Treatment Capacity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieving good status in all WFD water bodies waters, ensuring status does not deteriorate, maintaining the no. of high status water bodes. Delivery of new, upgrading of existing wastewater treatment plant in accordance with Irish Water Capital Plan. Implementation of the measures in the 3rd Cycle Draft River Basin Management Plan 2022-2027.

Environmental Component	SEO code:	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicator	Targets
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rigorous implementation of EPA Code of Practices for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (Population Equivalent <10) 2021 and EPA's 1999 Treatment systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels in assessing new developments.
Air	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid, prevent and reduce air pollution and environmental noise in order to maintain and improve air quality and reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment. Achieve compliance with relevant CAFÉ and WHO air quality limits and guidelines particularly in urban areas. Achieve and maintain a 'Good' Air Quality Index for Health (AQIH) in Donegal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air Quality Monitoring Data for PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀ and SO₂ at the Letterkenny Air Quality Monitoring Station vis-a-vis CAFÉ/WHO limits and guidelines. Air Quality Index for Health (AQIH) readings for Letterkenny and Malin Head. Share of commuting Share of developments (e.g. residential, retail, commercial) permitted at accessible/compact development locations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achievement of CAFÉ/WHO air quality limits and guidelines. Increase in share of sustainable and active travel commuting patterns in CSO Census Data. Achievement of compact development forms, delivery of 30% of all new homes in settlements over 1,500 population within the existing built-up footprints, implementing rural housing policies and locating new retail/commercial/community services and infrastructure at sustainable locations, in order to encourage active and sustainable travel modes and reduce air pollution.
Climatic Factors	CF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions in order to help mitigate climate change and meet our relevant International, European and National climate change obligations and targets including achieving the National Climate Objective. Pursue development strategies which increase our ability to adapt to climate change and improve climate resilience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EPA National Greenhouse Gas emissions data for development related sectors e.g. residential, energy, transport manufacturing. Number and capacity of Renewable Energy Developments (E.G. Wind, Solar, Hydro) permitted in Donegal. Share of sustainable and active travel commuting patterns in CSO Census Data. Share of new urban residential development in compact, brown field and infill locations and number/share of rural housing permissions and completions. Nature/type and extent of development permitted in High End Future Scenario Flood Risk Areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitating the achievement of relevant International, European and National climate change obligations and targets (e.g. 51% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030, average reduction GHGs of 8.3% PA 2026-2030) and the National Climate Objective Facilitating the achievement of Climate Action Plan 2023 measures (e.g. 80% of electricity generation from renewable sources and 50% reduction in transport emissions by 2030) Increase in share of sustainable and active travel commuting patterns in CSO Census Data.

Environmental Component	SEO code:	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicator	Targets
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achievement of compact development forms, delivery of 30% of all new homes in settlements over 1,500 population within the existing built-up footprints, implementing rural housing policies and locating new retail/commercial/community services and infrastructure at sustainable locations, in order to encourage active and sustainable travel modes and reduce air pollution.
Material Assets	MA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To sustainably develop new and efficiently utilise and (where appropriate) protect existing material assets (e.g. residential, energy, transport, water, wastewater, community, telecoms and land) by promoting compact consolidated growth and efficient land use planning. Promote the circular economy, reduce waste and increase energy efficiency. Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of current or future flooding and prevent new developments increasing flood risk elsewhere. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential permissions (DCC figures) and completions (CSO figures). DCC social housing completion figures. Geodirectory biannual Residential and Commercial Buildings Reports and associated data. CSO Vacancy Data. Retail, commercial and community development permission and commencement figures (DCC). Permissions/commencement figures (DCC) for renewable energy developments and electricity transmission networks. Delivery of new walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure. Progress on/delivery of key strategic transport projects (e.g. TEN-T PRIPD). Delivery of programmed Irish Water investment in wastewater treatment and collection networks. Delivery of programmed Irish Water upgrades to water supply network. Rollout/Implementation of National Broadband Plan. Share of new urban residential development in compact, brown field and infill locations and number/share of rural housing permissions and completions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the housing output targets in the Core Strategy of the plan (i.e. 7678 units) Provide new retail and commercial and community developments at sustainable locations. Reduce levels of vacancy and dereliction in urban and rural areas. Facilitate the provision of new renewable energy infrastructure (e.g. Wind and Solar) and enhancements to the electricity transmission infrastructure. Develop new walking and cycling, and public transport infrastructure. Deliver key strategic transport projects (e.g. TEN-T PRIPD, Derry to Sligo Rail Link). Upgraded and new wastewater treatment capacity and collection infrastructure in settlements. Upgraded water supply distribution network. Implementation of National Broadband Plan Ensure efficient land use by ensuring 30% of all new homes in settlements over 1,500 population occurs within the existing built-up footprints, and implementing rural housing policies. Manage development in flood risk areas in accordance with the Flood Risk

Environmental Component	SEO code:	Strategic Environmental Objective	Indicator	Targets
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature/type and extent of development permitted in High End Future Scenario Flood Risk Areas. 	<p>Management Guidelines and associated sequential approach.</p>
Cultural Heritage	CH	To protect and preserve cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and condition of Structures on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) and the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH). Condition of RPS, NIAH and vernacular structures within Architectural Conservation Areas. Number and condition of vernacular structures within Donegal. The condition of National Monuments in Donegal. The number and condition of Recorded Monuments, Historic Monuments and Historic Graveyards in Donegal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect all structures and parts of structures on the Record of Protected Structures and to extend the RPS as appropriate. Preserve the special character of Architectural Conservation Areas Protect the special character and integrity of NIAH structures. Protect, vernacular structures as appropriate. Conserve and protect archaeological heritage including National Monuments, Recorded Monuments, Historic Monuments and Historic Graveyards in accordance with Archaeological Protection Guidelines.
Landscape	L	To protect and manage the landscape (both rural and urban) in a sustainable manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and type of developments permitted in areas of designated landscape/scenic amenity designation. and their individual or cumulative landscape impacts. Alteration of Character of key landscape or settlement character areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure development does not cause avoidable adverse individual or cumulative impacts on the key landscape/scenic amenity designations, landscape or settlement features and designated views.

7.2 Summary Assessment Matrix of the Likely Significant Effects on the Environment of Implementing the CDP 2024-2030

Table 7.2 Summary Assessment Matrix of the Likely Significant Effects of Specific Objectives, Policies, and Land Use Zonings of the CDP 2024-2030

Key to Assessment of Likely Significant Effects in Table 7.2

	Significant Positive or Supporting Effect
	Positive or Supporting Effect
	No significant Effect
	Negative Effect
	Significant Negative Effect
	No interaction
?	Uncertain Effect
N/A	Not Applicable

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
Part A:										
Chapter 1: Introduction										
Chapter 2: Vision and Ambition										
S-O-1	Plan for population growth to 183,5000 by 2031 in line with the NPF and a further uplift of 200,000 by 2040									
S-O-2	Assert Donegal as having a key role in the NWRA including realising the potential of the North West City Region and the Atlantic Economic Corridor									
S-O-3	Support Growth through an all of County Strategy to harness particular strengths and opportunities in different areas.									
S-O-4	Support development of a sustainable economic development model for Donegal									
S-O-5	Prioritise regeneration of the County's towns, villages and rural area									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
S-O-6	To protect, enhance and appropriate harness the unique quality and diversity of the environment in the county.									
S-O-7	To progress and ultimately carry out/implement the TEN-T PRIPD as one of critical strategic importance.		?			?	?	?	?	
S-O-8	To retain, promote, and drive Donegal's position as a premier domestic and international tourism destination, with a focus on developing green and sustainable tourism.									
S-O-9	To maintain the strategic function, capacity and safety of the national roads network, and to ensure that the existing extensive transport networks, discrete sections of which have been enhanced are maintained to a high level to ensure quality levels of service, safety, accessibility and connectivity to transport users.									
Chapter 3: Core Strategy										
CS-O-1	Support the growth of Letterkenny as the key driver of population and economic growth.									
CS-O-2	Support the growth of a network of 'County Growth Drivers' and 'Service Towns'.									
CS-O-3	Support Vibrant Rural Settlements and Open Countryside									
CS-O-4	Seek alignment of infrastructure investment with growth priorities									
CS-O-5	Pursue Opportunities for further investment in essential infrastructure.									
CS-O-6	Co-ordinate and promote delivery of key roads and access infrastructure including the A5 WTC, A6, TEN-T PRIPD, the TEN-T generally and the Bridgend Bypass project.		?			?	?	?	?	
CS-O-7	Support economic growth throughout the county									
CS-P-1	Assess developments in settlements in light of all material planning considerations including infrastructure, dev. plan /LAP policies, and other regional and regional and national guidance and environmental designations									
CS-P-2	Guide development of town in a sequential manner outwards to maximise utility infrastructure promote sustainability, avoid leap frogging.									
CS-P-3	Support and facilitate the provision of additional WWTC and Water supply upgrades public realm improvements, civic, cultural, green amenity and recreational infrastructure, vacancy and dereliction initiatives.									
Chapter 4: Climate Change										
CA-O-1	promote sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas including measures to reduce energy demand and reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and address the necessity of adaptation to climate change,									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
CA-O-2	support and implement: the UN Sustainable Development Goals, NPF Climate Change National Policy Objectives, objectives in climate Action Plan 2021, relevant Regional Policy Objectives in the RSES, and actions in DCC's Climate Adaptation Strategy									
CA-P-X	To integrate Green Infrastructure into new developments, where feasible, to contribute to the County's green infrastructure network by its extension and enhancement and to provide for the environmental resilience of new development.									
CA-P-X	To avoid the fragmentation of green spaces in site design and to link green spaces/ greening elements to existing adjacent green infrastructure / the public realm where feasible.									
Chapter 5: Towns and Villages										
TV-O-1	Identify appropriate regeneration and renewal initiatives in Layer 3 rural towns/areas									
TV-O-2	Support initiatives to strengthen and improve the physical environment of towns and villages and encourage positive place-making.									
TV-O-3	Seek innovation in addressing infrastructural constraints in the County's 'Strategic Towns'									
TV-O-4	Identify 'vacant' sites and 'regeneration sites' in urban areas									
TV-O-5	Ensure quality design proposals for new development within towns and villages in order to contribute to positive place-making.									
TV-O-6	Implement Projects funded under the UEDF, RRDF, Town Centre First, Town and Village Renewal and similar funding schemes									
TV-P-1	Encourage proposals aimed at harnessing particular special economic functions of the County's key settlements									
TV-P-2	Encourage proposals for small scale residential development, including social housing schemes in towns and villages that will contribute to revitalization and renewal									
TV-P-3	Ensure that development proposals within towns and villages centres provide distinctive buildings, create strong street frontages, respects contexts of existing buildings, respects architectural character,, creates building of human scale, promotes visual interest, utilise adaptable accessible design on 1 st floors, avoids use of industrial type cladding.									
TV-P-4	Consider proposals for contemporary architecture in town centre in specific circumstances									
TV-P-5	Ensure developments make efficient use of land and do not hinder backland development									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
TV-P-6	Require shop fronts to be a of a high quality design, respect the exiting building, and streetscape, avoids box facias/plastic canopies.									
TV-P-X	Protect and enhance the unique physical character of historic town and village centres.									
TV-P-X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote heritage -led regeneration in the County's towns and villages. Require that adaptative re-use of older buildings and historic centre heritage-led regeneration adheres to best conservation practice and principles. Presumption against demolition of older buildings considered to be intrinsic elements of the character of a place where restoration or adaption is feasible. 									
TV-P-7	consider mixed-use development including residential, community uses and light industrial/commercial, but excluding retail within the 'Barrack Hill Opportunity Site, Carndonagh' area. Proposals for residential development must be located on the north-western portion of the lands									
TV-P-8	Consider small scale commercial integrated limited residential or tourism development, primarily residential on the site of the former Bakery opposite the Mall Quay Ballyshannon									
TV-P-X	To ensure that the Plan's transport objectives (including those in LAP's and LTP's) for active travel projects and public transport infrastructure are considered and incorporated into regeneration projects as required.									
Chapter 6: Housing										
UB-O-1	Identify appropriate regeneration and renewal initiatives in Layer 3 rural towns/areas									
UB-O-2	Deliver services sites for housing within towns and villages									
UB-O-3	Seek effective resolution of unfinished residential development									
UB-O-X	To provide accommodation for travellers, and to identify and use particular areas for this accommodation as and when such a need is identified in consultation with relevant stakeholders.									
UB-P-1	Multiple housing development will generally be acceptable in towns/identified settlements subject to quality placemaking, compact growth the availability of supporting infrastructure and facilities (including school provision), and sequential development and wastewater treatment capacity.									
UB-P-2	a) Consider Multiple and single holiday home units in towns/settlements provided that the proposed development would not result in the total number of existing and permitted holiday homes within the settlement exceeding 20% of the total existing and permitted housing stock.									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
	b) Consider holiday home development in the centre of towns/settlements it is demonstrated that the development would assist with the regeneration or remediation of vacant and/or derelict properties without above restriction.									
UB-P-3	Require that 20% of land: zoned for residential use, residential and other use, where housing is permitted, is reserved for the provision of social and affordable housing.									
UB-P-4	Ensure that new residential development is carried out in serviced areas where required planned infrastructure including school provision is imminent.									
UB-P-5	Guide urban residential in a sequential manner outwards to maximise utility infrastructure promote sustainability, avoid leap frogging.									
UB-P-6	Support new residential development that will result in regeneration and/or renewal of town centre areas or areas of vacancy and/or dereliction.									
UB-P-7	Require that the design process, layout, specification and finish new multiple residential development comply with all relevant government planning guidelines/standards.									
UB-P-8	Determine appropriate residential densities having regard to departmental guidelines circulars, the nature of development, the site location and context									
UB-P-9	Protect residential amenity of existing residential units and promote housing design and establishes a reasonable level of urban residential amenity.									
UB-P-10	Require residential development layout to have regard to best practice in Universal Design									
UB-P-11	Require multiple housing development of 7 or more units to contain a minimum of 30% units built to universal design standards.									
UB-P-12	Public Amenity Space requirements for Multiple Residential Development: Greenfield 15%, Infill/Brownfield 10%, and private or institutional buildings in open lands 20%,									
UB-P-XX	It is a policy of the Council to consider proposals for urban residential development that seek to resolve existing unfinished residential development, including through appropriate reconfiguration of developments, and such proposals shall be considered outside the population targets set by the core strategy.									
RH-O-1	Ensure that that new residential development in rural areas provides for genuine rural need.									
RH-O-2	Protect under strong urban influence, rural areas under strong holiday home influence, and rural areas immediately outside towns from intensive levels of unsustainable urban/suburban residential development.									
RH-O-3	Sustain identified clachan style communities									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
RH-O-4	Ensure that rural housing is located, designed and constructed in a manner that does not detract from the character or quality of the receiving landscape									
RH-O-5	Facilitate positive reuse of existing vacant rural housing stock and to deliver 20% of all new housing stock in rural areas on brownfield sites.									
RH-P-1	Consider proposals for new one-off rural housing in Areas Under Strong Urban Influence from prospective applicants that can provide evidence of a demonstrable economic or social need to live in these areas. applicants with a demonstrated genuine rural need for a new dwelling and who can provide evidence that they, or their parents or grandparents, have resided at sometime within the area under strong urban influence in the vicinity of the application site for a period of at least 7 years. New holiday homes not permitted in these areas. Policy does not apply where the individual already had the benefit of a permission for a dwelling on another site.									
RH-P-2	Consider proposals for new one-off rural housing in Areas Under Strong Holiday Home Influence from prospective applicants that can provide evidence of a demonstrable economic or social need to live in these areas. applicants with a demonstrated genuine rural need for a new dwelling and who can provide evidence that they, or their parents or grandparents, have resided at some time within the area under strong urban influence in the vicinity of the application site for a period of at least 7 years. New holiday homes not permitted in these areas. Policy does not apply where the individual already had the benefit of a permission for a dwelling on another site.									
RH-P-3	consider proposals for new one-off housing within other rural areas from any prospective applicants with a demonstrated rural need for a dwelling house; Consider proposals for new one-off housing within Structurally Weak Areas from any prospective applicants with a demonstrated rural need for a dwelling house									
RH-P-4	Consider opportunities to deliver necessary social and affordable housing at locations around (i) rural schools and; (ii) rural settlements; subject to wastewater services being delivered and maintained by Donegal County Council									
RH-P-5	consider proposals for single dwellings for permanent occupation/family homes within identified Clachans without rural housing need subject to good siting and design, road safety, public health standard and other policies of the plan. New holiday homes will not permitted in these areas.									
RH-P-6	Consider refurbishment, or replacement, or extension of an existing non-vernacular habitable dwelling for permanent or holiday home use where the design, size, height and finishes integrates effectively with host landscape.									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
RH-P-7	Consider refurbishment of derelict vernacular traditional buildings where development provides for retention of majority of existing building, do not in general exceed 50% of original and compliance and comply with Policy RH-P-9									
RH-P-8	To consider proposals for the provision of ancillary accommodation for dependent relatives within the curtilage of an existing rural dwelling, subservient to main dwelling, served by the existing vehicular entrance, with adequate provision for effluent treatment.									
RH-P-9	a) Require individual dwelling proposals to: be sensitive to character of rural areas, assimilate with receiving landscape, adhere to best practice in siting, location and design, not create or expand suburban development or ribbon development, not be detrimental to amenity area, not constitute haphazard dev., not be unduly prominent in the landscape, blend in with the landform, trees and vegetation, building, slopes, or other natural features b) Assess individual dwellings against following criteria: avoid adverse impacts on Natura 2000 sites, negatives impact on River Basin Management Plans, not constitute a road hazard, provides safe and efficient effluent disposal, comply with flood risk management policies, c) Require the imposition of an occupancy condition.									
RH-P-10	Require single house developments in An Bun Beg-Doirí Beaga area to make provision for a future connection to the sewerage network,									
RH-P-11	Direct new multiple housing units to towns identified in the Core Strategy/Settlement Hierarchy.									
Chapter 7: Economic Development										
ED-O-1	Align job creation with the Core Strategy's Settlement Hierarchy with a view to achieving a jobs ratio of 1.0 and above in Letterkenny and those settlements identified as County Growth Drivers.									
ED-O-2	Support appropriately-scaled and located economic development projects in the County's smaller towns and villages.									
ED-O-3	Support appropriately scaled and located rural economic development projects where they are functionally-related to the countryside.									
ED-O-4	Support the development of Páirc Ghnó Gaoth Dobhair as a business, enterprise and manufacturing centre									
ED-O-5	Facilitate cross-border collaboration to enable and sustain regional economic, cultural and social development opportunities including the North West City Region, Atlantic Economic Corridor and									
ED-O-6	Ensure that sufficient land is provided and protected at appropriate locations for employment generating uses in key settlements									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
ED-O-7	Facilitate development of underutilised sites and buildings to meet demands for Grade A office accommodation and quality housing in core areas									
ED-O-8	Develop serviced lands for economic development and job creation purposes in key settlements									
ED-O-9	Facilitate the activation of economically important lands through CPO or other means including public private partnerships									
ED-O-10	Encourage enterprise and employment developments to locate in brownfield sites or unoccupied buildings in town centres or, where appropriate, in existing industrial/retail parks or other brownfield industrial sites									
ED-O-11	Enhance town centre vibrancy by supporting the development of 18 hour economy									
ED-O-12	Encourage and facilitate the activation of new town centre housing options									
ED-O-13	Support and facilitate, where appropriate, the further growth and development of the County's economic base through the key sectors identified in this plan.									
ED-O-14	facilitate and support the future development of the ATU campuses in Letterkenny and Killybegs,									
ED-O-15	implement the policy objectives as set out within the National Marine Spatial Planning Framework.									
ED-O-16	Support the early development of a Designated Marine Area Plan, off the coast of Donegal and the North West region,									
ED-O-17	Support the strategic importance of Killybegs as a primary commercial fishing port, and as a hub for the development of the renewable energy sector.									
ED-O-18	support and facilitate the sustainable development of Offshore Wind opportunities off the Donegal coastline	?							?	?
ED-O-19	facilitate the continued investment in key strategic infrastructure in Killybegs Port in a sustainable manner.									
ED-O-20	progress the delivery of key strategic enabling infrastructure including roads, rail, broadband, gas, electricity, water and wastewater	?								?
ED-O-21	facilitate, where appropriate, proposals to enhance the Metropolitan Area Networks, all ICT resources and infrastructure									
ED-P-1	<p>a) Direct office and light industrial developments to town centre sites, edge of centres locations, or appropriately zoned lands in Letterkenny, Growth Driver Settlements and Service Towns.</p> <p>b) Consider proposals on lands currently used for such purposes.</p> <p>c) determine such proposals on other lands within settlements on their own merits having regard to: scale/character of settlements, sustainable travel outcomes, infrastructure availability, ED-P-10 and compatibility with locality.</p>									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
ED-P-2	(a) direct development involving industrial buildings and/or industrial processes, and warehouse/storage use to appropriately zoned lands, or lands currently used for such purposes in Letterkenny, Growth Driver Settlements and Service Towns.. (b) Determine such proposals on other lands within settlements on their own merits scale/character of settlements, sustainable travel outcomes, infrastructure availability, ED-P-10 and compatibility with locality.									
ED-P-3	Consider extensions of an existing industrial or business use within a defined settlement provided it is compatible with the character/scale of the settlement and locality and complies with Policy ED-P-10.									
ED-P-4	Consider business in rural area which are Valuable additions to the local economy and/or tourism offering in an area such food forestry, crafts, creative industries, ecotourism and agritourism, farm diversification schemes including proposals for short term rental accommodation purposes (5 units max).									
ED-P-5	Support a home-based business of limited scale (circa 1-5 employees), located within the curtilage of an existing dwelling house; subject to compliance with Policy ED-P-10									
ED-P-6	Support the following small businesses in distinctly rural areas: a) ICT micro enterprises, enterprises addressing climate change and sustainability where workforce could be drawn from locality. b) Businesses providing professional services to the local community where clientele is likely to be drawn from the locality									
ED-P-7	Consider proposals for the expansion or re-development of an existing economic development in the countryside which contributes to the long-term sustainability of the existing enterprise and is ED-P-10 compliant and out with said criteria where the development cannot be relocated, contributes to the local economy, maintains existing rural character, provides development led infrastructural solutions where necessary.									
ED-P-8	Facilitates exceptional proposals for major industry/enterprise in the countryside which make a significant contribution to Donegal's economy, and cannot be located in a settlement (subject to suitable evidence/information) and subject to submission of a travel plan.									
ED-P-9	Support Gaeltacht-based economic opportunities on lands within the ownership of, or supported by, Údarás na Gaeltachta									
ED-P-10	Require economic development uses to: be compatible with surrounding land uses, not detrimental to character of area, not harmful to residential amenities, serviceable by existing programmed or developer led infrastructure, not detrimental to road safety, compliant with access/parking technical standards, not cause a noise nuisance, capable of dealing satisfactorily with any									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
	emission(s); not adversely affect built heritage or natura 2000 sites, not located in flood risk areas, have high quality siting and design, have appropriate boundary treatment, integrate with the landscape, and not compromise water quality.									
ED-P-11	Consider commercial developments on the periphery of settlements which would be incompatible with and detrimental to the centres of such settlements by reason of the extent of land required or the nature of the enterprise. Convenience and comparison retailing generally will not be supported. Exceptions to the general presumption against retail development may be made where the sale of vehicles is the predominant use Consider commercial developments, excluding traditional High Street uses that would generate regular customer trips on the periphery of settlements where such uses would be incompatible with and detrimental to the centres of such settlements and the extent of lands required for the effective functioning of such an enterprise would be prohibitive. Convenience and comparison retailing will not be supported. Exceptions will be considered in the case where the sale of vehicles is the dominant use.									
ED-P-X	To support: a. The potential the principle of the creation of appropriately scaled local multi-feedstock bio-refining hubs and bio-clusters; and b. The future-proofing of infrastructure planning to allow for the potential upgrading of existing industrial sites to bio-refining plants while also supporting the use of bio-renewable energy for the sustainable production of bio-based plants.									
RS-O-1	Ensure that the vitality and viability of town centres are not prejudiced by the scale and/or location of significant retail development proposals.									
RS-O-2	secure high design quality in the form and layout of retail proposals in a manner that contributes to the physical quality of town centres.									
RS-P-1	Consider proposals for large foodstores (up to 3000 square metres net) in the town centres of Letterkenny and the County Growth Drivers									
RS-P-2	Council to consider proposals for small-to-medium sized food/ convenience stores (up to 1500 square metres net) in the town centres of Letterkenny, the County Growth Drivers and Service Towns as identified in the Core Strategy									
RS-P-3	Require all retail proposals with the potential to impact on the vitality and viability of the relevant centre (or centres) to be subject to an appropriate sequential test in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines (2012)									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
RS-P-4	Require a Retail Impact Assessment where retail developments are particularly large compared to the host settlement including detailed requirements for such assessments									
RS-P-5	Consider proposals for the provision of local scale neighbourhood shops which are clearly designed and located to serve distinct residential neighbourhoods,									
RS-P-6	Consider proposals for a shop of up to 100 square metres net retail area when associated with a petrol filling station.									
RS-P-7	Consider proposals for certain appropriate retail facilities outside settlement framework areas including farm shops, shops for tourist/recreational facilities, shops for craft workshops and shops serving dispersed rural communities.									
Chapter 8: Infrastructure										
Chapter 8.1 Transport										
T-O-1	Promote sustainable development and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas including measures to reduce energy demand, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change									
T-P-1	Integrate land use and transportation considerations to optimise the availability and use of sustainable transport modes.									
T-P-2	Apply NTA's 'Area Based Transport Assessment' guidance in preparation of urban plans.									
T-O-2	Secure the development of strategic, coherent and high-quality walking and cycling networks that are integrated with public transport, connected with destinations consistent with the National Outdoor Recreation Strategy, Draft Donegal Outdoor Recreational Strategy and the Cycle Connects Network- and as developed through the Local Transport Plan process.									
T-O-3	Protect and acquire the lands necessary for, the sustainable transportation improvement projects									
T-O-4	Provide safer routes to schools and promote walking and cycling as safe and suitable modes of transport.									
T-O-5	retrospectively provide safe segregated walking and cycling infrastructure, , in settlements and into settlements from suitable adjacent rural areas, accessing cultural recreational, commercial, educational, and employment destinations and attractions									
T-P-3	Consider all developments against the objectives of providing safe and effective active travel linkages and public transport facilities and to require the provision of such facilities and require the protection of potential linkages and the design and layout of large development to effectively provide for internal pedestrian and vehicular movements.									
T-P-X	Require new developments, as appropriate, include a street network (including links through open spaces) based on Filtered Permeability, whereby a									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
	permeable and legible urban environment is created for pedestrians, cyclists, and where applicable public transport vehicles.									
T-P-X	To support the principle of the development of an active travel link between linking Ballyshannon and Belleek.									
T-O-6	Support and facilitate the provision of new and expansion of existing public transport services and infrastructure and renewable energy for the transport fleet.									
T-O-7	secure the provision of a rail link between: (i.) Letterkenny and Derry; and (ii.) Letterkenny and Sligo.									
T-P-4	Collaborate with the NTA in the preparation and implementation of the Connecting Ireland Programme.									
T-O-8	Develop a centrally-located transport hub in Letterkenny and a dedicated bus corridor between the hub and the eastern edge of the town.									
T-P-5	Facilitate off street charging facilities and only facilitate on street where there are no alternatives.									
T-O-9	Sustain and enhances the services provided by Donegal Airport and City of Derry Airport									
T-P-6	Facilitate and enhance appropriate access to and expansion of Donegal airport									
T-P-7	Manage development in the vicinity of Donegal Airport, Finner Camp and City of Derry Airport having regard to the safeguarding maps and solar safeguarding zones.									
T-P-8	save to provide for the TEN-T PRIPD, the Bridgend to County border project scheme, and the Buncrana Inner relief Road Protect established/historic railway corridors primarily for strategic infrastructure provision— (such as rail/road/greenway projects), and recreational development such as roads (including the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal, the Bridgend to County border project scheme, and the Buncrana Inner relief Road) greenways, and rail projects and secondly for recreational development. This policy will be implemented by the Council in so far as same can be practicably and reasonably achieved within the context of such Strategic Infrastructure Projects.									
T-P-9	support and facilitate the development of public, semi-public and community transport projects and proposals which provide innovative solutions in rural, disadvantaged and border areas									
T-O-10	Safeguard the carrying capacity and safety of National Roads and associated junctions, the R238 Bridgend to Buncrana Regional Road in accordance with the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DECLG, 2012)									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
T-O-11	Deliver improvements to the TEN-T Network. It is an objective to: 1. a) Progress/Implement the TEN-T PRIPD as one of critical strategic importance to Donegal. b) Reserve the Route corridors of the TEN-T PRIPD. 2. Progress/Implement the N13 Bridgend to County Boundary Route Improvement Project as one of critical strategic importance to Donegal. 3. Reserve the preferred option corridors (to be determined) for the purposes of the project and the ancillary facilities and not to permit other development within those corridors where such development may prejudice the project. 4. Progress and carry out/implement further improvements to the TEN-T comprehensive network Donegal such as the N13 Stranorlar to Letterkenny and the N13 Manorcunningham to Bridgend as one of critical strategic importance to Donegal. Reserve the preferred Options Corridors and ancillary facilities and not to permit other development within those corridors where such development may prejudice the project.		?			?	?	?	?	
T-O-12	Prioritise the TEN-T PRIPD over any conflicting objectives, policies and land use zonings of the development plan.		?			?	?	?	?	
T-O-13	Achieve quality strategic and important inter-urban and cross border transport corridors including the A5 WTC and the new links to and within the NW City Region.		?			?	?	?	?	
T-O-14	provide for high quality connectivity in line with the Core Strategy through the promotion of a quality Strategic Road Network		?			?	?	?	?	
T-O-15	protect the corridors and routes and acquire the lands necessary for the transportation improvement projects									
T-O-X	To safeguard the capacity and efficiency of the national road network drainage system for national road drainage purposes.									
T-P-10	Support and facilitate the development, extension and improvement of the TEN-T network and in this regard, it is a specific policy: a) Progress and implement the TEN-T PRIPD, b) Reserve the TEN-T PRIPD route corridors. c) Facilitate any TEN-T PRIPD related development on TEN-T PRIPD dual zonings. d) Progress and ultimately implement the N13 Bridgend to County Boundary TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project.		?			?	?	?	?	

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
	e) Progress and carry out/implement further improvements to the TEN-T comprehensive network Donegal such as the N13 Stranorlar to Letterkenny and the N13 Manorcunningham to Bridgend.									
T-P-11	Support and facilitate the development, extension and improvement of Donegal's transport network and not to permit development that would prejudice the implement of a transport scheme identified in the plan.									
T-P-12	a) Not to permit developments requiring new accesses, or which would result in the adverse intensification of existing access points onto national road where speed limit >60kph and the R238 where speed limit >60kph save for developments of national and regional strategic importance in specific circumstances. b) On the N56 between the Five Points Junction and the Log Cabin Creeslough consider one off housing where alternative access onto county or regional road or private access is not available. c) Consider the above proposals onto the N56 subject to the applicant or their parents having owned the land for 5 years, a legal agreement to occupy the dwelling for 7 years and compliance with National Roads standards.									
T-P-13	Require new development adjacent to existing and planned National Roads is set back 50m from the outside edge of the running carriageway or the established building line.									
T-P-14	Require new accesses to strategic roads is designed in accordance with TII road design standards.									
T-P-15	Implement the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) in relation to urban streets and roads in the 50/60kph zone.									
T-P-X	For developments affecting the national road network require the provision of Traffic and Transport Assessments in accordance with the requirements of the 'TII Traffic & Transport Assessment Guidelines (2014)'									
T-P-X	Large out-of-town retail centres shall generally not be supported where they would be located adjacent or close to existing, new or planned national roads.									
T-P-X	control the proliferation of non-road traffic signage on and adjacent to national roads in accordance with National Roads Guidelines' and TII's 'Policy on the Provision of Tourist & Leisure Signage on National Roads									
T-P-X	Require developments in the vicinity of existing or proposed national roads to include noise mitigation measures were warranted and implemented by developer.									
T-P-16	Support parking proposals in town centres for;									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
	<p>a) Commercial development in exceptional circumstances where there is a clear evidence shortfall of existing parking and such parking would not prejudice regeneration, active travel or public transport.</p> <p>b) Residential and other developments where such parking can be discretely accommodated and satisfies the Council's urban design ambitions.</p>									
T-P-17	Insert the principle of additional park and ride/share hubs in the commuter villages around Letterkenny including Kilmacrenan, Ramelton Newtowncunningham, Manorcunningham, Ballinalackey(Raphoe Environs), Ballindrait, Lifford, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Convoy.									
Chapter 8.2 Waste and Wastewater Infrastructure										
WW-O-1	Maintain, improve and enhance the quality of surface and ground waters in accordance with the Water Framework Directive (WFD), RBMP 2022-2024 and Surface and Ground Water Regulations.									
WW-O-2	Provide an adequate system of wastewater treatment in settlements in line with the Core Strategy									
WW-O-3	Facilitate the provision of an adequate, reliable and clean supply of drinking water									
WW-P-1	Support the facilitate the provision new, and the upgrading of existing, water and wastewater infrastructure.									
WW-P-2	Ensure developments do not have an adverse impact on surface and ground water quality, drinking water supplies, Bathing Waters and aquatic ecology, WFD objectives, EU Habitats and Bird Directives, Drinking Water Safety Plan, IFI Protection of Fisheries Construction Guidelines.									
WW-P-3	Require development to provide confirmation from Irish Water that there is an appropriate water supply service and network capacity to serve the development.									
WW-P-4	<p>a) Require all new developments to connect to the public wastewater infrastructure where available. Such connections shall be subject to a connection agreement with Uisce Eireann</p> <p>b) Require developments connecting to the public wastewater network to provide confirmation from Uisce Eireann that the wastewater system in the area has both treatment capacity and network availability to serve the development</p> <p>c) Where works to provide treatment capacity/or network availability have commenced developments will be considered on the merits of each case.</p> <p>d) In all instances the first principle of the planning authority shall be to seek to facilitate development subject to the principles of orderly development and other objectives and policies of this plan.</p>									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
WW-P-5	In areas with no public wastewater treatment infrastructure or inadequate capacity require larger developments with a PE>10 maintained in single ownership to provide effluent treatment by means of independent wastewater system compliant with the EPA's <i>Treatment systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels</i> manual									
WW-P-6	Facilitate developments in single or rural setting for single dwelling or developments with PE<10 maintained in single ownership in unsewered areas by means of independent wastewater system compliant where such systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comply with the EPA's <i>Code of Practice for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (PE. ≤10)</i> (EPA 2021). Would not result in an over concentration or proliferation of such systems. Comply with WW-O-2 									
WW-P-7	Support and facilitate Irish Water Initiatives for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of new wastewater collection and treatment through Measure A8 of the Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme. sustainable long-term solutions for legacy developer-provided water services Infrastructure in residential development through the Multi-Annual Developer-Provided Water Services Infrastructure Resolution Programme 									
WW-P-8	Consider proposals for community-based group wastewater/sewage schemes for extension of public WW treatment infrastructure or standalone wastewater collection and treatment which demonstrate sustainable long term management structures and maintenance, compliance with EPA Code of Practice, approval from Irish Water and compliance with WW-P-2									
WW-P-9	Not permit developments proposing to provide effluent treatment by means of connection to communal treatment system or proposals for such new treatment systems in areas with no public wastewater infrastructure or inadequate wastewater treatment.									
WW-P-10	Only permit developments where they do not negatively impact on existing or proposed water and wastewater infrastructure and the location is with, the operation/use or expansion of existing or proposed new wastewater treatment plants. Prohibit surface water discharge to combined sewers and require use of nature based solutions.									
WW-P-11	Only permit proposed borehole/private wells where it is not feasible to connect to public water supply or group scheme, a potable supply can be provided and it will not adversely affect water quality.									
WW-P-12	Support the extension of the public sewer network serving Glencolmille from its current western edge to the Glencolmille Folk Village									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
WW-P-13	Ensure that new developments do not have an adverse impact on the Lough Mourne drinking water supply. Any developments of scale in the general vicinity shall be required to identify overground and underground water sources supplying the Lough and to demonstrate that there shall be no adverse impact on these supplies.									
Chapter 8.3 Telecoms										
TC-O-1	facilitate a sustainable telecommunications network across the County including those arising out the National Strategic Outcome 6 of the NDP and the Government's Harnessing Digital – The Digital Ireland Framework and the National Broadband plan.									
TC-P-1	Protect the ICT Wireless Network									
TC-P-2	seek the co-location of new or replacement antennae and dishes on existing masts in the first instance and the co-location and clustering of new masts on existing sites as a second preference, unless a fully documented case.									
TC-P-3	Where co-location or clustering is not possible new telecoms antennae and support structure shall be located in accordance with <i>Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures, Guidelines for Planning Authorities 1996</i> , and such structures shall not normally be supported in EHSA areas, beside schools, protected structure or protected structures or archaeological sites and other monuments									
TC-P-4	Require broadband ducting road, sewer, watermain, commercial and residential schemes, including one-off rural dwellings.									
Chapter 8.4: Flooding										
F-O-1	Ensure that development does not give rise to unacceptable new flood risks, or does not exacerbate existing flood risk.									
F-P-1	Only permit development where: flood or surface water management issues can be successfully addressed, and there is no unacceptable residual flood risk for the development, its occupants or elsewhere. Apply a precautionary approach in accordance with the EU Flood Directive and Flood Risk Management Guidelines and require developers to submit an independent Flood Risk Assessment, Surface Water Drainage Calculations, evidence of compliance with justification test as appropriate.									
F-P-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Require the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) for urban development proposals. b) Support the removal of existing stormwater discharging to combined (foul and storm) sewers using nature-based solutions c) Not to support the discharge of additional surface water to combined sewers. 									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
F-P-3	Support the development of long and short term flood remediation works including embankments, sea defences, drainage channels, and attenuation ponds and wetlands, subject to environmental considerations, best practice in coastal zone management, and the Marine and Resource and Coastal Zone Management Policies of the plan									
F-P-4	Not to permit developments which would hinder the maintenance of river or drainage channels.									
Chapter 8.5: Electricity Transmission and Gas Networks.										
ETN-O-1	secure the upgrade-strengthening of the electricity distribution grid to include the provision of network serving the County to a minimum 220kv distribution transmission networks to enable the harnessing and distribution or energy									
ETN-P-X	a) protect Donegal's 3 hydro-electric power stations Cathleen's Fall, Cliff and Clady by restricting incompatible lands uses which might affect the ability of these facilities to consolidate and/or expand operations. a)b) The treatment of HEP boundaries shall be sympathetic to adjoining amenities									
G-O-1	To secure the build-out of the gas supply network into Donegal.									
Chapter 9: Natural Resource Development										
E-O-1	Sustainably develop a diverse and secure renewable energy supply to meet demands and capitalize on the County's competitive locational advantage.									
E-O-2	Secure the maximum potential from the wind energy resources of the County commensurate with the receiving environment and local developments patterns consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development,									
E-O-3	facilitate the strengthening of the electricity grid to a minimum rating of 220KV to enable the harnessing and distribution of energy.									
E-O-4	Facilitate the sustainable development of Donegal as a Centre of Excellence for renewable technology, and Killybegs as an offshore service centre and renewable energy hub.									
E-O-5	ensure that wind energy developments do not adversely impact upon the existing residential amenities of residential properties, and other centres of human habitation									
E-O-X	Support and facilitate proposals for hybrid energy systems and/or co-location of renewable energy where such development will not have adverse impacts on the surrounding environment.									
E-O-X	Recognise that natural gas, particularly renewable and indigenous gas with the exception of fracking proposals, will continue to have a role to play in the transition to a low carbon economy.									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
E-P-1	Facilitate the development of grid reinforcements including grid connections and transboundary energy network (electricity and gas) into and through the County, within the Region, and to support the development of cross border grid connections.									
E-P-2	a) facilitate the appropriate development of renewable energy and energy storage projects arising from a variety of sources, b) not to support the process of Hydraulic Fracturing (or fracking). c) applications for Solar Farm developments should be accompanied by glint and glare assessments.									
E-P-3	Facilitate solar energy installations in residential, commercial, industrial and public building projects, provided such proposals do not detract from the built heritage									
E-P-4	Make Donegal a centre of excellence for research and development of renewable energy technologies including wind, hydro, tidal and wave and facilitate Killybegs Harbour and Donegal Airport as maintenance, service and supply centres for onshore and offshore energy facilities									
E-P-5	Ensure that, where practicable, power lines be routed underground, having particular regard to the scenic amenity of the receiving landscape.									
E-P-6	Consider grid connection proposals on the national road network after other potential alternative routes have been reasonably eliminated for reasons of environmental sensitivities.									
E-P-6	support utility scale solar installation of a scale and design that would assimilate into the landscape, subject to other objectives and policies of this plan.									
E-P-X	Support and facilitate proposals for secure, appropriately scaled energy storage systems and infrastructure, including green hydrogen gas storage which supports energy efficiency and reusable energy systems, subject to other objectives and policies of this plan.									
WE-P-1	Determine wind farm developments in accordance with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map 8.2.1 Wind Energy Acceptable in Principle Open to Consideration. Not Normally Permissible (However the augmentation, upgrade and improvements of: existing windfarms; windfarm developments under construction; developments where permission has lapsed but substantial works have been completed, or on sites with an extant planning permission will be open to consideration in such areas or where a modestly proportioned projection beyond the established footprint can be demonstrated to be essential and unavoidable.) 									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
WE-P-X	The augmentation, upgrade and improvements of: existing windfarms; windfarm developments under construction; developments where permission has lapsed but substantial works have been completed, or on sites with extant planning permission will be open to consideration where such proposals shall generally be confined to the planning unit of the existing development, or where a modestly-proportioned projection (relative to the established unit) beyond the established footprint can be demonstrated to be essential and unavoidable for the augmentation project in terms of operational efficiencies, and can demonstrate beyond reasonable doubt that all environmental issues can be adequately mitigated.									
WE-P-2	wind farm development must not be located: a) In the zone of Visual Influence of Glenveagh National Park. b) Gweebarra river basin, EHSA and St Johns' point									
WE-P-3	Ensure that Wind energy proposals have regard to: landscape sensitivity, protected views, prospects, designated landscapes, local visual impacts, nature conservation designations, archaeological areas, county geological sites, historic structures, public rights of way and walking routes; local environmental impacts including noise, shadow flicker and over-dominance visual and environmental impacts, project scale, size and layout, cumulative impacts, impacts on protected birds and mammals, Wind Energy Development Guidelines, Flood Risk Management Guidelines, impacts on drinking water sources and public water services infrastructure and shall be accompanied by a Peat Stability Risk Assessment Report.									
WE-P-4	Support and facilitate, appropriate on site wind energy development by auto producers/micro producers* where energy generated is primarily required to meet the immediate needs of the development (Not restricted by Map 8.2.1)									
WE-P-5	ensure that all roads associated with wind farms are maintained or repaired at the developer's expense									
WE-P-6	ensure all windfarm developments demonstrate how they will be of enduring economic benefit to the communities, through community investment/ownership, benefit or dividend, or similar.									
WE-P-7	Ensure the decommissioning, post-operational restoration and restoration of habitats of redundant windfarm developments is achievable and practical									
WE-P-8	Ensure that proposals for grid connections shall be considered along the national road network only after other alternative routes have been reasonably eliminated for reasons of environmental sensitivity									
WE-P-9	Specific Biodiversity Related Requirements in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of functionally linked habitat Mortality due to collision with operational wind turbines. 									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disturbance displacement. Water quality 									
EX-O-1	facilitate extractive industries subject to the protection of residential and natural amenities, the prevention of pollution, and the safeguarding of aquifers and groundwater.									
EX-P-1	Accept principle of new extractive industries save: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In EHSA areas, Natura 2000 site, NHAs, Nature Reserves Other Areas of Importance for conservation of flora or fauna, areas of significant archaeological protection. In identified views and prospects, greenways, blueways and tourist routes unless it is clearly demonstrated it would not have significant adverse impacts on the amenities or the environment. 									
EX-P-2	Only support extractive industry developments where they identify relevant robust and effective environmental impact mitigation measures									
E-P-X	When designing, planning, and consenting for new electricity grid infrastructure, opportunities to use the existing roads and rail network for such development will be considered in accordance with any protocols that have developed between ESB/Eirgrid, TII, DECC/DOT and Local Authorities.									
G-P-1	Protect County Geological Sites (CGS).									
Chapter 10: Tourism										
TOU-O-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Support the development of the WAW Regional Tourism Development Strategy 2023-2027. b) facilitate the sustainable development of Donegal's tourism product as a key economic driver of, and social catalyst for, the County whilst protecting and enhancing the County's landscape, natural heritage, built heritage, and communities from inappropriate development that would detract from the tourism product. c) Work in collaboration with Failte Ireland to ensure the continued maintenance of the 39 discovery points, including 3 signature Discovery Points, and access routes. 									
TOU-P-1	facilitate the development of signature/strategic tourism experiences/attractions which are consistent with the brand identity of the Wild Atlantic Way and other similar initiatives.									
TOU-P-2	not to permit development which would materially detract from visual and scenic amenities along the route of the Wild Atlantic Way.									
TOU-P-3	not to permit developments which would materially detract from the visual/scenic amenities on the approach roads to, the visual setting of, or the views to be had from, significant tourism attractions.									
TOU-P-4	support tourism and recreational activities that will harness the potential of the river systems subject to environmental considerations.									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
TOU-P-5	a) Support resource- related/activity-based tourism developments (throughout the County, but excluding Especially High Scenic Amenity areas, where it is a demonstrable tourism product, is functionally-dependent on the, has wider economic benefits. b) Support On-site accommodation units, A small ancillary retailing element or café/restaurant, and ancillary infrastructure.									
TOU-P-6	Consider standalone tourism accommodation development in accordance with associated table.									
TOU-P-7	Consider holiday resorts of a scale that would have a regional impact on the tourism market involving high quality recreational amenities/visitor facilities and associated managed accommodation units, in both urban and rural locations areas excluding areas of Especially High Scenic Amenity, which offer a wide range of high quality recreational activities, retain 75% of accommodation within resort ownership, and provides a high quality design and layout.									
TOU-P-X	Support and protect the built heritage assets that are the focus for tourism development to promote heritage led economic growth and regeneration whilst not adversely detracting from the built heritage assets or their setting.									
TOU-P-8	Criteria for new tourism developments including: high quality location siting and design, not located within that there are no significant impacts on designated habitats, does not affect sensitive natural habitats, set back and screening from coastlines, shore and riverbanks, will not detract from the visual setting of the coastline, has appropriate boundary treatment, does not impact on residential amenities, has adequate effluent treatment, will not cause a traffic hazard, has adequate parking, does not create a noise nuisance, will not have an adverse impact on built, scenic or natural heritage, is not in a flood risk area, and will not compromise water quality.									
TOU-P-X	Support and promote existing festivals and sporting events to increase the cultural, heritage and lifestyle profile of the county, and, where appropriate, promote and facilitate the development of new festivals and events, subject to compliance with other relevant provisions of this Plan.									
TOU-P-X	To support Fáilte Ireland in the development of 'Destination and Experience Development Plans' for the Inishowen Peninsula, West Donegal & the Islands and for South Donegal.									
Chapter 11: Natural and Built Heritage										
Chapter 11.1: Biodiversity										
BIO-O-1	preserve and enhance the biodiversity of the County in accordance with the relevant EU policies and national legislation.									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
BIO-O-X	To have regard to the objectives of any extant National Biodiversity Action Plan and National Peatlands Strategy in all aspects of the sustainable development of the county.									
BIO-P-1	To require all developments comply with the requirements of the EU Habitats Directive and EU Bird Directive, including that developments do not adversely affect the integrity of any European site, provides for protection of species listed in Annex IV of the habitats directive and the Flora Protection Order., manage protect and enhance features of the landscape of importance of for wild fauna and flora and the ecological coherence of the Natura 2000 network.									
BIO-P-2	Ensure developments seek to conserve/protect the qualifying interests of Ramsar Sites, Nature Reserves, NHAs pNHAS the Cró na mBroanáin Red Grouse Sanctuary and species protected under the Wildlife Act save to the extent necessary to the provide for strategic infrastructure projects including but not restricted to the TEN-T PRIPD, the Bridgend to County border project scheme, the Bunrana Inner relief Road and Greenways, subject to such projects being in accordance with all relevant statutory and regulatory provisions. Otherwise, where no statutory or regulatory provisions apply this policy will be implemented by the Council in so far as same can be practicably and reasonably achieved within the context of such projects.									
BIO-P-3	Save to the extent necessary to the provide for the TEN-T PRIPD a) Protect, where justified, features of local biodiversity value. b) Require, where justified, that developments otherwise maximise the retention of and suitably integrate such features. c) Require developments provide biodiversity enhancement measures. d) Require large-scale developments result in no net biodiversity loss and include a site-specific comprehensive Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP), as part of any planning proposal. This policy will be implemented by the Council in so far as same can be practicably and reasonably achieved within the context of Strategic Infrastructure Projects including, but not restricted to, the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal, the Bridgend to County border project scheme, the Bunrana Inner relief Road and Greenways.									
BIO-P-4	Ensure that any development proposals do not lead to the introduction or spread of invasive species and developments will be required to be submit an appropriate control and management programme for the particular invasive species.									
BIO-P-5	a) Ensure that new developments do not have a significant adverse impact on pollinator habitat and species b) Require pollinator friendly planting and management regimes as part of new public development									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
	b)c) Manage road verges to enhance biodiversity in accordance with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.									
Chapter 11.2 Landscape										
L-O-1	Protect, manage and conserve the character, quality and value of the Donegal landscape.									
L-P-1	Protect areas identified as 'Especially High Scenic Amenity' and only consider developments of strategic importance or developments that are provided for by policy elsewhere in this plan									
L-P-2	Protect areas identified as 'High Scenic Amenity' and 'Moderate Scenic Amenity' only consider developments of development of a nature, location and scale that integrates with, and reflects the character and amenity of the landscape									
L-P-3	safeguard the scenic context, cultural landscape significance, recreational/tourism amenities, and environmental amenities of the County's coastline from inappropriate development save for strategic infrastructure provision of overriding public regional or national public interest This policy will be implemented by the Council in so far as same can be practicably and reasonably achieved within the context of Strategic Infrastructure Projects including, but not restricted to, the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal, the Bridgend to County border project scheme, the Bunrana Inner relief Road and Greenways.									
L-P-4	Protect the character of specific approach roads to the Glenveagh National Park:									
L-P-5	protect views to and from St Johns Point.									
L-P-6	Safeguard prominent skylines and ridgelines from inappropriate development.									
L-P-7	Seek to preserve the views and prospects of special amenity value and interest									
L-P-8	preserve scenic views between public roads and the sea, lakes and rivers on the basis of whether the view has been affected to-date by development, the development would intrude significantly on the view; and the development would materially alter the view.									
Chapter 11.3 Built and Architectural Conservation										
AH-O-1	Conserve, manage, protect and enhance the architectural heritage of Donegal									
AH-O-2	Promote the sustainable and sensitive re-use of the existing built heritage This objective will be pursued on a collaborative and integrated basis in partnership with all relevant stakeholders and through all available funding mechanisms.									
AH-P-1	Seek to ensure best conservation practice through the application of the Guiding Principles of Architectural Conservation									
AH-P-2	Protect traditional shopfronts and signage and where required and appropriate, ensure new shopfronts are of a high-quality architectural design.									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
AH-O-3	Protect all structures and parts of structures on the Record of Protected Structures and to extend the RPS where appropriate.									
AH-P-X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the maintenance and appropriate re-use of the existing buildings stock with architectural merit. Ensure that measures to upgrade the energy efficiency of protected structures and traditionally built historic structures are sensitive to the building. 									
AH-P-3	<p>a) Protect all structures or parts of structures on the RPS</p> <p>b) Require that development proposals directly affecting structures on the RPS are appropriate</p> <p>Save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including but not restricted to the TEN-T PRIPD the Bridgend to County border project scheme, the Buncrana Inner relief Road and Greenways, subject to such projects being in accordance with all relevant statutory and regulatory provisions.</p>									
AH-P-X	Preserve, protect and enhance the special built character and functions of the 'Heritage Towns' of Ardara, Ballyshannon, Moville, Ramelton and Raphoe.									
AH-P-4	<p>a) Extend the Record of Protected Structures</p> <p>b) Identify structures for inclusion in the Record of Protected Structures based on Architectural Heritage Protection, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011), the NIAH and Ministerial recommendations.</p>									
AH-P-5	Require works which includes works to an RPS structure to be carried out in the first phase of the development to prevent endangerment, abandonment and/or dereliction of the structure.									
AH-O-4	Preserve the special character of the Ardara, Ballyshannon, Buncrana, Letterkenny, Ramelton, Raphoe, and Moville Architectural Conservation Areas									
AH-P-6	<p>a) Protect and enhance the special character of ACAs</p> <p>b) Protect all buildings, structures, groups of structures, sites, landscapes and all other features considered to be intrinsic elements to the special character of an ACA.</p> <p>c) Ensure appropriate and sensitive reuse and rehabilitation of buildings and sites, secure appropriate infill and new development, and require high quality architectural design within and adjacent to ACAs.</p> <p>d) Protect traditional shopfronts in ACAs and ensure new shopfronts are of a high-quality architectural design.</p>									
AH-P-7	Require developments of NIAH structures are appropriate in terms of architectural treatment, character, scale, and form, and is not detrimental to the special character and integrity of the structure and its setting Save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including but not restricted to the TEN-T PRIPD the Bridgend to County border project scheme,									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
	the Bunrana Inner relief Road and Greenways. This policy will be implemented by the Council in so far as same can be practicably and reasonably achieved within the context of said projects.									
AH-P-8	Ensure high quality architectural design of all new development relating to or which may impact on NIAH structures Save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including but not restricted to the TEN-T PRIPD: the Bridgend to County border project scheme, the Bunrana Inner relief Road and Greenways. This policy will be implemented by the Council in so far as same can be practicably and reasonably achieved within the context of said projects.									
AH-P-9	Seek to protect, conserve and preserve vernacular structures and historic building stock that are considered to be intrinsic elements of the character of a place, Save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including but not restricted to the TEN-T PRIPD: the Bridgend to County border project scheme, the Bunrana Inner relief Road and Greenways. This policy will be implemented by the Council in so far as same can be practicably and reasonably achieved within the context of said projects.									
AH-P-10	ensure that conversions or extensions to vernacular buildings/traditional historic building stock and the provision of new adjoining buildings shall be of a scale and form that complements the existing building and ensures that the distinctiveness and character of the vernacular form is retained and respected.									
Chapter 11.4: Archaeological Heritage										
AYH-O-1	Conserve and protect archaeological heritage, achieve greater knowledge and appreciation of archaeology, protect existing access to, and where appropriate provide new access and visitor infrastructure for, such heritage.									
AYH-P-1	Save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including the TEN-T PRIPD. a) Conserve and protect all forms of archaeological heritage b) Conserve and Protect Zones of Archaeological Protection located in Urban areas of Ballyshannon, Donegal Town, Killybegs, Lifford, Ramelton, Rathmullan and St. Johnston requiring the carrying out of an archaeological assessment prior to the granting of permission and the undertaking of additional archaeological mitigation where required to inform the planning application or, if appropriate, the imposition of similar archaeological mitigation conditions The policy will be implemented save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including, but not restricted to, the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal the Bridgend to County border project scheme, the Bunrana Inner relief Road and Greenways, subject to such projects being in accordance with all relevant statutory and regulatory									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
	provisions or where no statutory or regulatory provisions apply in so far as the policy provisions can be practicably and reasonably achieved within the context of such projects.									
AYH-P-2	Save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including the TEN-T PRIPD protect existing access to, and facilitate appropriate new public access, informational and visitor infrastructure for, archaeological heritage This policy will be implemented by the Council in so far as same can be practicably and reasonably achieved within the context of Strategic Infrastructure Projects including, but not restricted to, the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal the Bridgend to County border project scheme, the Bunrana Inner relief Road and Greenways.									
AYH-P-3	Save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including the TEN-T PRIPD ensure that development proposals: Sensitive incorporate archaeological heritage Preserved In Situ Be accompanied by long-term management plan. Provide appropriate informational signage The policy will be implemented save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including, but not restricted to, the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal the Bridgend to County border project scheme, the Bunrana Inner relief Road and Greenways subject to such projects being in accordance with all relevant statutory and regulatory provisions or where no statutory or regulatory provision applies in so far as the policy provisions can be practicably and reasonably achieved within the context of such projects.									
AYH-P-4	Ensure that historic graveyards in the ownership or care of the Council are managed and maintained in accordance with legislation, appropriate/best conservation standards									
Chapter 12: Community and Culture										
CCG-O-1	Create sustainable, healthy, socially inclusive, and cultural vibrant communities with an optimum quality of life and high-quality childcare, education, recreational, and cultural infrastructure and facilities and to integrate the planning and sustainable development of the County with the social, community and cultural requirements of its population.									
CC-P-1	Support the provision of new social and community infrastructure/service related developments which are consistent with the zoning objectives of the plan and in accordance with specific sequential location criteria focusing areas of settlement within are within safe walking distances of local services and residential areas first.									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
CC-P-2:	Require that social, community cultural development proposals: are compatible with adjacent existing or approved land uses, do not impact on adjacent residential amenities, provide adequate effluent treatment, do not cause a traffic hazard, provide adequate parking Specifically in relation to schools and similar education facilities, incorporate measures that de-prioritise set-down/drop-off arrangements. , prioritise pedestrians, do not create a noise nuisance, integrates within the landscape, provides adequate screening, does not impact on the built or natural heritage, and complies with flood risk management guidelines.									
CCG-P-3	Consider local childcare capacity and requirements when considering new multiple residential development, and require provision of purpose built facilities as part of large scale residential development in accordance with Childcare Planning Guidelines.									
CC-P-4	Require that developments adjoining existing public educational facilities shall not hinder the planned future expansion of such facilities and any associated ancillary infrastructure.									
CC-P-5	Require that the design and layout of new public education facilities enable the use of any associated social and sporting facilities (e.g. playing pitches sports halls) for wider community uses.									
CC-O-2	Provide a network of high-quality green, active and recreational infrastructure at sustainable and socially inclusive locations throughout the county									
CC-P-6	Ensure that the siting, layout, and design of community development proposals facilitate and promote active travel modes (e.g. walking and cycling) and reduce car dependency.									
CC-P-7	Support and facilitate community-based gardens/allotments at sustainable, accessible, and socially inclusive locations.									
CC-P-8	Ensure that the siting and design of developments (including housing, retail, commercial, community, public realm/urban environment and public amenity spaces) comply with best practice in universal design									
CC-P-9	Ensure that the needs of older and disabled persons are integrated into the provision of public transport services and associated physical infrastructure.									
CC-O-3	To protect and enhance the vibrancy of Donegal’s cultural resource in a sustainable and socially inclusive manner including providing new arts and cultural infrastructure, new spaces for arts and culture in the public realm, quality public art, and enhanced creative/artistic spaces.									
CC-P-10	Support and facilitate: a) strategic cultural infrastructural projects including the Donegal Town Library, Archives Centre and redevelopment of the County Museum, b) the provision of large-scale cultural facilities c) small scale Cultural developments									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
	d) a performing arts facility in the Inishowen peninsula subject to an evidence-based needs assessment									
CC-P-11	Ensure new urban placemaking/regeneration and public realm projects provide space for arts and cultural events and incorporate creative public art where practicable									
CC-P-12	Facilitate the reuse/refurbishment of underutilised, vacant, or derelict buildings as artist workspaces, creative hubs and and/or exhibition spaces and other cultural facilities									
CC-P-13	Seek the protection of stone wall boundaries where they are shown to play a significant heritage role									
Chapter 13: An Gaeltacht										
GAE-O-1	Sustain and strengthen the Irish Language, to protect the cultural heritage of, and facilitate the sustainable social, physical, cultural, and economic development of the Gaeltacht.									
GAE-P-1	Support the implementation of language plans in Gaeltacht Language Planning areas, Gaeltacht Service Towns and Irish Language Networks.									
GAE-P-2	a) Impose a language condition for multiple residential development of 2 more dwellings in the Gaeltacht requiring that the proportion of units to be occupied by Irish speakers equates to the proportion of Irish speakers within the subject DED subject to a minimum of 20% 66%. A language condition shall be applied to all applicable units for a duration of 15 years from the date of the first occupancy of the unit. b) Require Language Impact Assessments for Multiple Residential Developments within Gaeltacht areas of 10 or more dwellings in all cases, and less than 10 dwellings where there is potential for a significant impact on the Irish language in the area,									
GAE-P-3	Facilitate sustainable single rural housing developments within the Gaeltacht in accordance with the rural housing policies of this plan.									
GAE-P-4	Support educational, cultural and community developments, strategic tourism projects supported by UNaG, economic/enterprise development proposals including those in UNaG business parks and sites, the provision of enhanced transport, water and wastewater infrastructure, urban regeneration and placemaking projects in Gaeltacht towns, villages and Islands.									
GAE-P-5	Support and facilitate the development of the marine sector in the Gaeltacht									
GAE-P-6	Require the use of the Irish language in public, business, and community signage in accordance with the requirements Official Languages Act 2003(as amended). DCC is also committed to collaborating with Faiite Ireland and Tourism Ireland .									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
Chapter 14: Marine Resource, Coastal Management and the Islands										
MRCM-O-1	Sustain and enhance the economic, social and cultural, and tourism vitality of Donegal's marine sector, coastal communities and islands.									
MRCM-O-2	Safeguard and enhance the health of Donegal's marine and coastal ecosystems and sustainably manage our coastal environment.									
MRCM-P-1	Ensure that development proposals are consistent with the National Marine Planning Framework including the environmental, economic, social and sectoral objectives and policies detailed therein.									
MRCM-P-2	Support and facilitate, additional wastewater treatment capacity and water supply upgrades, public realm improvements, civic, cultural, green, amenity, and recreational infrastructure, vacancy and dereliction, sustainable transport infrastructure and visitor facilities in our coastal/WAW settlements.									
MRCM-P-3	Safeguard and enhance the roles of Killybegs, Greencastle, and Burtonport, as centres of fishing, fleet activity, seafood processing and/or ancillary marine services and education including supporting the development of Marine Resource Innovation Park(s) .									
MRCM-P-4	Support the development of Killybegs as an Offshore Renewable Energy centre and as a marine logistics hub for onshore wind energy									
MRCM-P-5	facilitate onshore aquaculture related developments including servicing, marine access, storage, and processing-related developments									
MRCM-P-6	support and maintain existing, and facilitate the improvement of, marine access infrastructure and ferry services, tourism, cultural, community, transport, remote working, and education facilities for Donegal's Islands.									
MRCM-P-7	Facilitate marine and inland waters access infrastructure, facilitate large scale marine access infrastructure in specific locations, operation of the Greencastle to Magilligan and Bunrana to Rathmullan Ferry Services, the development of Killybegs and Greencastle as regional cruise ship destinations									
MRCM-P-8	Support the maintenance of and facilitate improved coastal/beach infrastructure and management services at Blue Flag beaches and candidate locations.									
MRCM-P-9	facilitate coastal erosion or flooding prevention works at locations subject to significant long-term coastal erosion/flooding or the effects of sea-level rise and where there is strategic justification.									
MRCM-P-10	ensure new marine and coastal developments do not give rise to significant coastal change, nor have a significant adverse impact on: visual and scenic amenities of the coastline/seascape and the marine environment, sensitive physical coastal environments, coastal Geomorphological processes and systems.									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
Chapter 15: Public Rights of Way										
PROW-O-1	Preserve public rights of way which give access to seashore, mountain, lakeshore, riverbank or other place of natural beauty or recreational utility.									
PROW-P-1	Support development where such proposals would not give rise to any impeding or obstruction of any public rights of way identified in this Plan.									
Mapped Public Rights of Way	All Mapped Routes of Public Rights of Way									
Chapter 16: Technical Standards										
TS-P-1	Require compliance with the following technical standards where applicable									
TS-P-X	For developments affecting the national road network, a Traffic and Transport Assessment will be required in accordance with the requirements of the 'TII Traffic & Transport Assessment Guidelines (2014)'.									
Part B: Area Plans										
Chapter 17: General Introduction										
GEN-DM-1	Support principles of developments that: a) Are consistent with the zonings objectives in the Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Bundoran LAP Land Use Zoning Map. b) Supported in the zonings matrix for said LAPs									
GEN-H-O-1	Facilitate an adequate supply, range and mix of high-quality housing at serviced, sustainable, accessible, and socially inclusive locations to meet anticipated housing need.									
GEN-H-P-1	secure strategic landbanks for housing provision beyond the life of the LAPS by identifying Strategic Residential Reserve (SRR) Lands. The release of SRR lands shall only be carried out in the context of a statutory review or variation of the CDP.									
GEN-H-P-2	facilitate one off housing in 'Rural/Agricultural' where applicant's can demonstrate that they need a new house at this location and can provide evidence that they, or their parents, have resided in those areas for a period of at least 7 years.									
GEN-H-P-X	It is a policy of the Council to consider limited residential development proposals in areas identified as 'Local Environment' in accordance with the following:									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposals for single dwellings within areas zoned 'Local Environment' will only be considered in circumstances where the land in question is in family ownership and where the applicant/s can demonstrate a genuine need to reside on the subject site. Proposals for multiple housing developments (i.e. 2 or more dwellings) within areas zoned 'Local Environment' will not be considered. <p>Any proposal for a single dwelling on lands zoned as 'Local Environment' will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would integrate harmoniously with the local landscape, utilising and retaining key landscape features such as trees and hedgerows and; Would not have an adverse impact on the existing character of the area or the residential amenity of adjoining properties. 									
GEN-H-P-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider Multiple Residential Development where there is market failure on New Residential Phase 1. 									
GEN-ED-P-1	Only support professional services, where the services proposed are provided principally to visiting members of the public, within land zoned as 'Urban Core' and the Cockhill Neighbourhood Centre, Bunrana.									
GEN-T-O-1	Facilitate a significant increase in sustainable mobility through the provision of a compact permeable urban form, new and enhanced active travel infrastructure.									
GEN-T-O-2	Improve strategic transport connectivity, traffic safety and local traffic flow and accessibility (including the delivery of the Section 1 TEN-T PRIPD strategic roads project), the provision of new local access links and the implementation of appropriate safety, parking/traffic management solutions.									
GEN-T-P-1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Implement actions in Area Plan Transport/Sustainable Mobility strategies and during the lifetime of the LAPs Ensure that developments do not prejudice the transport projects/links identified in the Land Use/Transportation Strategy and protect the routes of same. 									
GEN-T-P-2	Preserve the key access points to undeveloped or existing adjoining lands identified in the relevant Area Plan									
GEN-T-P-3	Require new developments to be sited and designed in a manner which prioritises, and provides safe, direct, and attractive access for pedestrians and cyclists.									
GEN-T-P-4	Facilitate the re-allocation of existing road space to provide enhanced, pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.									
GEN-T-P-5	Facilitate local public transport services and associated infrastructure.									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
GEN-T-P-6	Facilitate electric vehicle charging points at publicly off-street locations.									
GEN-T-P-7	Consider vehicle parking proposals within areas zoned 'Urban Core' in the following exceptional circumstances: For residential development in accordance with Urban Design Manual guidance where such parking cannot be otherwise catering for by existing capacity, for commercial developments where it is essential for commercial visibility and cannot be catered for by existing spare capacity, and publicly accessible disabled/age friendly parking.									
GEN-TC-0-1	Create vibrant, multifunctional, attractive, and accessible town centres, and Vacancy and Dereliction levels.									
GEN-TC-P-1	Facilitate a variety of developments and uses within the town centres									
GEN-TC-P-2	Positively facilitate sensitive proposals for the refurbishment and reuse of vacant and derelict building in accordance with urban design policies.									
GEN-TC-P-3	support infill and backland residential and commercial developments where they would not have a significant adverse effect on existing residential and visual amenities, respect the local built environment.									
GEN-TC-P-4	Consider food take-away units, bookmakers, amusement arcades, and casinos within the 'Urban Core' zoning provided they do not abut residential accommodation, schools or religious institutions, do not result in an over-concentration of such uses in a given area and do not detract from the streetscape and vitality and viability									
GEN-RCNH-O-1	Create a high-quality integrated network of recreational and amenity spaces, linkages and infrastructure									
GEN-F-P-X	<p>a. Within 'Established Development 2', area minor development only will be supported where it can be demonstrated that they will not obstruct important flow paths, introduce a significant additional number of people into flood risk areas or entail the storage of hazardous substance.</p> <p>b. Such applications shall be accompanied by an assessment of the risks of flooding to demonstrate that they would not have adverse impacts or impede access to a watercourse, floodplain or flood protection and management facilities and follow best practice in the management of health and safety for users and residents of the proposal.</p>									
GEN-F-P-X	<p>a. Within areas zoned as 'Rural Agricultural 2', minor developments only (eg. small extensions to existing agricultural, residential or commercial buildings) will be supported where it can be demonstrated that they will not obstruct important flow paths, introduce a significant additional number of people into flood risk areas or entail the storage of hazardous substance).</p>									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
	b. Such applications shall be accompanied by a commensurate assessment of the risks of flooding to demonstrate that they would not have adverse impacts or impede access to a watercourse, floodplain or flood protection and management facilities. Such proposals shall follow best practice in the management of health and safety for users and residents of the proposal.									
Chapter 16: Buncrana Area Plan										
BC-S-O-1	Protect and enhance the character, setting and natural heritage of the shorefront in Buncrana									
BC-S-O-2	Support the progress and implementation of the 'Re-powering Buncrana' –									
BC-S-P-1:	Support the following development proposals within the shorefront: developments that support Buncrana's tourism product, Public realm and active travel interventions, Community-based recreation projects, marinas, jetties, facilities for outdoor water-based activities and harbour facilities for maritime leisure developments.									
BC-S-P-2:	Protect the coastal walkways in Buncrana									
BC-S-P-3:	Not permit development that would have a negative impact on the use of Buncrana Pier									
BC-S-P-4:	Support the principle of the development of a flagship tourism project,									
BC-TC-O-1	Sustain and enhance the role of Buncrana as the retail and services hub of the Inishowen peninsula.									
BC-TC-O-2	Strike the appropriate balance between facilitating the Main Street commercial sectors to the town's retail and services offering with the need for the further enhancement of the streetscape and public realm									
BC-TC-O-3	Secure the development of the brownfield 'Town Centre Opportunity Sites'									
BC-TC-O-4	Revitalise the public realm and built environment of the Market Square.									
BC-TC-P-1	Require the incorporation of strong street frontage into the design of developments located adjacent to the Inner Relief Road									
BC-RG-O-1	Secure the development of the brownfield 'Settlement Consolidation Sites' and Opportunity Site 4									
BC-SCS-P-1A	Support the significant redevelopment of Settlement Consolidation Site SCS1A for housing, commercial (subject to the retail policies of this Plan), or employment uses and/or a mixed-use development of the aforementioned uses									
BC-SCS-P-1B	Support the significant redevelopment of Settlement Consolidation Site SCS1B for housing, commercial (subject to the retail policies of this Plan), or employment uses and/or a mixed-use development of the aforementioned uses									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
BC-SCS-P-2	Support the significant redevelopment of Settlement Consolidation Site SCS2 for housing, commercial (subject to the retail policies of this Plan), or employment uses and/or a mixed-use development of the aforementioned uses									
BC-OPP-P-4	Support residential, leisure, tourism, or marine uses and require proposals to: not materially detract from any aspect to/from the shorefront and/or from any of the approach roads, reflect and respect the characteristics of the site, respect neighbouring building heights and orientation, and include permeability. Any application for development must be accompanied by an appropriately detailed site-specific flood risk assessment.									
BC-ZEL-O-1	Grow the industrial and office-based sectors in Buncrana									
BC-AT-O-1	Deliver the projects listed in Transport/Sustainable Mobility Strategy									
BC-AT-O-2	to work with TII to progress and ultimately carry out and develop the Inishowen Greenway network									
BC-AT-O-X:	To prepare a detailed Local Transport Plan for Buncrana during the lifetime of the plan in accordance with the NTAs/TIIs Area Based Transport Assessment manual.									
BC-AT-P-1	Require that development proposals: a) provide for suitable connectivity and permeability, b) Have regard to indicative access routes identified in the land use zoning map, to active transport/sustainable mobility projects, and reserve corridors for the required routes.									
BC-H-P-1	Require <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site specific flood risk assessment for NR1.2; NR1.3; NR1.4; and NR.1.5. • Layouts NR1.3 and NR1.4 provide for walking and cycling permeability. • Layout for NR1.4 provide for vehicular, pedestrian and cycle connectivity to the public roads to the north and south. • Layout for NR1.6 active travel (pedestrians and cycling) facilities. • Layout for NR2.12 preserves the proposed Buncrana Relief Road, provides for access from the Cockhill road, and incorporates active travel facilities • Proposals for NR2.15 preserves the Buncrana Inner Relief Road and Outer Relief Road corridors and provides for active travel access from neighbourhood services in Cockhill and the Inishowen Greenway. • Proposals for NR2.16 preserves the Buncrana Inner Relief Road corridors and provides active travel access from the Inner Relief Road. 									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposals for NR2.17 preserves Buncrana Relief road and provides for active travel from the Inner Relief Road. Developers required to engage with DCC Roads Service re provision of footpaths and reconfiguration of Westbrook Road junction, future pedestrian/cyclist permeability through lands to the SW of the Site connecting onto Westbrook road, SW management details required. 									
BC-OPP-P-1	Facilitate a sensitive, heritage-led regeneration and development project for tourism purposes at Opp. Site 1 (Ned's Point)									
BC-OPP-P-2	Support light industry, residential, employment or economic development uses. Proposals shall be required on Opp. Site 2 (Cockhill Road). Any application must be accompanied by an appropriately detailed site-specific flood risk assessment.									
BC-OPP-P-3	Support either solely comparison retail/light industry, or solely residential uses on Opp site 3.									
BC-R-O-1	Protect the corridors and routes and acquire the lands necessary for transportation improvement and projects as identified on the Land Use Zoning Map,									
BC-R-P-1	Require new development affected by the proposed Inner Relief Road and Outer Relief Road corridors be designed to anticipate and mitigate the operational and environmental impacts of the road, including noise impact and not permit new individual accesses onto said roads.									
BC-F-O-1	Support and facilitate the implementation of the Buncrana-Luddan Flood Relief Scheme subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive.									
BC-NH-P-1	Safeguard and enhance the local landscape and natural environment, and coastline.									
BC-NH-P-2	Conserve and protect the lands identified as 'High Amenity' on the Zoning Map									
BC-NH-P-3	Protect the recreational, environmental and conservation integrity, and the visual quality of all beaches within and adjacent to the Plan area, including Lady's Bay, Buncrana and Lisfannon Beaches.									
BC-LRA-P-1	Protect the architectural, cultural and historic value of residential communities within and on the edge of the town centre identified as 'Long Established Residential Areas'									
BC-SCC-O-1	support and facilitate the redevelopment of the Buncrana Community Leisure Centre.									
Land Use Zoning Map for Buncrana										
Chapter 17: Ballybofey/Stranorlar Area Plan										

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
BS-H-P-1	Facilitate residential development according to the district level placemaking objectives and principles set out in Ballybofey/Stranorlar Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan within Districts 1,2 and 4									
BS-H-P-2	<p>a) Ensure development NR 1.8, NR 1.11, NR1.12 provides for a pedestrian and cycling links to the N13 and the Golf Course Road and Lough Alaán.</p> <p>b) Ensure development of NR 1.3 provides for pedestrian and cycling link between the Glenfinn and Donegal Roads- and otherwise require, or facilitate the provision of, a vehicular link through the site between said roads if the site is selected as the preferred link between Donegal Road and Glenfinn Road.</p> <p>c) Require development of NR 1.6 to provides for vehicular access via any proposed Glenfinn Street to Donegal Road Link Road (on Site NR 1.3).</p> <p>d) Ensure development of NR 1.7 provides for pedestrian and cycling links between the L-3044-2 and the L-2864-2.</p> <p>e) Ensure development of NR 1.10 provides for pedestrian and cycling links between the Glenfinn road and the railway road.</p> <p>f) Ensure development of NR 1.4 supports the overall place shaping strategy for District 1 of the Ballybofey Regeneration Strategy.</p> <p>g) Require that any development proposal on site New Residential 2.2 is accompanied by a detailed site-specific flood risk assessment, does not provide for any residential development in flood risk areas or exacerbate flood risk elsewhere.</p> <p>h) Ensure that any residential development on Site NR1.2 is setback at minimum of 100m from the Ballybofey/Stranorlar Wastewater Treatment Plant.</p>									
BS-ED-O-1	Strengthen and diversify the economic and employment base of Ballybofey/Stranorlar and capitalise on its strategic economic location.									
BS-ED-P-1	Facilitate business enterprise proposals (including light engineering/manufacturing, logistics/warehousing, service based enterprises) but excluding retail development on lands zoned BE1									
BS-ED-P-2	Facilitate business enterprise proposals (including light engineering/manufacturing, logistics/warehousing, service based enterprises) excluding retail development on lands zoned BE2									
BS-T-0-1	Prioritise the TEN-T PRIPD over any conflicting objectives, policies and land use zonings of the development plan.					?	?			
BS-T-0-2	Deliver the projects listed in the Transport/Sustainable Mobility Strategy above.									
BS-T-0-3	Prepare a detailed Local Transport Plan for Ballybofey/Stranorlar during the lifetime of the plan in accordance with relevant National Best Practice Guidance.	?		?	?		?		?	?


Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
BS-T-P-1	Support and facilitate the development, extension and improvement of the TEN-T network and in this regard, it is a specific policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress and implement the TEN-T PRIPD, Reserve the TEN-T PRIPD route corridors. Facilitate any TEN-T PRIPD related development on TEN-T PRIPD dual zonings. 					?	?			
BS-F-P-1	Support and facilitate the implementation of the Ballybofey/Stranorlar Flood Relief Scheme subject to the requirements of the Habitats Directive.									
BS-TC-0-1	Sustain and enhance the town centre's role as the retail, hospitality, tourism and cultural hub of the Finn Valley.									
BS-TC-O-2	Fully implement the SEED Project									
BS-TC-0-3	Implement projects which achieve the placemaking objectives and principles set out in the Ballybofey/Stranorlar Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan									
BS-TC-P-1	Facilitate and support proposals/projects according with the district level placemaking objectives and principles set out in the Ballybofey/Stranorlar Regeneration and Action Plan including suitable alternatives, collaborate with stakeholders and ensure development are not contrary to the district level placemaking objectives and principles.									
BS-RCNH-O-1	Support and strengthen Ballybofey/Stranorlar as a sporting centre of excellence including completion of the Donegal Community Stadium, and the Stranorlar Multi-Use sports facility									
BS-RCNH-O-2	Protect, enhance, and, where appropriate, sustainably develop key natural heritage assets in Ballybofey/Stranorlar including: Drumboe Woods and Environs area, the River Finn Corridor and areas of rural local environment									
BS-RCNH-O-3	Collaborate with Ballybofey and Stranorlar Co-op Livestock Mart in their identification of a suitable alternative location.									
BS-RCNH-P-1	Facilitate developments which accord with the proposals in the Drumboe Wood and Environs Feasibility Study									
BS-RCNH-P-2	Facilitate developments which accord with the Drumboe Castle and Environs Masterplan area in accordance with specific criteria									
BS-RCNH-P-3	Positively support and facilitate the provision of a central urban public park on the lands to the east of the Ballybofey shopping Arcade									
BS-RCNH-P-4	Support and facilitate the development of riverside/lakeside recreational walks (including those identified within the Ballybofey/Stranorlar Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan) which maximise retention of existing environmental features subject Habitats Directive.									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
BS-RCNH-P-5	Support and facilitate the reuse/development of historic railway corridors, require access/parking infrastructure at their start/end points, and protect mature trees along same.									
BS-RCNH-P-6	Facilitate proposals for additional parking facilities to cater for buses serving the Finn Valley Complex.									
BS-RCNH-P-7	Facilitation the future expansion of Ballybofey/Stranorlar Golf Club and/or St Joseph's community Hospital on Opp. Site 6									
BS-RCNH-P-8	Ensure that any development proposals on the Community Infrastructure Zoning adjoining Robertson National School are accompanied by a detailed site specific flood risk assessment, only provides for water compatible ancillary educational infrastructure and does not exacerbate flood risk elsewhere.									
BS-RCNH-P-X	Ensure that any future development to the west of St Joseph's Hospital provides adequate protections for the residential amenities of the hospital including detailed landscaping/planting proposals as necessary.									
BS-RCNH-P-X	Not to permit any development within a 10m safety buffer of the boundary of the Ballybofey/Stranorlar Golf Club.									
BS-OPP-P-1 (OPP Site 1)	Facilitate business/enterprise (including light engineering/manufacturing, logistics/warehousing, service-based enterprises) and multiple residential development proposals on Opp. Site 1 which accord with the Opp. Site. 1 indicative masterplan and : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> do not prejudice the delivery, strategic functionality road safety, and carrying capacity of the Section 1 TEN-T PRIPD link road, and any multimodal access enabling permeability across and to this Opp Site 1 shall be plan led via a single strategic access point onto said link road the location and design of which shall be subject located and designed in to the agreement of DCC; and in consultation with TII and also be accordance with the National Road Guidelines. facilitate in conjunction with the abovementioned a transport link between the TEN-T PRIPD link road and the Glenfinn Road, provides for a high quality active travel friendly design, protects adjoining residential amenities and retains existing environmental features where possible; and does not prejudice the achievement of BS-TC-O-1 to sustain and enhance the town centre's role as the retail, hospitality, tourism and cultural hub of the Finn Valley. 									
BS-OPP-P-2 (OPP Site 2)	Facilitate business/enterprise proposals (including light engineering/manufacturing, logistics/warehousing, service based enterprises) multiple residential development and education proposals on Opp Site 2 which provides for a developer led link between Donegal Road and Trusk Road, links to the undeveloped lands to the SW, protects adjoining residential amenities,									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
	retains existing environmental features where possible- and does not prejudice the achievement of TS-TC-O-1 to sustain and enhance the town centre's role as the retail, hospitality, tourism and cultural hub of the Finn Valley.									
BS-OPP-P-3 (Opp Site 3)	Facilitate the expansion of the adjacent golf course or hospital facilities on Opportunity Site 3 which provides access onto the Lifford Road via the access points on the land use zoning map and protects of the environmental and residential amenities of the adjoining uses									
BS-OPP-P-4 (Opp Site 4)	a) Facilitate the re-development of the existing mart site including multiple residential development or business/enterprise (including light engineering/manufacturing, logistics/warehousing, service-based enterprises but excluding bulky retail) on Opportunity Site 4. b) Ensure that any residential development on Opp Site 4 is setback at minimum of 100m from the Ballybofey/Stranorlar Wastewater Treatment Plant.									
BS-OPP-P-5 (Opp Site 5)	Facilitate proposals for multiple residential development, sports/recreational or community facilities on Opportunity Site 5.									
Land Use Zoning Map for Ballybofey/Stranorlar										
Chapter 18: Bundoran Area Plan										
BN-CZ-O-1	Protect and enhance the character, setting and natural heritage of the coastal zone in Bundoran,									
BN-CZ-P-1	Support the following development proposals within the High Amenity Area along the seafront: redevelopment of brownfield sites, development ancillary to existing uses that support the tourism product, Small-scale tourism, Public realm interventions, Community-based recreation, marinas, jetties, facilities for outdoor water-based activities and harbour facilities for maritime leisure developments.									
BN-CZ-P-2	Protect the coastal walkways in Bundoran as important tourism, recreation and amenity resources for the town.									
BN-CZ-P-3	Ensure that developments do not have a negative impact on the use of pier facilities by the Bundoran Lifeboat Station									
BN-CZ-P-4	Ensure that development/expansion of Golf course respects the landscape character and visual sensitivity of its coastal location and has due regard to the natural heritage									
BN-TC-O-1:	Strike appropriate balance between the contribution of the Main Street commercial sectors to the town's tourism offering with the need for the further enhancement of the streetscape and public realm									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
BN-REGEN-O-1	Seek the development and renewal of areas in need of regeneration, and in particular the Regeneration Areas identified on the land-use zoning map									
BD-EE-O-1	Diversify the local economic base in Bundoran to contribute towards year-round employment opportunities and increased service provision.									
BN-AT-O-1	Deliver the projects listed in the Transport/Sustainable Mobility Strategy for Bundoran.									
BN-AT-P-1	Require developments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide for suitable connectivity and permeability between adjoining land parcels. Have regard to indicative access routes in the land use zoning map, active transport sustainability projects, and reserve corridors for the required routes. 									
BN-AT-P-2	Require developments adjacent to Bradogue River retain a minimum 10m wide strip from the edge of the river bank to allow for the creation of an active travel route and amenity area.									
BD-H-P-1	Ensure development of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NR 1.1: employs SuDs/nature based solutions, considers flood risk, incorporates car and active travel connectivity from the Regional Road R280 towards the Drumacrin Road and to adjoining residential lands to the south and provides a footbridge to the town centre. NR 1.2: employs SuDs/nature based solutions, considers flood risk, incorporates car and active travel connectivity from the Regional Road R280 towards the Drumacrin Road and to adjoining residential lands. NR 1.3: employs SuDs/nature based solutions, considers flood risk, Incorporates car and active travel connectivity from the Regional Road R280 towards the Drumacrin Road and to adjoining residential lands. NR 1.4 employs SuDs/nature based solutions, Provides for additional public lighting. 									
BD-H-P-2	Ensures development of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NR 2.1: Provides vehicular access onto the R267 from western end of site, provides pedestrian/cycle access onto the R267 from the eastern end, employs SuDs/Nature based solutions, upgrades footpath/provides and additional public lighting on frontage. NR 2.2: employs SuDs/Nature based solutions, upgrades footpath/provides and additional public lighting on frontage. NR 2.3: employs SuDs/Nature based solutions, NR: 2.4 employs SuDs/Nature based solutions, 									

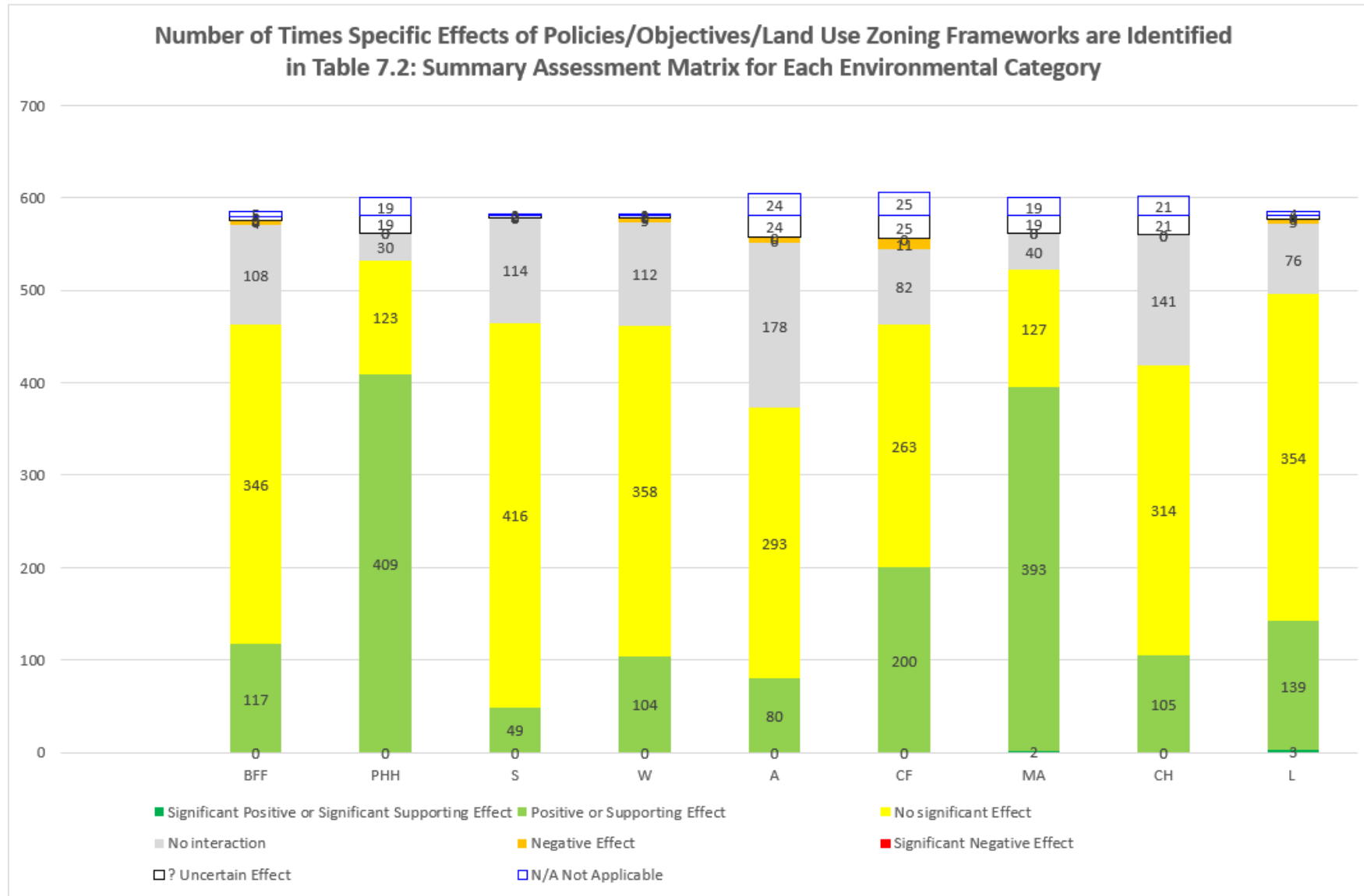
Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NR 2.5: Has due regard for the need for connectivity between the Drumacrin Road and the Town Centre area. 									
BN-OPP-P-1	Support: office development, light industry, medical related facilities/services, community and recreational use, provides for a high quality landmark development, require a detailed landscaping schemes on Opp. Site 1									
BN-OPP-P-2	Support: Office development, Light industry, Nursing home, Medical related facilities/services, Community and recreational use and Car showrooms, provides for a high quality landmark development, and require a detailed landscaping schemes on Opp. Site. 2									
BN-OPP-P-3	Supports, proposals to resolve unfinished housing development at northern end, Proposals that seek to resolve the unfinished housing development located at the northern end of the site, Office development, Light industry, Nursing home, Medical related facilities/services, Community and recreational use, Car showrooms re-use/refurbish the disused service station, provide for a high-quality landmark development and require a detailed landscaping schemes on Opp. Site. 2									
BN-CP-P-1	Preclude the development of new caravan parks within the urban core									
Land Use Zoning Map for Bundoran										
Part C: Settlement Frameworks										
Chapter 19: Settlement Frameworks										
All Settlement frameworks	Settlements and associated defined boundaries and zonings (where applicable).									
LIFF-OPP-1	It is a policy of the Council to only consider 'water compatible' development within flood zone A on the Opportunity Site at The Common, Lifford.									
SF-P-X:	To guide development of all settlement frameworks including Lifford, Raphoe, Bunbeg-Derrybeg and Milford in a sequential manner, outwards from the core area in order to maximise the utility of existing and future infrastructure provision, promote the achievement of sustainability, avoid 'leap-frogging' to more edge-of-centre and edge-of-town areas and to make better use of under-utilised land. This policy shall not apply to small-scale business enterprises (excluding retail development) of circa 1 to 5 employees.									

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L		
SF-P-X:	To facilitate the sustainable provision of a hotel and marina leisure tourism development at Fahan Marina and its environs. In general, standalone holiday homes will not be supported.	?										
SF-P-X	<p>Ensure that any development occurring within the area outlined in blue in the map below in Ramelton:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Preserves the special character and sense of place of the host Ramelton Architectural Conservation Area. b) Provides vehicular/footpath access solely via the R249 to the north and a separate additional active travel only linkage along the 'Green Lane' to the south as far as the existing footpath in Ramelton village. c) Does not materially harm/affect the character of RPS 4080014, provides for the sensitive heritage led regeneration of said structure, preserves the visual setting of said structure and provides a substantial setback and appropriate screening between it and any new development. 											
SF-P-xx:	<p>Within flood risk areas identified within settlement frameworks, only the following developments will be considered</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Areas of established development, including those parts of the Ballintra, Kilcar, Pettigo, Burtonport, Dunfanaghy and Glenties, and Rathmullan Regeneration Opportunities,</td> <td>New (currently undeveloped) area</td> </tr> </table>	Areas of established development, including those parts of the Ballintra, Kilcar, Pettigo, Burtonport, Dunfanaghy and Glenties, and Rathmullan Regeneration Opportunities,	New (currently undeveloped) area									
Areas of established development, including those parts of the Ballintra, Kilcar, Pettigo, Burtonport, Dunfanaghy and Glenties, and Rathmullan Regeneration Opportunities,	New (currently undeveloped) area											

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
	<p>Minor development only (eg. small extensions to houses, and most changes of use of existing buildings and or extensions and additions to existing commercial and industrial enterprises, unless they obstruct important flow paths, introduce a significant additional number of people into flood risk areas or entail the storage of hazardous substance); and</p> <p>Such applications shall be accompanied by a commensurate assessment of the risks of flooding to demonstrate that they would not have adverse impacts or impede access to a</p> <p>watercourse, floodplain or flood protection and management facilities. Such proposals shall nfollow best practice in the management of health and safety for users and residents of the proposal.</p>									
SF-P-XX	<p>It is a policy of the Council to consider proposals for development of site ref T1 that provide for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A small hydro facility at the existing dam on the River Bredagh; and 2. Ecotourism, including the provision of sustainable glamping and camping, compatible with the natural riverine habitat and cognisant of adjacent lands zoned for 'amenity' purposes. <p>Applications submitted for development of this site shall be accompanied by a flood risk assessment.</p>									
Total Effects of Plan										

Objective, Policy, or Land Use Zoning Ref.	Summary of Objective or Policy	BFF	PHH	S	W	A	CF	MA	CH	L
Total Effects of the plan (including all objectives, policies and zonings)		Orange	Green	Yellow	Orange	Orange	Orange	Green	Green	Orange

Figure 7.3 Summary of Overall Interactions between Objectives, Policies and Spatial Frameworks and Environmental Criteria



7.3 Overall Assessment of Likely Significant Effects on Key Environmental Aspects

7.3.1 Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

Impacts on Natura 2000 Sites.

Natura 2000 sites represent the most significant biodiversity assets related to the CDP. In this regard there are of 73 Natura 2000 sites (both terrestrial and marine) comprising 47 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and 26 Special Protection Areas (SPA) in Donegal. In particular 41 Annex I Habitats (including 9 priority habitats) and 17 Annex II species occur in Donegal. In addition, Donegal is hydrologically linked to a number of sites in Northern Ireland (e.g. River Foyle and Tributaries SAC, Lough Foyle SPA).

The assessment in Table 7.2 has found that a number of objectives and policies and zonings, if fully implemented would have a positive impact on biodiversity, flora within Natura 2000 sites including: for example:

- BIO-P-1: Requires all development to require with the requirements of the Habitats and the Bird Directive- and provides for the strict protection of animal and plant species listed in Annex IV of the EU Habitats Directive.
- WE-P-1 (and the associated Wind Energy Spatial Framework): Precludes such developments wholly within, and within a 500m buffer of, Natura 2000 sites.
- EX-P-1: Precludes extractive developments in Natura 2000 sites.
- RH-P-9: Requires the avoidance of adverse impacts from rural housing on Natura 2000 sites.
- ED-P-10 Requires economic development proposals to not have an adverse impact on Natura 2000 sites.

In accordance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive an Appropriate Assessment process was initiated. Stages 1 and 2 of the AA process have been completed. In relation to Stage 2 Assessment, a Natura Impact Report (NIR) comprising a professional scientific examination of the plan or project and the relevant Natura 2000 sites, to identify and characterize any possible implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives, taking account of in combination effects was prepared. The assessment was undertaken using experienced ecological expertise to identify any risks of significant adverse effects on European sites and general issues of concern for conservation in the County. A review of conservation objectives, qualifying interests and threats to site integrity for relevant European sites in the County and within the zone of influence of the CDP was undertaken to identify sites that might be impacted by policies/objectives in the Draft Plan.

The strategy of sequential outward development within the settlement layers and policies focussing development in town centres first before less central sites was considered and noted as avoiding pressures on receiving environments, in particular on European sites.

The Assessment noted the highly strategic nature of the Draft CDP and that it is not always possible to accurately determine likely potential impact on European sites. However, throughout the Draft CDP policies and objectives state that compliance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive is required, and in all instances where there is potential for development to have significant adverse effects on any European site it will be subject to Appropriate Assessment. There are also many objectives and policies within the Draft CDP that are proactive in promoting protection of European sites and of annexed species in the wider environment.

Cumulative and in-combination effects were considered in relation to other plans and programmes of relevance. Many of these latter programmes are used to guide the formulation of objectives and policy in

the Draft CDP. Many are themselves mutually complementary and supportive having been prepared as part of coordinated and structured planning systems and individually assessed in respect of Habitats Directive Appropriate Assessment.

Therefore, considering the policies and objectives of the Draft CDP and the specific mitigation measures included to prevent impact, it was found that no direct, indirect or cumulative significant effects on European sites were likely. The Appropriate Assessment Report and Natura Impact Report concludes a Finding of no adverse effects on site integrity on European sites following the completion of Stage 2 of the process.

Impacts on Other Designated Biodiversity Sites and Protected species.

Donegal also contains a range of other designated Biodiversity Sites (e.g. Ramsar Sites, Nature Reserves, Natural Heritage and Proposed Natural Heritage Area). In addition, 22 animal species and 86 species of flora are protected under the Wildlife Act by ministerial order. Under BIO-P-2 of the plan it is a policy to *Ensure that all developments seek to conserve/protect the qualifying interests of Ramsar Sites, Nature Reserves, Natural Heritage Areas (NHA), proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA), the Cró na mBroanáin Red Grouse Sanctuary and any species protected under the Wildlife Act ~~save to the extent necessary to provide for the strategic infrastructure projects including the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal.~~* In addition, none of said sites have been zoned for urban development under any settlement framework or Area Plan contained within the CDP. Furthermore, it is specifically noted that the Wind Energy Policy Framework Map identifies said designated sites, and a significant portion of the areas identified on the National Biodiversity Data Centre as having the highest concentration of Bat Species as 'Not Normally Permissible' for such development. Finally, notwithstanding said exemption regarding Strategic Development no such development is currently proposed in the vicinity of said sites. On the basis of the above it is therefore considered that the CDP will not result in any significant direct loss or fragmentation of habitats or species loss associated within said biodiversity sites or protected species.

Impact on Biodiversity in the Wider Environment.

A significant portion of Donegal's biodiversity is contained within the wider environment outside said designated nature protection sites particularly in the rural environment and in aquatic environments. The plan provides for a range of development which may have temporary, short-term, medium-term and long term effects on such biodiversity including rural housing, agricultural developments, commercial developments connected to individual wastewater treatment systems, extractive industries and renewable energy developments (e.g. wind farms). Such impacts may include direct loss of habitats and species as a result of site clearance (e.g. rural housing, commercial developments in rural areas), fragmentation of habitats arising from dispersed development, disturbance to species as a result of noise impacts during the construction or operational phases of developments (e.g. construction machinery, traffic noise), water pollution and associated impacts on aquatic ecosystems arising from construction related sedimentation or inadequate wastewater treatment arising from both urban and rural development.

Section 3.1.8 of this report has outlined the significant declines which have been experienced in bird, flora and bee species in the wider environment. Furthermore Section 3.4 evidence that 55.7% of monitored river bodies, 20.7% of lake water bodies, and 20.5% of transitional and coastal waterbodies have a less than good WFD water quality status. Overall, this demonstrates the vulnerable state of biodiversity receptors in the wider environment.

Table 7.2 provides a strategic assessment of the impact of various individual objective and policies on the SEO related to Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna. This assessment takes into account the normal mitigation measures which would be employed in respect of particular forms of development (e.g. implementation of biodiversity protection policies and environmentally friendly construction management techniques).

Individually, and if fully implemented, a number of policies are likely to have a **positive effect** on biodiversity outside designated sites (including within aquatic ecosystems) including for example:

- CA-P-X: Integrate green infrastructure into new developments.
- BIO-O-X: Have regard to the objectives of the National Biodiversity Action Plan and National Peatlands Strategy.
- BIO-P-3: Requiring that developments, ~~where justified~~, protect or otherwise maximise the retention of features of local biodiversity value, provide biodiversity enhancement measures, and larger developments result in no net biodiversity loss.
- BIO-P-X: Avoiding adverse levels of light pollution in Donegal.
- S-O-1: To protect, enhance and appropriate harness the unique quality and diversity of the environment in the county.
- RH-P-1: Limiting one-off rural housing in Areas under Strong Urban influence to specific applicants.
- RH-P-2: Limiting one-off rural housing in Areas under Strong Holiday Home influence to specific applicants.
- WW-P-1: Facilitating the provision of new, or the upgrading of existing wastewater infrastructure.
- WW-P-2: Ensure development do have an adverse impact on water quality and Aquatic ecosystems.
- WW-P-4: Requiring adequate wastewater treatment capacity and network availability for developments connecting to public sewerage network.
- WW-P-5: In areas with no/inadequate wastewater infrastructure requiring developments with a PE>10 to comply the EPA's Treatment systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels
- WW-P-6: Requiring single dwellings to comply with the EPA's *Code of Practice for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (PE. ≤10)* (EPA 2021)
- WE-P-9: Specific biodiversity related requirements for wind energy developments.

Individually a significant number of objectives and policies within the plan are recorded as having a **no significant effect** on biodiversity. In this regard many of the policies are related to more urban forms of development or contain specific biodiversity safeguards which if implemented should mitigate significant impacts on biodiversity.

Individually, and if fully implemented, a number of policies are likely to have a **negative impact** on biodiversity including:

- S-O-1: Plan for population growth to 183,500 by 2031 (as this is in turn likely to result in significant development both in urban and rural areas which in turn inevitably have negative effects on Biodiversity).
- S-O-3: Support growth through an all of County Strategy.
- RH-P-3: Consider proposals for new one-off housing within structurally weak rural areas from any prospective applicants with a demonstrated rural need for a dwelling house.

Intra Plan Cumulative Effects and Conclusion

The assessment of likely significant effect should also take into account intra plan cumulative effects. In this regard whilst individual objectives, policies or land use zonings may not in of themselves have a significant effect on biodiversity they are cumulatively likely to have some temporary, short-term, medium term and long-term effects on biodiversity (e.g. removal of hedgerows/trees to facilitate rural housing or economic development, sedimentation of surface water run-off etc, disturbance to wildlife arising from noise impacts during construction or operational phases of development). In this regard the plan provides for approximately 1920 residential units in the open countryside.

Consequently, notwithstanding the fact that the plan adequately protects designated biodiversity sites it is likely that collectively these small scale individual impacts on biodiversity are likely to collectively result in a significant negative additive cumulative effect on biodiversity. Therefore, notwithstanding the likely significant effects of individual policies it is assessed that the **total effects on biodiversity, flora and fauna** SEO will be **negative** overall.

7.3.2 Population and Human Health

Overall, the policies, objectives and zonings of the plan will have a **positive effect** on/support **sustaining and growing Donegal Population**. In this regard the plan contains a number of objectives, policies and land use zonings, in relation to overall strategic development, core strategy, economic, retail, transport, wastewater, power, telecoms, **tourism**, education/community development, which are likely to attract inward investment, encourage economic growth, generate employment, maintain/improve essential community services and in turn sustain and growth the existing population and encourage in-migration. For example, and in summary:

- S-O-1: Plan for Population growth in 183,5000 by 2031 in line with the NPF.
- S-O-2: Assert Donegal as having a key role in the NWRA including realising the potential of the North West City Region and the Atlantic Economic Corridor.
- S-O-7: To progress and ultimately carry out/implement the TEN-T PRIPD as one of critical strategic importance.
- **S-O-X: Retain, promote and drive Donegal's position as a premier domestic and international tourism destination.**
- Core Strategy: Target Provision of 7678 housing units in Donegal
- CS-O-1: Support the growth of Letterkenny as the key driver of population and economic growth.
- CS-O-2: Support the growth of a network of 'County Growth Drivers' and 'Service Towns'.
- CS-O-7: Support economic growth throughout the county
- Rural Housing: Significant scope for new rural housing development in rural areas.
- Significant Land use Zonings (including zonings over and above Core Strategy allocation) facilitating housing development in Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Bundoran.
- ED-O-2: Support economic development proposals in smaller towns and villages.
- ED-O-9: facilitate the activation of economically important lands through CPO or other means including public private partnerships.
- ED-O-14 facilitate and support the future development of the ATU campuses in Letterkenny and Killybegs,
- ED-O-17: Support the strategic importance of Killybegs as a primary commercial fishing port, and as a hub for the development of the renewable energy sector.
- ED-P-9: Support Gaeltacht-based economic opportunities on lands within the ownership of, or supported by, Údarás na Gaeltachta
- T-O-7: Secure the provision of a rail link between: (i.) Letterkenny and Derry; and (ii.) Letterkenny and Sligo.
- T-P-10: Support and facilitate the development, extension and improvement of the TEN-T network including the TEN-T PRIPD.
- WW-P-1: Support the facilitate the provision new, and the upgrading of existing, water and wastewater infrastructure.
- TC-O-1: Facilitate a sustainable telecommunications network across the County including the National Broadband plan.
- PED-O-1: secure the upgrade of the electricity distribution network serving the County to a minimum 220kv distribution network and a strategic gas supply
- CC-P-1: Support the provision of new social and community infrastructure/service related developments.
- Business/Enterprise and Opportunity sites facilitating economic development in Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Bundoran
- Significant greenfield and brownfield development opportunities for housing and business/enterprise related purposes in other settlements.

Some objectives and policies are either unrelated to, or would have an insignificant effect on sustainable and growing Donegal's populations (e.g. design policies or other technical requirements). Otherwise no

objectives, policies or zonings were identified as having a negative effect vis-à-vis sustaining or growing Donegal's population.

In terms of **Human Health**, the plan contains a number of objectives policies and zonings which would, encourage regeneration and positive placemaking (and thus enhance overall quality of life) provide adequate housing options including **traveller**, social and affordable, protect residential amenities, encourages social inclusivity, facilitate compact growth and provide new safe active travel infrastructure, upgrade wastewater infrastructure/ensure adequate effluent treatment, , protect new and existing properties from flood risk, provide new green/recreational, sporting and healthcare amenities, which would in turn have a positive medium-term and long-term effect on/support human health. For example, and in summary:

- **CA-P-X: Integrate green infrastructure into developments.**
- TV-O-1: Identify appropriate regeneration and renewal initiatives in Layer 3 rural towns/areas
- TV-O-2: Support initiatives to strengthen and improve the physical environment of towns and villages and encourage positive place-making.
- **TV-P-X: Protect and enhance the unique physical character of historic town and village centres.**
- UB-O-2: Deliver serviced sites for housing within towns and villages.
- **UB-O-X: Provide accommodation for travellers.**
- UB-P-1: Multiple housing development will generally be acceptable in towns/identified settlements subject to quality placemaking, compact growth and sequential development and wastewater treatment capacity.
- UB-P-3: Require that 20% of land: zoned for residential use, residential and other use, where housing is permitted, is reserved for the provision of social and affordable housing.
- UB-P-6: Support new residential development that will result in regeneration and/or renewal of town centre areas or areas of vacancy and/or dereliction.
- UB-P-9: Protect residential amenity of existing residential units and promote housing design and establishes a reasonable level of urban residential amenity.
- UB-P-12: Public Amenity Space requirements for Multiple Residential Development: Greenfield 15%, Infill/Brownfield 10%, and private or institutional buildings in open lands 20%.
- UB-P-11: Require multiple housing development of 7 or more units to contain a minimum of 30% units built to universal design standards.
- **UB-P-X: Consider proposals for urban residential development to resolve unfinished residential development.**
- ED-P-1: Direct office and light industrial developments to town centre sites, edge of centres locations, or appropriately zoned lands in Letterkenny, Growth Driver Settlements and Service Towns.
- ED-P-10: Require economic development to be not harmful to residential amenities.
- T-O-1: Promote sustainable development and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas
- T-P-1: Integrate land use and transportation considerations to optimise the availability and use of sustainable transport modes.
- T-O-2: Secure the development of strategic, coherent and high-quality walking and cycling networks.
- T-O-4: Provide safer routes to schools and promote walking and cycling as safe and suitable modes of transport.
- T-O-5: Retrospectively provide safe segregated walking and cycling infrastructure, in settlements.
- T-P-3: Consider all developments against the objectives of providing safe and effective active travel linkages and public transport facilities.
- WW-P-1 to 5: Support new, upgrading of, existing, water and wastewater infrastructure, ensuring developments do have an adverse impact on water quality, requiring confirmation of adequate wastewater treatment capacity for developments connecting to public wastewater network, and other requiring compliance with EPA Codes of Practices for individual wastewater treatment systems.
- F-O-1: Ensure that development does not give rise to unacceptable new flood risks, or does not exacerbate existing flood risk.
- E-O-5: ensure that wind energy developments do not adversely impact upon the existing residential amenities of residential properties, and other centres of human habitation.

- WE-P-3: Ensure that Wind energy proposals have regard to... local environmental impacts, including those on residential properties, such as noise, shadow flicker and over-dominance.
- EX-O-1: Facilitate extractive industries subject to the protection of residential Amenities.
- [BIO-P-X: Avoid adverse levels of light pollution.](#)
- CC-P-6: Ensure that the siting, layout, and design of community development proposals facilitate and promote active travel modes.
- CC-P-9: Ensure that the needs of older and disabled persons are integrated into the provision of public transport services and associated physical infrastructure.
- [BC-AT-O-X: Prepare a detailed Local Transport Plan for Buncrana.](#)
- The zonings/facilitation of adequate housing lands, the protection of environmental amenities and the provision of new active travel recreational amenities in Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Bundoran and other settlements.

Otherwise, no objectives, policies and zonings were identified as having a negative effect on human health. In relation to intra plan cumulative effect on Population and Human Health it is noted that whilst certain environmental protection policies may limit housing and economic development at certain locations/instances. However, the plan otherwise provides adequate zoning for new housing and economic development in serviced urban locations which will positively support population growth. In addition, the plan's policies and objectives supports social inclusion by: supporting compact growth and thus facilitating access to local services and community facilities by socially disadvantages and requiring multiple housing developments of 7 or more units to contain 30% of residential units built to a universal design standard (UB-P-11 refers).

Consequently, on the basis of the wide ranging positive effects of the plan on population and human health detailed above and the absence of any identified significant negative effects on same It is considered that the **total effects** of the plan on the **Population and Human Health SEO** will be **positive overall**.

7.3.3 Soils and Geology

Section 3.3 details the soil types which exist in County Donegal. The CDP 2018-2024 provides for a wider range of development (e.g. housing, economic, retail, transport, wind energy, extractive, tourism etc) on greenfield sites at both urban and rural locations which is likely to impact on soils and soil functionality in a variety of ways including:

- Disturbance and depletion of the overall soil resource arising from construction activities.
- Loss of key soil functionality including food production (through the loss of agricultural lands), as well as habitats, flood attenuation, nutrient cycling, water purification, and carbon sequestration arising from the overbuilding of soils.
- Soil contamination arising from sewage pollution associated with development in unsewered areas of Letterkenny.

The exact severity of these effects may depend on the specific nature of the development (e.g. the overall amount of excavation required, the amount of hard surface area provided) and the susceptibility of the soil to erosion/mass movement either during construction or a result of post construction surface water runoff. However, the loss of agricultural land for food production is likely to be negative, permanent and in practice irreversible. In addition, where overbuilding occurs as a result of new development the resultant impacts on habitats, flood attention, habitats, flood attenuation, nutrient cycling, water purification, and carbon sequestration are also likely to be negative, permanent and irreversible.

Notwithstanding these impacts, on the basis that:

- The overall amount of land zoned for new greenfield development (e.g. primarily residential, general employment, opportunity site or strategic road development) is a small fraction of overall amount of the soil types occurring both in Donegal and in Ireland generally.
- The abovementioned soils types do not have any statutory protection and there are no specific environmental thresholds sets down at either a European or a National level for the protection of soils.
- Area identified at being at risk from high landscape susceptibility on GSI's landslide susceptibility map viewer have been excluded from the Open to Consideration Zoning within the Wind Energy Policy Framework.
- The fact that the Environmental Report for the Variation to the County Development Plan in respect of the TEN-T PRIPD concluded that whilst said project could give rise to short term construction phase negative effects on the SEO related to the quality of soils, said effects could be mitigated to an acceptable level through an avoidance and mitigation strategy including project level mitigation measures (e.g. construction management plans and techniques).
- A number of plan provisions, objectives and policies were identified as having a positive effect on soils including, in summary.
 - Overall focus on compact, brownfield and infill development rather than expansive greenfield development within Local Areas Plans and Settlement Frameworks.
 - RH-P-1: Limiting one-off rural housing in Areas under Strong Urban influence to specific applicants.
 - RH-P-2: Limiting one-off rural housing in Areas under Strong Holiday Home influence to specific applicants
 - RH-P-11: Requiring rural housing development to assimilate with receiving landscape, blend in with the landform, trees and vegetation, building, slopes, or other natural features
 - ED-O-10: To encourage enterprise and employment developments to locate in brownfield sites.
 - WW-P-1 to 10: Wastewater/Effluent Treatment Policies.
 - WE-P-10: Ensure wind energy proposals are..... accompanied by a peat stability assessment.
 - F-P-2: Requiring the use of SuDs for urban development proposals.
 - BD-H-P-1 to 2: Requiring the use of SuDs in New Residential Phase 1 and 2 housing sites in Bundoran.

It is considered that the abovementioned effects on soil would be not significant, either in respect of individual objectives, policies or zonings or more widely for the plan overall. Consequently, it is considered that the **overall** the plan will have **no significant effect on Soils**.

As detailed in Section 3.3 Donegal contains a rich range of geological assets ranging from Precambrian Dalradian Gneiss, Schists, quartzite (700 Ma approx.), granite (approximately 405 Ma approx.), Devonian sandstones, and carboniferous sandstones and limestones (approximately 350 Ma approx.). In addition, It is also noted that a Donegal contains a significant number of County Geological Sites in a variety of both coastal and terrestrial locations.

The plan provides for a wide range of development which may impact geology principally on greenfield sites, including housing both urban and rural, economic, retail, transport, extractive, renewable, etc. Such impacts principally include the breakup and removal the underlying geology to extract rock, accommodate buildings, roads or otherwise alter site levels.

However, on the basis that:

- The overall amount of development provided by the plan within either urban or rural location area represents a small fraction of the abovementioned rock formations in Donegal.
- The abovementioned rock types do not have any statutory protection and there are no specific environmental thresholds sets down at either a European or a National level for the protection of geology.

- Policy G-P-1 specifically provides for the protection of County Geological Sites.
 - No objectives or policies were identified as having a negative effect on geology
- It is considered that overall the plan will have an insignificant effect on geology overall.

In conclusion it is considered that the **total effects** of the plan on the **soils and geology SEO** will be **not significant overall**.

7.3.4 Water

The CDP 2024-2030 will facilitate a wide range of new development which may result in impacts on water quality including: short-term, medium-term and long-term effects arising from one off urban and rural housing reliant on individual Wastewater Treatment Systems (WWTS), commercial developments in urban areas with inadequate wastewater treatment/network capacity reliant on individual WWTS, agricultural developments, extractive developments, and short-term construction related effects in both urban and rural areas likely to give rise to risks of contaminated/surface water runoff during construction. In this regard the data on catchments.ie indicates that Urban Wastewater and Domestic Wastewater are significant pressures in 16 'At Risk' Water Framework Directive (WFD) waterbodies in Donegal, extractive industry in a significant pressure in 14 such water bodies, whilst urban runoff is a significant pressure in 11 such water bodies.

The Surface Water Quality data detailed in Section 3.4.4 indicates that data indicates that 55.7% of monitored river bodies, 20.7% of lake water bodies, and 20.5% of Transitional and Coastal water bodies have a less than good WFD Water Quality status. In this regard Under the WFD Member states are required to achieve at least good status in all waters and must ensure that status does not deteriorate. Section 3.4 also indicates that 29 settlements in Donegal have no spare Wastewater Treatment Capacity either as a result of an overloaded or the absence of a municipal wastewater treatment plant.

Furthermore, consultation with the Environment Section of Donegal County Council indicates that there are significant compliance issues with commercial wastewater discharge licences for individual wastewater discharge licences. In addition, the EPA Report on Domestic Wastewater Treatment System Inspections 2021 found that 36% of the 121 systems inspected in Donegal failed said inspections.

It is assessed that the following objectives and policies in the plan will have a **positive effect** on water quality, including and in summary:

- S-O-6: To protect, enhance and appropriate harness the unique quality and diversity of the environment in the county.
- CS-O-4: Seek alignment of infrastructure investment with growth priorities.
- CS-P-3: Support and facilitate the provision of additional Wastewater Treatment Capacity and Water supply upgrades public realm improvements, civic, cultural, green amenity and recreational infrastructure, vacancy and dereliction initiatives.
- TV-O-3: Seek innovation in addressing infrastructural constraints in the County's 'Strategic Towns'
- UB-P-1: Multiple housing development will generally be acceptable in towns/identified settlements subject towastewater treatment capacity.
- ED-P-10: Require that economic development is serviceable by existing programmed or developer led infrastructure.
- WW-O-1: Maintain, improve and enhance the quality of surface and ground waters in accordance with the Water Framework Directive (WFD), RBMP 2022-2024 and Surface and Ground Water Regulations.
- WW-O-2: Provide an adequate system of wastewater treatment in settlements in line with the Core Strategy
- WW-P-1: Facilitating the provision of new, or the upgrading of existing wastewater infrastructure.

- WW-P-2: Ensure development do have an adverse impact on water quality and Aquatic ecosystems.
- WW-P-4: Requiring adequate wastewater treatment capacity and network availability for developments connecting to public sewerage network.
- WW-P-5: In areas with no/inadequate wastewater infrastructure requiring developments with a PE>10 to comply the EPA's Treatment systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels
- WW-P-6: Requiring single dwellings to comply with the EPA's *Code of Practice for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (PE. ≤10)* (EPA 2021).
- WW-P-7: Support Irish Water Initiatives for new wastewater collection and treatment through Measure A8 of the Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme and sustainable long-term solutions for legacy developer-provided water services Infrastructure.
- WW-P-8 Consider proposals for community-based group wastewater/sewage schemes for extension of public WW treatment infrastructure or standalone wastewater collection and treatment
- WW-P-9: Not permit developments proposing to provide effluent treatment by means of connection to communal treatment system or proposals for such new treatment systems.
- F-P-2: Require the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) for urban development proposals.
- WE-P-3: Ensure that Wind energy proposals shall have regard to the protection of drinking water sources and shall be accompanied by a Peat Stability Risk Assessment Report.
- EX-O-1: facilitate extractive industries subject tothe prevention of pollution, and the safeguarding of aquifers and groundwater.
- MRCM-O-2: safeguard and enhance the health of Donegal's marine and coastal ecosystems and sustainably manage our coastal environment.
- BD-H-P-1 to 2: Requiring the use of SuDs in New Residential Phase 1 and 2 housing sites in Bundoran.

It is assessed that the following objectives and policies in the plan will have a negative effect on water quality, including and in summary:

- S-O-1: Plan for population growth to 183,5000 in line with the NPF and a further uplift of 200,000 by 2040.
- Core Strategy Allocation of approximately 1534 residential units in the Open Countryside.
- CS-O-7: Support economic growth throughout the county
- RH-P-3: consider proposals for new one-off housing within structurally weak rural areas from any prospective applicants with a demonstrated rural need for a dwelling house.

In this regard it is noted that overall quantum of development facilitated by the plan including one-off housing and commercial development is likely to result in negative effects on water quality as a result of both temporary construction related effects impacts and short-term, medium-term and long-term effects arising from reliance on individual WWTSS.

In relation to intra plan cumulative effects certain individual policies may individually have an insignificant effect on water quality (e.g. policies providing for economic developments in rural areas such as ED-P-5 support home based business of limited scale within curtilage of a dwelling house, ED-P-6 Support ICT based micro enterprises, business providing professional services to the local community in unsewered rural area, and rural housing in areas under strong urban and holiday home pressure). However, it is possible that the overall quantum of development provided by such policies may cumulatively impact on water quality due to long term reliance of such developments on individual WWTSS and the abovementioned ongoing problems with the satisfactory maintenance of such systems.

Consequently, on balance on the basis of:

- The fact: that 55.7% of monitored river bodies, 20.7% of lake water bodies, and 20.5% of Transitional and Coastal water bodies in Donegal have a less than good WFD Water Quality status, there are a very significant number of WFD 'At Risk' waterbodies in the County and development

related pressures such as urban waste water, domestic wastewater, extractive and urban run have all been identified as significant pressure affecting 'At Risk' water bodies.

- The cumulative extent of rural housing likely to be permitted during the lifetime of the plan the which will be permanently reliant on individual wastewater treatment system and the high failure rate of septic tanks systems in the county [notwithstanding certain restrictions in rural housing policies](#). In this regard the Core Strategy for the CDP 2024 allocates approximately 1920 residential units in the Open Countryside.
- The cumulative extent of commercial development in both urban and rural areas which is likely to be reliant in individual wastewater treatment systems and the abovementioned difficulties with ensuring the such systems are satisfactorily operated/maintained.
- The overall cumulative extent of development provided by the plan (e.g. 7678 residential units, a population growth of 183,5000 in line with the NPF) and the associated likelihood of Short term construction related effects on water quality may arise to due to sedimentation of surface water during ground works or surface water contamination due to spillage of hydrocarbons/cements arising from poor construction management practices.
- The fact that that 29 settlements in Donegal have no spare Wastewater Treatment Capacity either as a result of an overloaded or the absence of a municipal wastewater treatment plant and the consequent reliance on individual wastewater treatment systems in said settlements.

It is considered that the **total effects of the plan on the water SEO will be negative overall.**

7.3.5 Air

The CDP 2024-2030 will facilitate a wide range and significant quantum of new development including 7678 housing units, retail, business/enterprise, light industrial, extractive etc. and supports a significant growth ambition of expanding Donegal's population to grow Donegal's population to 183,500 people by 2031 in line with the NPF. In turn this development has the [potential](#) to generate additional air pollution including transport related NOx emissions arising from additional private vehicular and commercial traffic arising from the overall population economic growth facilitated by the plan and PM2.5 arising from the burning of fossil fuels from home heating.

The air quality monitoring data outlined in section 3.5 indicates that whilst air quality is generally good in Donegal, in 2021 the Letterkenny air quality monitoring station recorded:

- 64 exceedances of the new tougher WHO Air Quality Guidelines Daily (24hr) Mean of 15µg/m³ for PM_{2.5} most prevalent in the winter months.
- An average annual PM_{2.5} level of 11.25 which significantly exceeded the new tougher WHO Air Quality Guidelines Annual Mean of 5µg/m³ but did not exceed the CAFE Limit Value Annual mean of 25µg/m³
- 10 exceedances of the new tougher WHO Air Quality Guidelines Daily (24hr) Mean of 45µg/m³ for PM₁₀ most prevalent in the winter months.
- An average annual PM₁₀ level of 14.68 which was marginally below the new tougher WHO Air Quality Guidelines Annual Mean of 15µg/m³ but did not exceed the CAFE Limit Value Annual mean of 40µg/m³
- 12 exceedances of the new tougher WHO Air Quality Guidelines Daily (24hr) Mean of 40µg/m³ for SO₂ which were most prevalent in the winter months.

This data, EPA Air Quality Reports and consultation with the DCC Environment section, strongly indicates that PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀ and SO₂ pollution in Letterkenny is strongly linked to the burning of fossil fuels for home heating particularly during periods of colder weather and there may be compliance issues with the implementation of the smokeless fuel ban. Whilst it is noted that air quality data is only available for Letterkenny it is logical to assume that PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀ and SO₂ air pollution also occurs in other urban areas of Donegal where solid fuel is burned for home heating.

It is noted that Part L of the Building Regulations now requires new residential and commercial buildings to achieve a Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) Standard including limiting the energy consumption and

CO₂ emissions to nearly zero, providing that any energy requirements are covered to a very significant extent by energy from renewable sources, and that heat loss is limited through the fabric of the buildings. It is therefore likely that heating requirements for new dwellings will be significantly reduced and importantly these requirements will not be met by the burning of solid fuels. Consequently, new residential or commercial development facilitated by the plan is unlikely to result in significant additional PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀ and SO₂ emissions.

A number of objectives, policies, and land use zoning provisions are likely to have a **positive effect** on the Air Quality in Donegal including, and in summary:

- The facilitation of a compact growth model by providing New Residential, Business Enterprise and Opportunity Sites within walking distances of local employment, retail and community services.
- The facilitation of new active travel infrastructure within the transport/sustainable mobility strategies of the Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Bundoran Area Plans.
- CS-P-1: Assess developments in light of regional and national guidance.
- CS-P-2: Guide development of town in a sequential manner outwards to maximise utility infrastructure promote sustainability, avoid leap frogging.
- CA-O-1: promote sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas including measures to reduce energy demand and reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions.
- UB-P-1: Multiple housing development will generally be acceptable in towns/identified settlements subject to ... compact growth and sequential development...
- ED-O-10: Encourage enterprise and employment developments to locate in brownfield sites or unoccupied buildings in town centres.
- ED-P-1: Direct office and light industrial developments to town centre sites, edge of centres locations, or appropriately zoned lands in Letterkenny, Growth Driver Settlements and Service Towns.
- ED-P-10: Require economic development uses to:.... It is capable of dealing satisfactorily with any emission(s);
- T-O-1: Promote sustainable development and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas including measures to reduce energy demand, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change.
- T-P-1: Integrate land use and transportation considerations to optimise the availability and use of sustainable transport modes.
- T-O-2: Secure the development of strategic, coherent and high-quality walking and cycling networks that are integrated with public transport, connected with destinations.
- T-O-3: Protect and acquire the lands necessary for, the sustainable transportation improvement projects.
- T-O-4: Provide safer routes to schools and promote walking and cycling as safe and suitable modes of transport.
- T-O-5: Retrospectively provide safe segregated walking and cycling infrastructure in and into settlements.
- T-P-3: Consider all developments against the objectives of providing safe and effective active travel linkages and public transport facilities and to require the provision of such facilities and require the protection of potential linkages and the design and layout of large development to provide for internal pedestrian and vehicular movements.
- T-O-6: Support and facilitate the provision of new and expansion of existing public transport services and infrastructure and renewable energy for the transport fleet.
- T-O-7: secure the provision of a rail link between: (i.) Letterkenny and Derry; and (ii.) Letterkenny and Sligo.
- T-P-4: Collaborate with the NTA in the preparation and implementation of the Connecting Ireland Programme.
- T-O-8: Develop a centrally-located transport hub in Letterkenny and a dedicated bus corridor between the hub and the eastern edge of the town.
- T-P-5: Facilitate off street charging facilities and only facilitate on street where there are no alternatives.

- T-P-9; Support and facilitate the development of public, semi-public and community transport projects and proposals which provide innovative solutions in rural, disadvantaged and border areas
- EX-P-2: Only support extractive industry developments where they identify relevant robust and effective environmental impact mitigation measures.
- E-P-X: Support utility scale solar installations.
- E-P-X: Support proposals for energy storage systems.
- GEN-T-P-1: Implement actions in Area Plan Transport/Sustainable Mobility strategies and during the lifetime of the LAPs.
- GEN-T-P-3: Require new developments to be sited and designed in a manner which prioritises, and provides safe, direct, and attractive access for pedestrians and cyclists.
- GEN-T-P-4: Facilitate the re-allocation of existing road space to provide enhanced, pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.
- GEN-T-P-5: Facilitate local public transport services and associated infrastructure.
- GEN-T-P-6: Facilitate electric vehicle charging points at publicly off-street locations.
- BC-AT-P-1: require that development proposals: a) provide for suitable connectivity and permeability, b) Have regard to indicative access routes identified in the land use zoning map, to active transport/sustainable mobility projects, and reserve corridors for the required routes.
- BC-H-P-1: Require walking and cycling connectivity/permeability links for specific residential sites in Buncrana.
- BC-AT-O-X: Prepare a detailed local transport plan for Buncrana.
- BS-H-P-2: Require walking and cycling connectivity/permeability links for specific residential sites in Ballybofey/Stranorlar.
- BS-T-0-2: Deliver the projects in the Ballybofey/Stranorlar Transport/Sustainable Strategy.
- BN-AT-O-1: Deliver the projects listed in the Transport/Sustainable Mobility Strategy for Bundoran.
- BN-AT-P-1: Require provision for suitable connectivity and permeability between adjoining land parcels and have regard to indicative access routes in the land use zoning map, active transport sustainability projects, and reserve corridors for the required routes.
- BD-H-P-1 and 2: Require active travel connectivity in specific sites in housing sites in Bundoran.

A number of objectives, policies, and land use zoning provisions are likely to have a negative effect on the Air Quality in Donegal including, and in summary:

- S-O-1: Plan for population growth to 183,5000 by 2031 in line with the NPF:
- Core Strategy Allocation of approximately 1920 residential units in the Open Countryside.
- RH-P-3: consider proposals for new one-off housing within structurally weak rural areas from any prospective applicants with a demonstrated rural need for a dwelling house,
- ED-P-5: Support a home-based business of limited scale (circa 1-5 employees), located within the curtilage of an existing dwelling house;
- ED-P-7: Consider proposals for the expansion or re-development of an existing economic development in the countryside.
- ED-P-8: Facilitates exceptional proposals for major industry/enterprise in the countryside.

In this regard strategic objective S-O-1 and the related provisions of the Core Strategy will facilitate significant population and economic growth and associated travel demand which will be predominately met by private vehicular transport notwithstanding the active/sustainable transport provisions of the plan, and thus generate additional transport related emission (e.g. NO_x). Policy RH-P-3 will generate a significant quantum of dispersed/car dependent rural housing development, generate additional travel demand (to access employment, retail and other essential services) which will overwhelmingly be met by private vehicular transport and also result in such transport related air emissions. Furthermore, Policies ED-P-3, 5 and 7 will result in dispersed/car dependent economic/commercial development generate additional travel demand by employees, deliveries and customers and associated transport related air emissions.

Conclusion:

As outlined above the plan is not likely to result in significant additional built environment related PM_{2.5}/PM₁₀ and SO₂ air pollution as a result of burning of fossil fuels for home heating and will generally provide a spatial and policy framework which will facilitate and encourage sustainable/active transport. However, on the basis of:

- The significant growth in populations and development that will be facilitated by the plan and the associated growth in travel demand (e.g. population growth of 183,5000 by 2031 in line with the NPF).
- The **overall** significant amount of dispersed/car dependent residential and economic development enabled by the plan (e.g. approximately 1920 residential units in the open countryside) and the fact that said development will predominately be serviced by private vehicular transport.
- The stricter 2021 WHO air quality guidelines (e.g. NO_x annual 10 µg/m³, 24 hour 25 µg/m³).

It is considered likely that the plan will result in a net growth of transport related air pollution emissions overall. Consequently, on the basis of the above assessment it can therefore be concluded that the **total effects** of the plan on the **SEO related to Air** will be **negative overall**.

7.3.6 Climatic Factors

Potential Effects of the CDP 2024 on Climate Factors

In line with both the NPF and the RSES the CDP will facilitate overall growth and a range of development including population growth to 183,5000 by 2031 in line with the NPF, 7678 residential units in accordance with the Core Strategy including approximately 1920 units in the open Countryside, new business enterprise development, agricultural, strategic transport, community, and tourism development. It is considered that such development has potential to create additional GHG emissions over and above Donegal's current GHG emissions profile including:

- Construction related emissions arising from the production of building materials and operation of construction machinery. For example the survey *Operational and Embodied Carbon in New build Housing* NSBC Foundation found that a 103m² detached housing had an embodied total Carbon of 92.3 tCO_{2Eq}.
- Transport related emissions arising from both overall population growth and associated increase in travel demand and car dependent dispersed rural development. In this regard census 2016 found that the approximately 73% of people in Donegal commuted to work/school by Car or Van, the SEAI estimated that the average new car had a carbon intensity of 110gCO₂/km in 2020 and that the total distance travelled by cars in Ireland is 11% higher than the Celtic Tiger Peak and 51% higher than in 2000³⁵.
- Energy related emissions arising from additional heating and electricity demands resulting from the additional development and associated population growth. For example the SEAI estimates that in 2021 the average home in Ireland emitted 5.6 tCO_{2Eq} (69% from direct fuel use and 31% from electricity use).
- Agricultural related emissions arising from agricultural developments (e.g. agricultural slatted sheds) which will facilitate and enable the expansion of cattle number and in particular methane emissions.

The plan also has the potential to offset GHG emissions by facilitating new wind and solar energy development which related CO₂ emissions from non-renewable energy sources.

In addition, the plan may result in climate related impact such as by facilitating new development within coastal areas subject to climate related sea level rise or in areas which may be negatively impacted by climate related fluvial/pluvial flooding events.

³⁵ <https://www.seai.ie/data-and-insights/seai-statistics/key-statistics/transport>

Climate Mitigation Targets and Greenhouse Gas Projections

The 2021 greenhouse gas emissions figures for Ireland (61.53 Mt CO₂eq). As stated in the Low Carbon and Climate Change Act 2021 sets a legally binding target of a 51% reduction in Greenhouse gases by 2030 (relative to 2018). The Climate Action Plan 2023 details a range of measures to be achieved by 2030 to help Ireland meet its climate change obligations/targets. For example:

- **Electricity:** 75% Reduction in emissions by 2030 (compared to 2018) and 80% of all electricity be generated from renewable sources by 2030.
- **Transport:** 50% reduction in emission by 2030 (compared to 2018), 20% reduction in total vehicle kilometres, a reduction in fuel usage, and significant increases to sustainable transport trips and modal share.
- **Built Environment:** All new dwellings designed and constructed to Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) standard by 2025, 500,000 dwellings retrofitted to BER B2 or cost optimal equivalent by 2030
- **Industry:** 35% reductions in emissions by 2030 (compared to 2018).
- **Agriculture:** 25% reduction in emissions by 2030 (compared to 2018).

However, many of these national and local measures will take a significant time to implement. Furthermore, the EPA publication *Ireland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Projections 2021-2040* (EPA June 2022) indicates that even in a With Additional Measures (WAM) scenario (including implementing the measures provided for in the Climate Action Plan 2021 Ireland's emissions will only reduce by 28% relative to 2018. In this regard from 2018-2030 agricultural emissions will reduce by 22.4%, transport emissions will reduce by 39.3%, energy emissions will reduce by 58.1%, and residential emissions will reduce by 41.5%, and commercial public services will reduce by 44.7%. Whilst it is acknowledged that the Climate Action Plan 2023 provides for further policies, measures and actions designed to reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions most commentators agree that the achievement of these targets will be very challenging.

Net Likely Significant Effects of the CDP 2024 on Climate Factors

It is assessed that a number of objectives, policies, and land use zoning provisions are likely to have a **positive effect** vis-à-vis Climate Factors in Donegal as summarised below. In this regard these objectives and policies support wider climate change mitigation plans and measures [and climate adaptation](#) including the implementation of the Climate Action Plan 2023 and the Government Renewable Energy Targets.

- A Land use zoning framework in the Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Bundoran and other settlements which exclude in appropriate development in areas at risk from the High End Future Climate Scenario.
- S-O-6: To protect, enhance and appropriate harness the unique quality and diversity of the environment in the county.
- CS-P-2: Guide development of town in a sequential manner outwards to maximise utility infrastructure promote sustainability, avoid leap frogging.
- CA-O-1: promote sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas including measures to reduce energy demand and reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and address the necessity of adaptation to climate change,
- CA-O-2: support and implement: the UN Sustainable Development Goals, NPF Climate Change National Policy Objectives, objectives in climate Action Plan 2021, relevant Regional Policy Objectives in the RSES, and actions in DCC's Climate Adaptation Strategy
- [CA-P-X: Integrate green infrastructure into new developments.](#)
- [TV-P-X: Promote heritage led regeneration in the County's towns and villages, require re-adaptive use of older buildings and presumption against demolition of older buildings.](#)
- UB-O-2: Deliver serviced sites for housing within towns and villages.
- UB-P-1: Multiple housing development will generally be acceptable in towns/identified settlements subject tocompact growth and sequential development

- UB-P-5: Guide urban residential in a sequential manner outwards to maximise utility infrastructure promote sustainability, avoid leap frogging.
- UB-P-6: Support new residential development that will result in regeneration and/or renewal of town centre areas or areas of vacancy and/or dereliction.
- RH-P-1: Limiting one-off rural housing in Areas under Strong Urban influence to specific applicants.
- RH-P-2: Limiting one-off rural housing in Areas under Strong Holiday Home influence to specific applicants
- ED-O-10: Encourage enterprise and employment developments to locate in brownfield sites or unoccupied buildings in town centres or, where appropriate, in existing industrial/retail parks or other brownfield industrial sites
- ED-O-16: Support the early development of a Designated Marine Area Plan, off the coast of Donegal and the Northwest region,
- ED-O-17: Support the strategic importance of Killybegs as a primary commercial fishing port, and as a hub for the development of the renewable energy sector.
- ED-O-18: support and facilitate the sustainable development of Offshore Wind opportunities off the Donegal coastline.
- ED-P-1: Direct office and light industrial developments to town centre sites, edge of centres locations, or appropriately zoned lands in Letterkenny, Growth Driver Settlements and Service Towns.
- [ED-P-X: Support... the use of bio-renewable energy...](#)
- RS-P-3: Require all retail proposals with the potential to impact on the vitality and viability of the relevant centre (or centres) to be subject to an appropriate sequential test in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines (2012)
- T-O-1: Promote sustainable development and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas including measures to reduce energy demand, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change.
- T-P-1: Integrate land use and transportation considerations to optimise the availability and use of sustainable transport modes.
- [T-P-X: Require new developments include a street network based on filtered permeability.](#)
- [T-P-X: Support the principle of an active travel link between Ballyshannon and Belleek.](#)
- T-O-2: Secure the development of strategic, coherent and high-quality walking and cycling networks that are integrated with public transport, connected with destinations.
- T-O-3: Protect and acquire the lands necessary for, the sustainable transportation improvement projects.
- T-O-4: Provide safer routes to schools and promote walking and cycling as safe and suitable modes of transport.
- T-O-5: Retrospectively provide safe segregated walking and cycling infrastructure in and into settlements.
- T-P-3: Consider all developments against the objectives of providing safe and effective active travel linkages and public transport facilities and to require the provision of such facilities and require the protection of potential linkages and the design and layout of large development to effectively provide for internal pedestrian and vehicular movements.
- T-O-6: Support and facilitate the provision of new and expansion of existing public transport services and infrastructure and renewable energy for the transport fleet.
- T-O-7: secure the provision of a rail link between: (i.) Letterkenny and Derry; and (ii.) Letterkenny and Sligo.
- T-P-4: Collaborate with the NTA in the preparation and implementation of the Connecting Ireland Programme.
- T-O-8: Develop a centrally-located transport hub in Letterkenny and a dedicated bus corridor between the hub and the eastern edge of the town.
- T-P-5: Facilitate off street charging facilities and only facilitate on street where there are no alternatives.
- T-P-9; Support and facilitate the development of public, semi-public and community transport projects and proposals which provide innovative solutions in rural, disadvantaged and border areas

- F-O-1: Ensure that development does not give rise to unacceptable new flood risks, or does not exacerbate existing flood risk.
- F-P-1: Only permit development where: flood or surface water management issues can be successfully addressed, and there is no unacceptable residual flood risk for the development, its occupants or elsewhere.
- F-P-2: Require the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) for urban development proposals.
- F-P-X: Only support Minor Development in Established Development 2 zonings.
- F-P-X: Only support Minor Development in Rural/Agricultural 2 zonings.
- F-P-X: Only support Minor Developments in Flood Risk area within Established Development and Water Compatible Only development in Flood Risk area in undeveloped areas in Settlement Frameworks.
- E-O-2: Secure the maximum potential from the wind energy resources of the County
- E-O-X: Support and facilitate proposals for hybrid energy systems.
- E-O-X: Recognise that natural gas, particularly renewable and indigenous gas will continue to have a role in the transition to a low carbon economy.
- E-P-3: Facilitate solar energy installations in residential, commercial, industrial, and public building projects,
- E-P-X: Support utility scale solar installations.
- WE-P-1: Determine wind farm developments in accordance with Map 8.2.1 Wind Energy
- WE-P-X: Augmentation, upgrade and improvements to existing windfarms, windfarm developments under construction, developments where substantial work complete or sites with extant planning permission open to consideration.
- WE-P-4: Support and facilitate, appropriate on-site wind energy development by auto producers/micro producers*
- EX-P-2: Only support extractive industry developments where they identify relevant robust and effective environmental impact mitigation measures.
- AH-P-X: Promote maintenance and appropriate re-use of the existing building stock with architectural merit.
- GEN-T-P-1: Implement actions in Area Plan Transport/Sustainable Mobility strategies and during the lifetime of the LAPs.
- GEN-T-P-3: Require new developments to be sited and designed in a manner which prioritises, and provides safe, direct, and attractive access for pedestrians and cyclists.
- GEN-T-P-4: Facilitate the re-allocation of existing road space to provide enhanced, pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.
- GEN-T-P-5: Facilitate local public transport services and associated infrastructure.
- GEN-T-P-6: Facilitate electric vehicle charging points at publicly off-street locations.
- BC-AT-O-X: Prepare a detailed Local Transport Plan for Buncrana.
- BC-AT-P-1: require that development proposals: a) provide for suitable connectivity and permeability, b) Have regard to indicative access routes identified in the land use zoning map, to active transport/sustainable mobility projects, and reserve corridors for the required routes.
- BC-H-P-1: Require walking and cycling connectivity/permeability links for specific residential sites in Buncrana.
- BS-H-P-2: Require walking and cycling connectivity/permeability links for specific residential sites in Ballybofey/Stranorlar.
- BS-T-0-2: Deliver the projects in the Ballybofey/Stranorlar Transport/Sustainable Strategy.
- BN-AT-O-1: Deliver the projects listed in the Transport/Sustainable Mobility Strategy for Bundoran.
- BN-AT-P-1: Require provision for suitable connectivity and permeability between adjoining land parcels and have regard to indicative access routes in the land use zoning map, active transport sustainability projects, and reserve corridors for the required routes.
- BD-H-P-1 and 2: Require active travel connectivity in specific sites in housing sites in Bundoran.

It is assessed that a number of objectives, policies, and land use zoning provisions are likely to have a negative effect vis-à-vis Climate Factors in Donegal including, and in summary:

- S-O-1: Plan for population growth to 183,5000 by 2031 in line with the NPF and a further uplift of 200,000 by 2040.
- S-O-3: Support Growth through an all of County Strategy to harness particular strengths and opportunities in different areas.
- CS-O-7: Support economic growth throughout the county.
- Core strategy allocation of approximately 1920 residential units to the open Countryside and 7678 units overall.
- RH-P-3: consider proposals for new one-off housing within structurally weak rural areas from any prospective applicants with a demonstrated rural need for a dwelling house,
- ED-P-5: Support a home-based business of limited scale (circa 1-5 employees), located within the curtilage of an existing dwelling house; subject to compliance with Policy ED-P-10
- ED-P-7: Consider proposals for the expansion or re-development of an existing economic development in the countryside.
- ED-P-8: Facilitates exceptional proposals for major industry/enterprise in the countryside which make a significant contribution to Donegal's economy,

On the basis of the above it is noted that compact land use zonings in the above Area Plans and settlements and the abovementioned active/sustainable travel related objectives and policies will facilitate more sustainable transport modes (e.g. public transport, walking and cycling), and are therefore likely to reduce transport related greenhouse gas emissions that would otherwise occur. In addition, wind and solar energy developments facilitated by the plan will offset CO2 emissions otherwise produced from non-renewable electricity sources source (e.g. natural gas and coal) and will thus reduce energy greenhouse gas emissions. The plan in only providing for new residential and commercial buildings adhering to modern energy efficient standards will also result in a better emissions profile that the wider 'residential' and 'commercial and public services' sector which also includes existing building stock. Further the plan will facilitate climate adaptation by ensuring that inappropriate development does not occur within areas at risk from the High End Future Flooding Scenario.

However as stated above the plan will also facilitate significant population growth (i.e. to 183,500 by 2031) a significant range and quantum of development (e.g. 7678 residential units overall) and a significant amount of dispersed/car dependent developments (e.g. approximately 1920 residential units in the open countryside. This in turn is likely to result in significant additional construction, transport, housing, and commercial, and agricultural related greenhouses gas emissions over and above Donegal's current emissions profile. Furthermore, the emissions resulting from the plan are, with some exceptions, likely to broadly reflect these national greenhouse gas emission projections which are unlikely to meet the challenging climate targets of a 51% reduction in emissions by 2030.

It is therefore acknowledged that many individual land use zonings, objectives and policies will have positive effects on climate mitigation including those which will support active/sustainable travel and renewable energy. However, said effects are unlikely to outweigh the negative effects on climate arising from the additional GHG emissions arising from the very significant population growth and scale of development, particularly dispersed rural development, facilitated by the plan. Consequently, it is considered that overall the CDP 2024 would be likely to generate additional greenhouse gas emissions over and above Donegal current emissions profile. Furthermore, when considered in the context of the urgent need to reduce GHG emissions by 51% by 2031 and the abovementioned significant challenges in meeting said targets even with the implementation of the Climate Action Plan 2023, said additional greenhouse gas emissions are considered to be significant. Consequently, on balance, it is concluded that the that the **total effects** of the plan on the **Climate factors SEO** will be **negative overall**.

7.3.7 Material Assets

As alluded to in Section 3 Material Assets include a wide range of built and natural assets. Such assets include urban development, housing, commercial and retail developments, transport and wastewater infrastructure, energy generation and distribution infrastructure, tourism facilities, community infrastructure (e.g. green/education/healthcare), and marine access infrastructure. The effects of the objectives and policies on the improvement/provision of said material assets are outlined below.

In terms of urban development, a number of objectives and policies will have a positive effect on the quality, amenities and functionality of Donegal **urban built environment** including, and in summary:

- S-O-5: Prioritise regeneration of the County's towns, villages and rural area.
- [CA-P-X: Integrate green infrastructure into new developments.](#)
- TV-O-2: Support initiatives to strengthen and improve the physical environment of towns and villages and encourage positive place-making.
- TV-O-4: Identify 'vacant' sites and 'regeneration sites' in urban areas.
- TV-O-5: Ensure quality design proposals for new development within towns and villages in order to contribute to positive place-making.
- TV-P-3: ensure that development proposals within towns and villages centres provide distinctive buildings, create strong street frontages, respects contexts of existing buildings, respects architectural character, creates building of human scale, promotes visual interest, utilise adaptable accessible design on 1st floors, avoids use of industrial type cladding.
- [TV-P-X: Protect and enhance the unique physical character of historic town and village centres.](#)
- [TV-P-X: Promote heritage led regeneration.](#)
- UB-O-1: Identify appropriate regeneration and renewal initiatives in Layer 3 rural towns/areas.
- UB-P-6: Support new residential development that will result in regeneration and/or renewal of town centre areas or areas of vacancy and/or dereliction.
- BC-S-O-2: support the progress and implementation of the 'Re-powering Buncrana'.
- BS-TC-O-2: Fully implement the SEED Project
- BS-TC-O-3: Implement projects which achieve the placemaking objectives and principles set out in the Ballybofey/Stranorlar Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan
- BS-TC-P-1: Facilitate and support proposals/projects according with the district level placemaking objectives and principles set out in the Ballybofey/Stranorlar Regeneration and Action Plan.
- BN-TC-O-1: strike appropriate balance between the contribution of the Main Street commercial sectors to the town's tourism offering with the need for the further enhancement of the streetscape and public realm.
- BN-REGEN-O-1: seek the development and renewal of areas in need of regeneration, and in particular the Regeneration Areas identified on the land-use zoning map.

A number of objectives and policies will have a positive effect in terms of the provision or improvement of **housing** development:

- S-O-1: Plan for population growth to 183,5000 in line with the NPF and a further uplift of 200,000 by 2040.
- Core Strategy facilitating the provision of 7678 resident units through the county and associated land use zoning framework in Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar, Bundoran and other settlements.
- UB-O-2: Deliver services sites for housing within towns and villages
- UB-O-3: Seek effective resolution of unfinished residential development.
- [UB-O-X Provide accommodation for travellers.](#)
- [UB-P-X: Consider proposals for urban residential development that seek to resolve unfinished residential development.](#)
- RH-P-3: consider proposals for new one-off housing within structurally weak areas from any prospective applicants with a demonstrated rural need for a dwelling house.

- GEN-H-O-1: Facilitate an adequate supply, range and mix of high-quality housing at serviced, sustainable, accessible, and socially inclusive locations to meet anticipated housing need.

A number of objectives and policies will have a positive effect in terms of the provision or improvement of **economic and retail development** infrastructure:

- Business/Enterprise zonings within the Bunrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar, and Bundoran Area Plans.
- ED-O-2: Support appropriately-scaled and located economic development projects in the County's smaller towns and villages.
- ED-O-3: Support appropriately scaled and located rural economic development projects where they are functionally-related to the countryside.
- ED-O-4: Support the development of Páirc Ghnó Gaoth Dobhair as a business, enterprise and manufacturing centre.
- ED-O-8: develop serviced lands for economic development and job creation purposes in key settlements.
- ED-P-6: Support ICT micro enterprises, enterprises addressing climate change and sustainability professional services in rural areas:
- ED-P-7: Proposals for the expansion or re-development of an existing economic development in the countryside
- ED-P-8: Facilitates exceptional proposals for major industry/enterprise in the countryside.
- RS-P-1: Consider proposals for large foodstores (up to 3000 square metres net) in the town centres of Letterkenny and the County Growth Drivers.
- RS-P-2: consider proposals for small-to-medium sized food/ convenience stores (up to 1500 square metres net) in the town centres of Letterkenny, the County Growth Drivers and Service Towns.

A number of objectives and policies will have a positive effect in terms of the protection, provision or improvement of **transport** infrastructure:

- S-O-7: progress and ultimately carry out/implement the TEN-T PRIPD as one of critical strategic importance.
- [S-O-X: Maintain the strategic function, capacity, and safety of the national roads network.](#)
- T-O-2: Secure the development of strategic, coherent and high-quality walking and cycling networks.
- T-O-3: Protect and acquire the lands necessary for, the sustainable transportation improvement projects.
- T-O-5: Retrospectively provide safe segregated walking and cycling infrastructure, in and into settlements.
- T-O-6: Support and facilitate the provision of new and expansion of existing public transport services and infrastructure and renewable energy.
- T-O-7: Secure the provision of a rail link between: (i.) Letterkenny and Derry; and (ii.) Letterkenny and Sligo.
- T-O-8: Develop a centrally-located transport hub in Letterkenny and a dedicated bus corridor between the hub and the eastern edge of the town.
- T-O-9: Sustain and enhances the services provided by Donegal Airport and City of Derry Airport
- T-P-6: facilitate and enhance appropriate access to and expansion of Donegal airport.
- T-O-10: Safeguard the carrying capacity and safety of National Roads and associated junctions, the R238 Bridgend to Bunrana Regional Road.
- T-O-11: Deliver improvements to the TEN-T Network.
- T-O-13: achieve quality strategic and important inter-urban and cross border transport corridors including the A5 WTC and the new links to and within the NW City Region.
- T-O-14: Prioritise the TEN-T PRIPD over any conflicting objectives, policies and land use zonings of the development plan.
- T-P-11: Support and facilitate the development, extension and improvement of Donegal's transport network and not to permit development that would prejudice the implement of a transport scheme
- GEN-T-O-1: Facilitate a significant increase in sustainable mobility through the provision of a compact permeable urban form, new and enhanced active travel infrastructure.

- GEN-T-0-2: Improve strategic transport connectivity, traffic safety and local traffic flow and accessibility (including the delivery of the Section 1 TEN-T PRIPD strategic roads project), the provision of new local access links and the implementation of appropriate safety, parking/traffic management solutions.

A number of objectives and policies will have a positive effect in terms of the provision or improvement of **wastewater, telecoms and electricity** infrastructure:

- WW-P-1: Support the facilitate the provision new, and the upgrading of existing, water and wastewater infrastructure.
- WW-P-7: Support and facilitate Irish Water Initiatives for the Provision of new wastewater collection and treatment through Measure A8 of the Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme sustainable long-term solutions for legacy developer-provided water services Infrastructure in residential development through Annual Developer-Provided Water Services Infrastructure Resolution Programme.
- TC-O-1: Facilitate a sustainable telecommunications network across the County including the National Broadband plan.
- ETN-O-1: Secure the ~~upgrade-strengthening~~ of the electricity ~~grid to include the provision of distribution network serving the County to a minimum-220kv transmission distribution network and a strategic gas supply.~~ ~~To enable the harnessing and distribution of energy.~~
- ETN-P-X: Protect Donegal's 3 hydro-electric power stations by restricting incompatible land uses.
- E-P-1: Facilitate the development of grid reinforcements including grid connections and transboundary energy network (electricity and gas).
-

A number of objectives and policies will have a positive effect in terms of **renewable energy** generation developments or ancillary infrastructure:

- E-O-1: Sustainably develop a diverse and secure renewable energy supply to meet demands and capitalize on the County's competitive locational advantage.
- E-O-4: Facilitate the sustainable development of Donegal as a Centre of Excellence for renewable technology, and Killybegs as an offshore service centre and renewable energy hub.
- E-O-X: Support and facilitate hybrid energy systems and/or co-location of renewable energy.
- E-O-X: Recognise that natural gas, particularly renewable and indigenous gas with the except of fracking will continue to have a role in the transition to a low carbon economy.
- E-P-2: facilitate the appropriate development of renewable energy and energy storage projects arising from a variety of sources.
- E-P-3: Facilitate solar energy installations in residential, commercial, industrial and public building projects.
- E-P-X: Support utility scale solar installations.
- E-P-X: Support proposals for energy storage systems including green hydrogen storage.
- WE-P-1: Determine wind farm developments in accordance with Map 8.2.1 Wind Energy.
- WE-P-X: Consider the augmentation, upgrade and improvement of existing windfarms, windfarms under construction, developments where substantial works have been completed or sites with extant planning permission.
- WE-P-4: support and facilitate, appropriate on-site wind energy development by auto producers/micro producers*.

Several objectives and policies will have a positive effect in terms of the provision of **tourism** facilities:

- S-O-X: Retain, promote and drive Donegal's position as a premier domestic and internal tourism destination.
- TOU-P-1: Facilitate the development of signature/strategic tourism experiences/attractions.
- TOU-P-5: Support resource- related/activity-based tourism developments.
- TOU-P-6: Consider standalone tourism accommodation development.

- TOU-P-7: Consider holiday resorts of a scale that would have a regional impact on the tourism market involving high quality recreational amenities/visitor facilities and associated managed accommodation units.
- BC-S-P-1: Support shorefront: developments that support Buncrana's tourism product, Public realm and active travel interventions, Community-based recreation projects, marinas, jetties, facilities for outdoor water-based activities and harbour facilities for maritime leisure developments.
- BC-S-P-4: support the principle of the development of a flagship tourism project,
- BN-CZ-P-1: support the following development proposals within the High Amenity Area along the seafront: Small-scale tourism.
- BN-CZ-P-2: protect the coastal walkways in Bundoran as important tourism, recreation and amenity resources for the town.

A number of objectives and policies will have a positive effect in terms of supporting the provision and improvement of **community and cultural infrastructure and recreational** facilities.

- CC-P-1: Support the provision of new social and community infrastructure/service related developments.
- CCG-P-3: require provision of purpose-built facilities as part of large scale residential development in accordance with Childcare Planning Guidelines.
- CC-P-4: Require that developments adjoining existing public educational facilities shall not hinder the planned future expansion of such facilities and any associated ancillary infrastructure.
- CC-O-2: Provide a network of high-quality green, active and recreational infrastructure at sustainable and socially inclusive locations throughout the county.
- CC-P-7: Support and facilitate community-based gardens/allotments at sustainable, accessible, and socially inclusive locations.
- CC-O-3 providing new arts and cultural infrastructure, new spaces for arts and culture in the public realm, quality public art, and enhanced creative/artistic spaces.
- CC-P-10: Support and facilitate: a) strategic cultural infrastructural projects including the Donegal Town Library, Archives Centre and redevelopment of the County Museum, b) the provision of large-scale cultural facilities, c) small scale Cultural developments.
- d) a performing arts facility in the Inishowen peninsula.
- GAE-P-4: Support educational, cultural and community developments, strategic tourism projects supported by UNaG.
- PROW-O-1: Preserve public rights of way which give access to seashore, mountain, lakeshore, riverbank or other place of natural beauty or recreational utility.
- PROW-P-1: Support the following development proposals within the shorefront: developments that support Buncrana's tourism product, Public realm and active travel interventions, Community-based recreation projects, marinas, jetties, facilities for outdoor water-based activities and harbour facilities for maritime leisure developments.

A number of objectives and policies will have a positive effect in terms of supporting the provision and improvement of **marine and coastal** infrastructure:

- MRCM-P-3: Safeguard and enhance the roles of Killybegs, Greencastle, and Burtonport, as centres of fishing, fleet activity, seafood processing and/or ancillary marine services and education [including supporting the development of Marine Resource Innovation Parks](#).
- MRCM-P-6: Support and maintain existing, and facilitate the improvement of, marine access infrastructure
- MRCM-P-7: Facilitate marine and inland waters access infrastructure, facilitate large scale marine access infrastructure in specific locations,

In addition, the plan will protect new and existing material assets (e.g. urban, commercial and housing, healthcare, transport development etc) through the application of an appropriate **flood risk management** policies including:

- F-O-1: Ensure that development does not give rise to unacceptable new flood risks, or does not exacerbate existing flood risk.

- F-P-1: Only permit development where: flood or surface water management issues can be successfully addressed, and there is no unacceptable residual flood risk for the development, its occupants or elsewhere.
- F-P-2: Require the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) for urban development proposals.
- F-P-3: Support the development of long and short term flood remediation works
- F-P-4: Not to permit developments which would hinder the maintenance of river or drainage channels.
- F-P-X: Minor Development 2 only be supported within Established Development 2 zonings.
- F-P-X: Minor Developments Only will only be supported within Rural Agricultural 2 areas.
- F-P-X: Within flood risk areas in Settlement Frameworks minor development only will only be supported in areas Established Development and water compatible uses will only be supported in new undeveloped areas.

It is noted that the plan will result in the loss of productive agricultural lands greenfield sites both within urban and rural areas as a result of, inter alia multiple residential development, commercial development, rural one-off housing and strategic road development. In addition, it is also noted that strategic roads developments have the potential to impact on existing material assets such as housing and commercial developments in certain instances. However, on the basis of the above assessment including:

- The wide-ranging benefits of the plan in terms of the creation of new material assets such as housing, transport infrastructure, retail services, education, healthcare, recreational, and community facilities, and the enhancement of existing assets (e.g. urban regeneration).
- The fact that the plan will have no significant effects on existing material assets.
- The fact the plan will manage the impact of flood risk on new material assets in accordance with the guidance set out in the flood risk management guidance.

It is therefore concluded that the **total effects** of the plan on the **material assets SEO** is **positive overall**.

7.3.8 Cultural Heritage

As detailed in Section 3.8 Donegal contains a wide range of Cultural Heritage assets including structures and features on: the Record of Protected Structures (RPS), Architectural Conservation Areas in Ardara, Ballyshannon, Bunrana, Letterkenny, Ramelton, Raphoe and Merville, the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH), the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), Register of Historic Monuments (RHM) and National Monuments, Historic Graveyards other archaeological features not on the RMP and historic railway corridors. Furthermore, as also referred to in Section 3.8 Donegal's Gaeltacht is also an integral of Donegal's linguistic cultural heritage.

In relation to **Architectural Heritage** as detailed in Section 3.8 structures on the RPS and Architectural Conservation Area benefit from significant statutory protections. In addition, the following architectural Heritage related objectives and policies of the Plan also explicitly provide for the protection, improvement, or regeneration of, and therefore would have a **positive effect** on, Donegal's architectural heritage:

- S-O-5: Prioritise regeneration of the County's towns, villages and rural area.
- CS-P-1: Assess developments in settlements in light of all material planning considerations.
- TV-O-2: Support initiatives to strengthen and improve the physical environment of towns and villages and encourage positive place-making.
- TV-P-X: Protect and enhance the unique physical character of historic town and village centres.
- TV-p-X: Promote heritage led regeneration, adaptive re-use of older buildings and presumption against demolition of older buildings considered to be intrinsic elements of a character of a place.
- TV-O-4: Identify 'vacant' sites and 'regeneration sites' in urban areas
- TV-P-3: Ensure that development proposals within towns and villages centres.... respects architectural character.

- RH-P-7: Consider refurbishment of derelict vernacular buildings where development provides for retention of majority of existing building, do not in general exceed 50% of original and compliance and comply with Policy RH-P-9.
- T-P-8: Protect established/historic railway corridors for strategic infrastructure and recreational development.
- E-P-3: Facilitate solar energy installations in residential, commercial, industrial and public building projects, provided such proposals do not detract from the built heritage.
- AH-O-1: Conserve, manage, protect and enhance the architectural heritage of Donegal.
- AH-O-2: Promote the sustainable and sensitive re-use of the existing built heritage.
- AH-P-1: Seek to ensure best conservation practice through the application of the Guiding Principles of Architectural Conservation.
- AH-P-2: Protect traditional shopfronts and signage and where required and appropriate, ensure new shopfronts are of a high-quality architectural design.
- [AH-P-X: Promote the maintenance and re-use of existing building stock with architectural merit and ensure energy efficiency upgrades and sensitive to protected structures and traditionally built historic structures.](#)
- AH-O-3: Protect all structures and parts of structures on the Record of Protected Structures and to extend the RPS where appropriate.
- AH-P-3: a) Protect all structures or parts of structures on the RPS b) Require that development proposals directly affecting structures on the RPS are appropriate Save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including the TEN-T PRIPD [subject to such projects being in accordance with all relevant statutory and regulatory provisions.](#) -
- [AH-P-X: Preserve, protect and enhance the special built character and functions of the Heritage towns of Ar dara, Ballyshannon, Moville, Ramelton and Raphoe.](#)
- AH-P-4: a) Extend the Record of Protected Structures b) Identify structures for inclusion in the Record of Protected Structures based on Architectural Heritage Protection, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2011), the NIAH and Ministerial recommendations.
- AH-P-5: Require works which includes works to an RPS structure to be carried out in the first phase of the development to prevent endangerment, abandonment and/or dereliction of the structure.
- AH-O-4: Preserve the special character of the Ar dara, Ballyshannon, Bun crana, Letterkenny, Ramelton, Raphoe, and Moville Architectural Conservation Areas.
- AH-P-6: Specific protection requirements for ACAs.
- AH-P-7: Require developments of NIAH structures are appropriate in terms of architectural treatment, character, scale, and form, and is not detrimental to the special character and integrity of the structure and its setting Save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including the TEN-T PRIPD [in so far as same can be practicably and reasonably achieved within the context of such projects.](#) -
- AH-P-8: Ensure high quality architectural design of all new development relating to or which may impact on NIAH structures save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including the TEN-T PRIPD.
- AH-P-9: Seek to protect, conserve and preserve vernacular structures [and historic building stock](#) that are considered to be intrinsic elements of the character of a place, save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including the TEN-T PRIPD [in so far as same can be practicably and reasonably achieved within the context of such projects.](#)-
- AH-P-10: ensure that conversions or extensions to vernacular buildings [and historic building stock](#) and the provision of new adjoining buildings shall be of a scale and form that complements the existing building and ensures that the distinctiveness and character of the vernacular form is retained and respected.
- TOU-O-1: facilitate the sustainable development of Donegal's tourism product as a key economic driver of, and social catalyst for, the County whilst protecting and enhancing the County's built heritage.
- TOU-P-8: Criteria for new tourism developments including will not have an adverse impact on built, scenic or natural heritage.

- BS-TC-O-2: Fully implement the SEED Project
- BS-TC-O-3: Implement projects which achieve the placemaking objectives and principles set out in the Ballybofey/Stranorlar Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan.
- BS-TC-P-1: Facilitate and support proposals/projects according with the district level placemaking objectives and principles set out in the Ballybofey/Stranorlar Regeneration and Action Plan
- BS-RCNH-P-5: Support and facilitate the reuse/development of historic railway corridors.

Archaeological Heritage such as features on the RMP, RHM and National Monuments, benefit from significant **statutory protections**. In addition, the following **archaeological Heritage related objectives and policies** of the Plan also explicitly provide for the protection of, and therefore would have a **positive effect** on architectural heritage:

- AYH-O-1: Conserve and protect archaeological heritage, achieve greater knowledge and appreciation of archaeology, protect existing access to, and where appropriate provide new access and visitor infrastructure for, such heritage.
- AYH-P-1: ~~Save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including the TEN-T PRIPD.~~ a) Conserve and protect all forms of archaeological heritage b) Conserve and Protect Zones of Archaeological Protection located in Urban areas of Ballyshannon, Donegal Town, Killybegs, Lifford, Ramelton, Rathmullan and St. Johnston. **This policy will implemented save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including the TEN-T PRIPD subject to such projects being in accordance with all relevant statutory and regulatory provisions or otherwise in so far as the policy can be reasonably and practicably achieved within the context of such projects.**
- AYH-P-2: ~~Save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including the TEN-T PRIPD~~-protect existing access to, and facilitate appropriate new public access, informational and visitor infrastructure for, archaeological heritage. **This policy will be implemented by the Council in so far as same can be practicably and reasonably achieved within the context of such strategic infrastructure projects.**
- AH-P-3: ~~Save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including the TEN-T PRIPD~~-ensure that development proposals: Sensitively incorporate archaeological heritage Preserved In Situ, be accompanied by long-term management plan and provide appropriate informational signage- **This policy will implemented save to the extent necessary to provide for strategic infrastructure projects including the TEN-T PRIPD subject to such projects being in accordance with all relevant statutory and regulatory provisions or otherwise in so far as the policy can be reasonably and practicably achieved within the context of such projects.**
- AH-P-4: Ensure that historic graveyards in the ownership or care of the Council are managed and maintained in accordance with legislation, appropriate/best conservation standards.

In addition, the plan contains a number of objectives and policies which are likely to have a positive effect on the socio-economic and linguistic vibrancy of **Donegal's Gaeltacht** including:

- GAE-O-1: Sustain and strengthen the Irish Language, to protect the cultural heritage of, and facilitate the sustainable social, physical, cultural, and economic development of the Gaeltacht.
- GAE-P-1: Support the implementation of language plans in Gaeltacht Language Planning areas, Gaeltacht Service Towns and Irish Language Networks.
- GAE-P-2: a) language condition for multiple residential development in the Gaeltacht requiring that the proportion of units to be occupied by Irish speakers equates to the proportion of Irish speakers within the subject DED subject to a minimum of ~~20~~**66**%, b) Require Language Impact Assessments for Multiple Residential Developments within Gaeltacht areas of 10 or more dwellings in all cases, and less than 10 dwellings where there is potential for a significant impact on the Irish language in the area. **A 15year language condition shall be applied from the date of the first occupancy.**
- GAE-P-3: Facilitate sustainable single rural housing developments within the Gaeltacht.
- GAE-P-4: Support educational, cultural and community developments, strategic tourism projects supported by UNaG, economic/enterprise development proposals including those in UNaG business

parks and sites, the provision of enhanced transport, water and wastewater infrastructure, urban regeneration and placemaking projects in Gaeltacht towns, villages and Islands.

- GAE-P-6: Require the use of the Irish language in public, business, and community signage in accordance with the requirements Official Languages Act 2003(as amended).

Otherwise, a significant number of objectives and policies were identified as having no relationship or no significant effect on Cultural Heritage. However, no objectives and policies were identified as having a negative effect on such heritage. In this regard whilst a number of the architectural and archaeological protection policies contain **qualified** exemptions for strategic infrastructure projects it is considered that said derogation will have limited practical effect on such heritage as all such projects are subject to detailed multi criteria analysis in their route selection process which is designed to minimise effects on such heritage.

Consequently, on the basis of the above assessment it is considered the **total effects** of the plan on **the Cultural Heritage SEO** will be **positive overall**.

7.3.9 Landscape and Visual

Landscape can be defined as 'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors' (European Landscape Convention, Council of Europe 2000). Landscape covers natural, urban, peri-urban and rural areas, encompassing land, inland water, coastal and marine areas. In contrast visual issues in land use planning generally concern changes to specific views, visual amenity and effects on viewers.

Land and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of effects of changes resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity³⁶. In broad terms LVIA involves inter alia the defining the scope of the proposed plan/project, the establishment of a landscape and visual baseline and an assessment of the landscape and visual effects. It involves two related but separate assessments, namely:

- **Assessment of Landscape Effects:** Changes to landscape character and landscape resource. This is concerned with the physical landscape and its characteristics.
- **Assessment of Visual Effects:** Changes to views, visual amenity and effect on viewers.

Landscape and Visual Assessment is a qualitative assessment as the consideration of the likely significant landscape and visual effects are not a measurable objective science.

Scope of the Proposed Plan and Associated Potential Effects

The objectives of the plan have been described in Section 2 of this report whilst the individual objectives and policies are also listed in Table 7.2. In particular in relation to landscape and visual effects the plan provides for a variety and quantum of development which may impact on landscape and visual receptors including, for example: rural housing in the hinterland of larger urban areas, rural housing in coastal areas, housing and commercial developments on the edge of town and villages, renewable energy developments in rural areas including in particular upland areas, solar energy developments, and extractive developments. The exact impact of such developments on landscape and visual receptors will depend significantly on their specific location, the scale and layout, the susceptibility and value of the

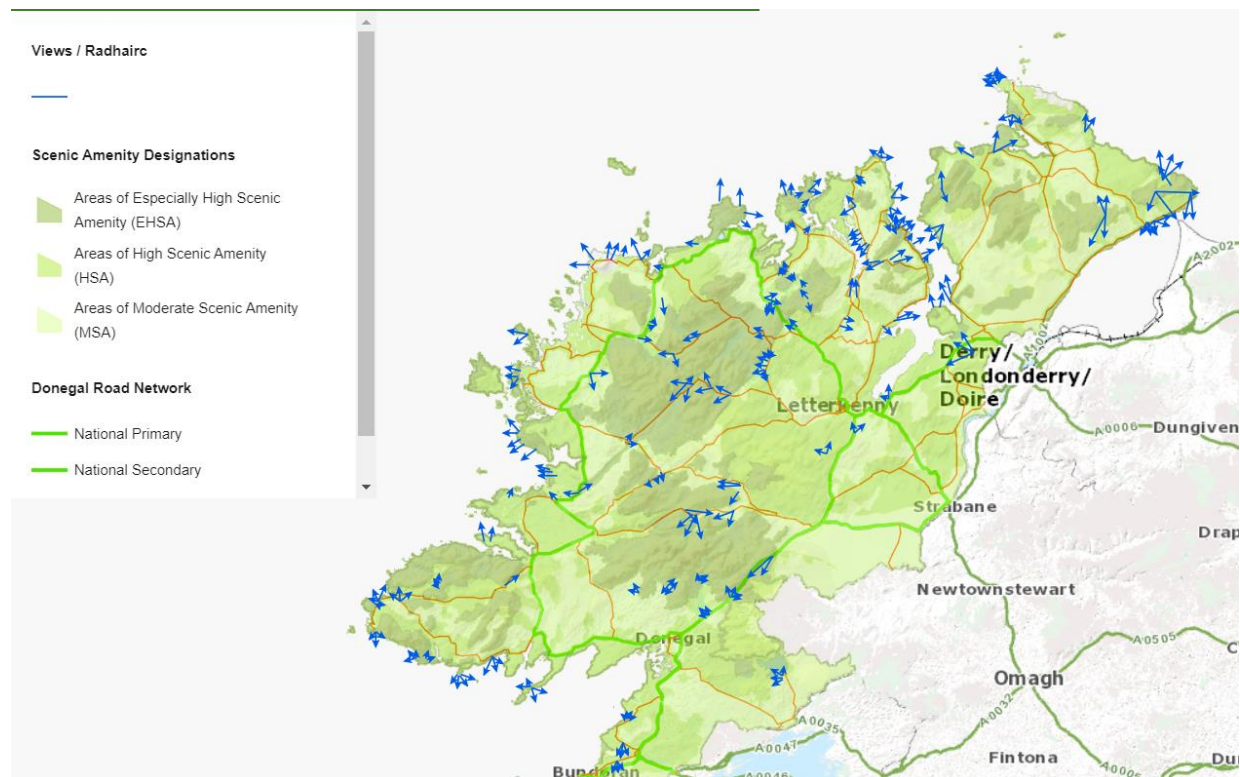
³⁶ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013, Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition,

landscape and view in question, and the resultant scale of landscape change, the geographical scale over which it is visible, and the duration/reversibility of such effects. In addition, the people's perception of the severity of the landscape and visual aspects may also be subjective in nature.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

In relation to the landscape the plan categorises the County into 3 layers of scenic value namely:

- **Areas of Especially High Scenic Amenity (EHSA):** Sublime natural landscapes of the highest quality synonymous with the identity of County Donegal. These areas have extremely limited capacity to assimilate additional development.
- **Areas of High Scenic Amenity (HSA):** Landscapes of significant aesthetic, cultural, heritage and environmental quality that are unique to their locality and are a fundamental element of the landscape and identity of County Donegal. These areas have the capacity to absorb sensitively located development of scale, design and use that will enable assimilation into the receiving landscape and which does not detract from the quality of the landscape, subject to compliance with all other objectives and policies of the plan.
- **Areas of Moderate Scenic Amenity (MSA)** Primarily landscapes outside Area Plan Boundaries and Settlement Framework boundaries, that have a unique, rural and generally agricultural quality. These areas have the capacity to absorb additional development that is suitably located, sited and designed subject to compliance with all other objectives and policies of the Plan.



In addition, a Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) has been prepared for by Donegal County Council. This LCA identifies both landscape 'types' (e.g. mountainous blanket bog, agricultural foothills, agricultural coastal, forest etc) and 'landscape character areas' (e.g. Derryveagh Mountains, Cark Mountain Uplands, Donegal Bay Drumlins, Foyle Valley, Malin Coast etc).

In relation to the landscape and visual baseline the following provisions of the Plan are deemed significant:

- The abovementioned Scenic Amenity designations and designated views and prospects.
- L-O-1: Protect, manage and conserve the character, quality and value of the Donegal landscape.
- L-P-1: Protect areas identified as 'Especially High Scenic Amenity' and only consider developments of strategic importance or developments that are provided for by policy elsewhere in this plan.
- L-P-2: protect areas identified as 'High Scenic Amenity' and 'Moderate Scenic Amenity'
- only consider developments of development of a nature, location and scale that integrates with, and reflects the character and amenity of the landscape.
- L-P-3: safeguard the scenic context, cultural landscape significance, recreational/tourism amenities, and environmental amenities of the County's coastline from inappropriate development save for strategic infrastructure provision of overriding public regional or national public interest. [This policy shall be implemented in so far as same can be practicably and reasonably achieved within the context of such projects.](#)
- L-P-4: Protect the character of specific approach roads to the Glenveagh National Park:
- L-P-5: Protect views to and from St Johns Point.
- L-P-6: Safeguard prominent skylines and ridgelines from inappropriate development.
- L-P-7: Seek to preserve the views and prospects of special amenity value and interest.
- L-P-8: preserve scenic views between public roads and the sea, lakes and rivers on the basis of whether the view has been affected to-date by development, the development would intrude significantly on the view; and the development would materially alter the view.

Assessment of Landscape Effects

A broad strategic assessment of the likely significant effects on landscape arising from the Proposed Variation based on the guidance set out in the publication *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition* (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (LIIEMA), 2013), is set out in Table 7.3 below:

Legend for Assessment of Landscape Effects in Table 7.3

Term	Definition/Explanation (as per LI, IEMA 2013)	Rating												
Sensitivity														
Susceptibility	Ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Very Low</td><td>Green</td></tr> <tr><td>Low</td><td>Light Green</td></tr> <tr><td>Medium</td><td>Yellow</td></tr> <tr><td>High</td><td>Orange</td></tr> <tr><td>Very High</td><td>Red</td></tr> </table>	Very Low	Green	Low	Light Green	Medium	Yellow	High	Orange	Very High	Red		
Very Low	Green													
Low	Light Green													
Medium	Yellow													
High	Orange													
Very High	Red													
Value	The Value of the landscape receptors on the basis of their Scenic Amenity Value.	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Very Low</td><td>Green</td></tr> <tr><td>Low</td><td>Light Green</td></tr> <tr><td>Medium</td><td>Yellow</td></tr> <tr><td>High</td><td>Orange</td></tr> <tr><td>Very High</td><td>Red</td></tr> </table>	Very Low	Green	Low	Light Green	Medium	Yellow	High	Orange	Very High	Red		
Very Low	Green													
Low	Light Green													
Medium	Yellow													
High	Orange													
Very High	Red													
Magnitude of Effect														
Size/scale	<p>The size/scale or change <u>in the landscape</u> that is likely to be experienced as a result of the effect. Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent of existing landscape elements that will be lost, the proportion of the total extent that this represents and the contribution of that element to the character of the landscape. The degree to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are altered by the removal of existing landscape components or additions of new ones. Whether this effect changes the key characteristics of the landscape which are critical to its distinctive character. 	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Insignificant Effect</td><td>N</td></tr> <tr><td>Minor</td><td>Yellow</td></tr> <tr><td>Moderate</td><td>Orange</td></tr> <tr><td>Major</td><td>Red</td></tr> </table>	Insignificant Effect	N	Minor	Yellow	Moderate	Orange	Major	Red				
Insignificant Effect	N													
Minor	Yellow													
Moderate	Orange													
Major	Red													
Geographical extent.	The geographical extent over which the landscape effect will be felt (as distinct from the size/scale of the effect)	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Not Applicable</td><td>N/A</td></tr> <tr><td>Site level</td><td>Light Green</td></tr> <tr><td>Immediate Setting of Site</td><td>Yellow</td></tr> <tr><td>Within host LCA Area</td><td>Orange</td></tr> <tr><td>Across several LCA Areas.</td><td>Red</td></tr> </table>	Not Applicable	N/A	Site level	Light Green	Immediate Setting of Site	Yellow	Within host LCA Area	Orange	Across several LCA Areas.	Red		
Not Applicable	N/A													
Site level	Light Green													
Immediate Setting of Site	Yellow													
Within host LCA Area	Orange													
Across several LCA Areas.	Red													
Duration/Reversibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duration: Timeframe over which landscape effect will be felt (i.e. short, medium or long term) Reversibility: Prospect/practicality of particular effect being reversed within a generation (e.g. housing permanent, Wind energy reversible). 	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Not Applicable.</td><td>N/A</td></tr> <tr><td>Short</td><td>Green</td></tr> <tr><td>Medium</td><td>Yellow</td></tr> <tr><td>Long Term</td><td>Red</td></tr> <tr><td>Permanent</td><td>P</td></tr> <tr><td>Reversible</td><td>R</td></tr> </table>	Not Applicable.	N/A	Short	Green	Medium	Yellow	Long Term	Red	Permanent	P	Reversible	R
Not Applicable.	N/A													
Short	Green													
Medium	Yellow													
Long Term	Red													
Permanent	P													
Reversible	R													
Total Landscape Effects														
	Overall Assessment of landscape effect combining sensitivity and magnitude	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Significant Positive</td><td>Green</td></tr> <tr><td>Positive</td><td>Light Green</td></tr> <tr><td>No Relationship/Insignificant</td><td>Yellow</td></tr> <tr><td>Negative</td><td>Orange</td></tr> <tr><td>Significant Negative</td><td>Red</td></tr> </table>	Significant Positive	Green	Positive	Light Green	No Relationship/Insignificant	Yellow	Negative	Orange	Significant Negative	Red		
Significant Positive	Green													
Positive	Light Green													
No Relationship/Insignificant	Yellow													
Negative	Orange													
Significant Negative	Red													

Table 7.3: Overall Assessment of Landscape Effects on Scenic Landscape Category Areas (Map 7.1.1 of the CDP 2018-2024(As Varied) refers)

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity of Receptor		Magnitude of Effect			Overall Landscape Effect	Comment
	Susceptibility	Value	Size/Scale	Geographical Extent	Duration/Reversibility		
Especially High Scenic Amenity (EHSA)					P		<p>Susceptibility: EHSA areas have a very high susceptibility to change arising from development on the basis that they are described as having '<i>extremely limited capacity to assimilate additional development</i>'.</p> <p>Value: EHSA areas have a high value on the basis that they are described as '<i>Sublime natural landscapes of the highest quality synonymous with the identity of County Donegal</i>'.</p> <p>Size/Scale: The policies of the plan does not provide for wind energy development (WE-P-2 refers) and extractive developments (EX-P-1) in EHSA areas. However, there is a significant geographic overlap (e.g. in areas like West and South West Donegal, Rosguill, Fanad Peninsula, NW Inishowen) between EHSA area and 'Structurally Weak Rural Housing Area in which proposals from any prospective applicants with a demonstrated need for a new dwelling will be considered (Policy RH-P-3 refers). Consequently, in combination with existing and permitted development there is a potential for said policy to have moderate effect on the host EHSA landscape of at least some of these areas, particularly coastal areas. In this regard the accumulation of one-off housing may interfere with the aesthetic/perceptual aspects of the landscape given its extremely limited capacity to assimilate additional development and may also change the key characteristics (e.g. relatively undeveloped natural area) which are critical to its distinctive character.</p> <p>Geographical Extent: As the effect is most likely to result from cumulative scattered one-off rural housing throughout the structurally weak rural area the landscape effect may be felt over a wide geographical area.</p> <p>Duration/Reversibility: The effect of such physical development will be long term and irreversible.</p> <p>Conclusion: Negative Effect. EHSA area have a very high susceptibility, the size scale of landscapes effects arising from rural one-off housing may be moderate, will be felt over a wide area and will be permanent/irreversible.</p>

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity of Receptor		Magnitude of Effect			Overall Landscape Effect	Comment
	Susceptibility	Value	Size/Scale	Geographical Extent	Duration/ Reversibility		
High Scenic Amenity (HSA)	Yellow	Orange	Orange	Orange	Red P	Orange	<p>Susceptibility: HSA areas have a medium susceptibility to change arising from development on the basis that they are described as having the ‘<i>capacity to absorb sensitively located development of scale, design and use that will enable assimilation into the receiving landscape and which does not detract from the quality of the landscape.</i>’</p> <p>Value: HSA areas have a high value on the basis that they are described as ‘<i>Landscapes of significant aesthetic, cultural, heritage and environmental quality that are unique to their locality and are a fundamental element of the landscape and identity of County Donegal.</i>’</p> <p>Size/Scale: A significant part of HSA areas are zoned ‘Open to Consideration’ for wind energy zoning and Donegal is likely to experience further pressure for such development in the coming years. However, on the basis that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent of the individual landscape elements (e.g. the undulating agricultural landscape of good quality pasture and arable land within the Lagan Valley LCA) which will be lost is likely to small relative to the overall extent of such elements within the HSA area. • The Wind Energy Guidelines generally indicate that subject to good siting and design wind energy developments can be accommodated within the ‘Hilly and Flat Farmland’ and the ‘transitional marginal landscape’ which make up the vast majority of the HSA zoned ‘Open to Consideration’. • Wind energy developments will be routinely subject to landscape impact assessment as part of the development management process. <p>It is considered that the size/scale of the change in the HSA landscape arising from Wind Energy is likely to be minor.</p> <p>The plan may also facilitate new Extractive developments in HSA areas. However, on the basis that the number of such new developments is likely to be low and their overall geographical extent is likely to be limited it is considered that the size and scale of change in the HSA landscape arising from Extractive Development is likely to be minor overall.</p> <p>However, the plan will also facilitate rural housing in HSA areas including in Structurally Weak Rural areas, Areas Under Strong Urban Pressure and Areas Under Holiday Home Pressure. In combination with existing and permitted rural housing development there is a potential for such development to have a moderate effect on such areas owing to the potential for such development</p>

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity of Receptor		Magnitude of Effect			Overall Landscape Effect	Comment
	Susceptibility	Value	Size/Scale	Geographical Extent	Duration/ Reversibility		
							<p>to cumulatively change the aesthetic/perceptual aspects or changes to the key characteristics of the landscape. Consequently, it is considered that the size/scale of the change in the HSA landscape arising from rural housing development is likely to be moderate.</p> <p>Geographical Extent: On the basis that the HSA areas are not generally elevated it is considered that such landscape effects arising from such development as Wind, Extractive or Rural housing will generally be confined to their host LCA area.</p> <p>Duration/ Reversibility: The landscape effects arising from rural housing and extractive developments is likely to be permanent and irreversible.</p> <p>Conclusion: Negative Effect. HSA areas have a moderate susceptibility. However they have a high value, the size/scale of landscapes effects arising from rural one-off housing may be moderate, be felt over a wide area and will be permanent/irreversible.</p>
Moderate Scenic Amenity (MSA)					P		<p>Susceptibility: MSA areas have a low susceptibility to change arising from development on the basis that they are described as having the <i>'capacity to absorb additional development that is suitably located, sited and designed subject to compliance with all other objectives and policies of the Plan'</i>.</p> <p>Value: MSA areas have a medium value on the basis that they are described as <i>'Primarily landscapes outside Area Plan Boundaries and Settlement Framework boundaries, that have a unique, rural and generally agricultural quality'</i>.</p> <p>Size/Scale: A significant part of MSA areas are zoned 'Open to Consideration' for wind energy zoning and Donegal is likely to experience further pressure for such development in the coming years. However, on the basis that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent of the individual landscape elements (e.g. the undulating agricultural landscape of large square fields in the Finn Valley LCA) which will be lost is likely to small relative to the overall extent of such elements within the HSA area. The Wind Energy Guidelines generally indicate that subject to good siting and design wind energy developments can be accommodated

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity of Receptor		Magnitude of Effect			Overall Landscape Effect	Comment
	Susceptibility	Value	Size/Scale	Geographical Extent	Duration/ Reversibility		
							<p>within the 'Hilly and Flat Farmland' and the 'transitional marginal landscape' which make up the vast majority of the MSA zoned 'Open to Consideration'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wind energy developments will be routinely subject to landscape impact assessment as part of the development management process. <p>It is considered that the size/scale of the change in the MSA landscape arising from Wind Energy is likely to be minor.</p> <p>The plan may also facilitate new Extractive developments in MSA areas. However, as the number of such new developments is likely to be low and their overall geographical extent is likely to be limited it is considered that the size and scale of change in the MSA landscape arising from Extractive Development is likely to be minor overall.</p> <p>However, the plan will also facilitate rural housing in MSA areas including in Structurally Weak Rural areas, Areas Under Strong Urban Pressure and Areas Under Holiday Home Pressure. In combination with existing and permitted rural housing development there is a potential for such development to have a moderate effect on such areas owing to the potential for such development to cumulatively change the aesthetic/perceptual aspects or changes to the key characteristics of the landscape. Consequently, it is considered that the size/scale of the change in the MSA landscape arising from rural housing development is likely to be moderate.</p> <p>Geographical Extent: On the basis that the MSA areas are generally located in the less elevated parts of the County is considered that such landscape effects arising from such development as Wind, Extractive or Rural housing will generally be confined to their host LCA area.</p> <p>Duration/Reversibility: The landscape effects arising from rural housing and extractive developments is likely to be long term and irreversible.</p> <p>Conclusion: Insignificant effect. MSA landscapes have a moderate value, the size/scaled of the effects arising from rural housing is likely to be moderate, the geographical extent of such effect is also likely to be moderate, and the effect is likely to be permanent and irreversible. However, on the basis of the</p>

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity of Receptor		Magnitude of Effect			Overall Landscape Effect	Comment
	Susceptibility	Value	Size/Scale	Geographical Extent	Duration/ Reversibility		
							low susceptibility of said landscapes it is considered that the overall landscape effects of the plan on MSA areas will be moderate overall.

Assessment of Visual Effects

Assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of plan/projects on the views available to people and their visual amenity. The abovementioned LIIEMA guidance advises that visual assessment should include inter alia:

- The establishment of a visual baseline, mapping the zone of theoretical visibility, identifying the visual receptors within those zones (i.e. the people that will be affected), identifying key viewpoints and views with said zone (e.g. the public viewpoints, transport route works places).
- The assessment and significant of visual effects including the sensitivity of visual receptors (including the susceptibility of visual receptors to change and the value attached to particular views) and the magnitude of the visual effects (include the size/scale of the visual effect, the geographical extent over which it will be felt, and duration/reversibility of the effects).

In this regard the visual effects of developments such as housing, wind energy and extractive development depends on the specific location, nature and extent of such individual developments and therefore is largely a matter for project level, rather than strategic level assessment.

Conclusion

On the basis of the above assessment and having particular regard to the likely effects of the plan on areas of Especially High Scenic Amenity and High Scenic Amenity Arising from cumulative rural one-off housing development (both existing and facilitated under this plan), it is considered that the **total effects** on the **landscape SEO** will be **negative** overall.

7.4 Inter Plan/Project In-combination and Cumulative Effects

7.4.1 Cumulative Assessment Methodology

Article 5 of the SEA Directive requires that the Environmental Report assesses the likely significant effects of implementing the plan or programme taking account its objectives and geographical scope. Furthermore, Annex I(f) of the directive states that likely significant effects include inter alia cumulative effects. The departmental SEA Guidance advises that SEA '*has the potential to assess cumulative effects which the case-by-case approach of project EIA may not be fully equipped to do*'.

In particular The EPA publication 'Good Practice Guidance on Cumulative Effects Assessment in Strategic Environmental Assessment (January 2020) states that:

- *Cumulative effects result from a combination of two or more individual effects on a receptor. Such effects can occur as a result of plans, programmes, projects and other actions ... in the past, present and the reasonably foreseeable future. They can result from impacts that may be individually insignificant, but collectively significant.*

The guidance notes that cumulative impacts include:

- Additive: Where impacts can be simply added together.
- Synergistic: Where 2 impacts together have a greater impact than adding up the individual impacts.

In summary this guidance advises that Cumulative Effects Assessment should adopt the following approach:

- **Task 1: Identify Receptors:** For example: Climate change, flooding, biodiversity, air quality, landscape etc, including scoping in impacts that, along might be insignificant but cumulatively may be significant.
- **Task 2: Identify Limits/Threshold/Standards** in relation to the key environmental receptors. (e.g. Climate Change Targets, Natura 2000 sites, Water Framework Directive Targets etc).
- **Task 3:** Discuss the current state of the environment without implementing the plan including:
 - Describing the **current state of the environment** and past trends.
 - **Identifying other actions** that could have cumulative effects. In this regard the guidance suggests limiting the analysis to existing and reasonably foreseeable actions including: continuation of past trends, projects under construction, permitted and subject projects not yet built, CDP's, national plans and other plans which set the framework for future development consents. The guidance also suggest that the relevance of the other actions depends on; the probability of affecting the receptors, the likelihood that the action will undermine efforts to keep receptor within standards/limits or otherwise impact on environmental commitments and whether the action jointly with the plan have a significant cumulative effect on the receptor.
 - **Describing the likely environmental impacts of these other actions.**
- **Task 4: Assess the impacts of the plan plus those of other actions** and compare these against the limits/thresholds to assess significance including:
 - Identifying the total effects of the plan. Note: The total effect of the plan are those of all of the plan policies and subcomponents together.
 - Identifying the cumulative effects (i.e. the total effects of the plan plus the effects of other actions).
- **Task 5: Mitigate** Significant Cumulative Impacts.
- **Task 6: Monitor** for Significant Cumulative Impacts.

The above approach has been used to assess the cumulative effects of the CDP 2024-2030.

7.4.2 Assessment of Cumulative Effects

Task 1: Identification of Key Environmental Receptors:

The key environmental receptors relevant to specific environmental aspects are identified within the current state of the environment section of this report and are summarised in the table below:

Table 7.7 Key Environmental Receptors.

Environmental Aspects	Key Receptor
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natura 2000 sites. Ramsar Sites Natural Heritage Areas. Nature Reserves Other threatened and protected species. Aquatic Habitats Biodiversity in the wider environment including within upland and Atlantic blanket bogs.
Population and Human Health	Human Populations within Donegal and adjoining area and human health factors related to air, water and noise and social deprivation.
Soils and Geology	A range of soil types and geology (identified in Section 3.3) and County Geological Sites.
Water	Water bodies Rivers, lakes, estuaries, coastal waters and ground waters through the county including in particular WFD High status objectives waterbodies, WFD Register of Protected Areas waterbodies and water bodies with poor or moderate WFD status
Air	Humans, Flora and Fauna.
Climatic Factors	Humans, Flora and Fauna.
Material Assets	Existing and new: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing, retail, commercial, industrial, healthcare and education developments. Transport, water, wastewater, waste, infrastructure.
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Architectural Heritage: Structures on the Record of Protected Structures and National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, ACAs within the plan area. Archaeological Monuments: Record of Monuments and Places Record of Historic Monuments, National Monuments, and Historic Graveyard
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape: 	Areas of Especially High Scenic Amenity, High Scenic Amenity and Moderate Scenic Amenity identified and designated view and prospects

Task 2: Key Limits/Threshold/Standards in relation to the key environmental receptors

The key environmental receptors are identified within the current state of the environment section of this report and are summarised in the table below:

Table 7.8 Key Limits/Thresholds/Standards In Relation To the Key Environmental Receptors.

Environmental Aspects	Limit/Threshold/Standard
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The overall aim of the Habitats Directive is to maintain or restore the favourable conservation status of habitats and species of community interest. Article 4(1) of the Bird Directive requires that Annex I species be the subject of special conservation measures and similar measures for regularly occurring migratory species.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Wildlife Act 1976 provides general protection to certain birds, animals and flora.
Population and Human Health	No specific relevant limit/threshold/standard
Soil	No specific relevant limit/threshold/standard
Water	Under the WFD Member states are required to achieve at least good status in all waters and must ensure that status does not deteriorate
Air	WHO and CAFE emission limits values.
Climatic Factors	Paris Agreement, European and national Greenhouse Gas Emission Targets.
Material Assets	No specific relevant limit/threshold/standard.
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record of Protected Structures: S.57(10)(b) of the Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended) states that a planning authority shall not grant permission for the demolition of RPS structure save in exceptional circumstances. Record of Monuments and Places: The National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 legally protects structures on the RMP.
Landscape:	No quantifiable limit/threshold/standard.

Task 3: Current State of Environment (including Other Relevant Actions which could have cumulative effects and likely environmental impacts of said actions)

- The current state of the environment (including key trends) for the various environmental aspects are detailed for the various environmental aspects in Section 3.
- Other actions which could have cumulative effects with the plan are identified in the above below.

Table 7.9 Other Key Actions Which Could have Cumulative Effects With the Plan.

Environmental Aspects	Other Actions (Other than CDP 2024)
CDP Plans and Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal
Other plans and projects which set the framework for future development consents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly Regional Development Strategy 2035 (Northern Ireland) National Planning Framework

Task 4: Assess the Impact of the Plan plus those of Other Actions

The total effects of the plan were identified and categorised in Table 7.2 and these findings are incorporated into the table below. The total effects of other relevant actions which may also impact on environmental receptors in the Donegal are also detailed, assessed and categorised in the table below. Collectively this facilitates a cumulative assessment (i.e. an assessment of the total effect of the plan plus those of other actions) across a range of environmental categories as detailed in the table below.

Task 5: Mitigation:

The measures envisaged to prevent and reduce any significant adverse effects related to the Plan are detailed in Section 8 of this report.

Task 6: Monitor

The measures to monitor the effects of the Plan are detailed in Section 10 of this report.

Table 7.10: Description of Environmental Impacts of Other Actions related to the Plan (i.e. Actions Other than provided for within the Plan)

Key

++	Significant Positive Effect
+	Positive Effect
0	No Significant Effect
-	Negative Effect
--	Significant Negative Effect
?	Uncertain Effect
N/A	NoIntereaction

Specific Other Action	Biodiversity Flora Fauna	Population Human Health	Soil	Water	Air	Climate	Material Assets	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Comments
TEN-T PRIPD (Strategic level)		?			?	?	?	?		<p>This project is currently at Phase 3 Design and Environmental Evaluation. The finalised design of the project will be subject to detailed project level EIAR. However, the Variation to the CDP 2018-2024 in respect of said project, which provided the strategic planning framework for the project, was subject to both an Environmental Report and Natura Impact Report.</p> <p>Said Environmental Report found that the strategic objective providing for the overall project did not identify any conflict with any Strategic Environmental Objective (SEO) which could not be mitigated to an acceptable level and otherwise found a number of uncertain impacts vis-a-vis said SEOs.</p> <p>Said Natura Impact Report concluded beyond reasonable scientific doubt that Variation would not adversely affect the integrity of any Natura 2000 site having regard to the mitigation measures outlined in the report.</p>
Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly										<p>The Natura Impact Statement for the RSES concludes that <i>'the NW RSES would not adversely affect the integrity of a European site (whether individually or in combination with other plans or projects) subject to application of all of the mitigation measures identified in this NIR.'</i></p> <p>Otherwise the Environmental Report for the RSES identifies a variety of positive, neutral and negative effects in each of the environmental categories. It is therefore difficult to neatly categorise the effects of the RSES on all environmental areas opposite and said areas have been left blank accordingly.</p>

Specific Other Action	Biodiversity Flora Fauna	Population Human Health	Soil	Water	Air	Climate	Material Assets	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Comments
										<p>However, Section 8.4 Cumulative Effects of the Environmental Report for the RSES (which takes into account the 'interaction of regional policy objectives within the RSES') states that: <i>'the greatest cumulative benefit should be in relation to PHH'</i>, and otherwise states that <i>'there is potential for cumulative negative impacts on receptors such as biodiversity, water, soils, cultural heritage and landscape.'</i></p> <p>Negative impacts on biodiversity, and water arising from the RSES outside Donegal may also negatively impact on said environmental receptors in Donegal as the plan area is inherently linked to wider ecosystems and hydrological systems. (e.g. additional development within the River Foyle or Erne catchments)</p> <p>However, given the emphasis on the 'sustainable growth of more compact urban and rural settlements' contained within the RSES it is considered that the strategy will not have a negative effect on landscape receptors Donegal. Consequently, the effect of the RSES on landscape has been rated as insignificant.</p> <p>In addition, negative impacts on receptors which are geographically specific to Donegal such as its soil resource, and cultural heritage are unlikely to be significantly impacted by any negative effects arising from the RSES elsewhere. Consequently, the impact of the RSES on these receptors has rated as insignificant.</p>
National Planning Framework:										<p>The Natura Impact Statement for the NPF concludes that subject to the mitigation proposed in the NIS being incorporated, there will be no adverse effects on the integrity of any European Sites as a result of implementation of the NPF.</p> <p>Otherwise the Environmental Report for the NPF identifies a variety of positive, neutral and negative effects in each of the environmental categories. It is therefore difficult to neatly categorise the effects of the NPF on all environmental categories opposite.</p> <p>However Section 8.3.10 Cumulative Impacts of said Report states that <i>'the greatest cumulative benefit should be in relation to Population and Human Health'</i> and otherwise states that <i>'there is potential for cumulative negative impacts on receptors such as biodiversity, water, soils, cultural heritage and landscape.'</i></p> <p>Negative effects arising from the NPF on Biodiversity and Water may also impact on said receptors in Donegal and are thus categorised as negative in the assessment opposite. However it is unlikely that the NPF will give rise to negative impact on landscape receptors in Donegal given its emphasis on compact growth, and otherwise any negative effect arising from the NPF on soils and cultural heritage</p>

Specific Other Action	Biodiversity Flora Fauna	Population Human Health	Soil	Water	Air	Climate	Material Assets	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Comments
Regional Development Strategy (Northern Ireland)										<p>elsewhere are unlikely to affect said receptors within Donegal. Consequently, the impact of the NPF on these receptors is categorised as insignificant.</p> <p>The assessment section of the Environmental Report on the RDS (NI) (p.117 refers) noted that the RDS would, in summary have the following cumulative environmental effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity: Cumulative effects upon habitats and biodiversity in urban locations as a result of additional housing and infrastructure: • Population: Urban populations will be supported by regeneration initiatives, additional housing and improved economic prospects, whilst rural populations will be aided by better access to services and facilities. • Human Health: Substantial levels of development may lead to negative impacts on air quality and consequently human health. However, this may be offset by enhanced access to services, improved walking and cycling opportunities, and reduced congestion. • Soil: Reduction of waste may reduce landfill requirements. However, this would offset by significant developments around settlements and climate change may result in soil erosion. • Water: Development pressure may impact upon water quality in certain areas if appropriate infrastructure is not in place.. • Air: Guidance to reduce car use, promote public transport and encourage walking and cycling should mitigate emission increases. • Climate: Positive guidance on climate change mitigation but however reductions only possible if cumulative actions taken at global level. • Material Assets: Transport, waste and water infrastructure will be cumulative affected by increases in development. Effects will be negative unless additional investment takes place to ensure capacity is phased. • Cultural Heritage: Guidance to reduce vehicles numbers, reduce congestion and improve environmental quality should have positive effects. • Landscape: Landscape on urban fringe may be impacted.
Total Effects Of Other Actions										<p>The abovementioned assessment other key plans and projects of relevance to Donegal broadly indicate that they would have a positive effect on the Population/Human Health and Material Assets Categories, a negative effect on biodiversity and water categories and an insignificant effect on other environmental categories.</p>
Total Effect of the CDP 2024-2030 (replicated from Table 7.2)										<p>The total effects for the CDP 2024-2030 area identified at the end of Table 7.2 are replicated opposite.</p>

Specific Other Action	Biodiversity Flora Fauna	Population Human Health	Soil	Water	Air	Climate	Material Assets	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Comments
										<p>It is therefore considered that the cumulative effects of the CDP 2024-2030 and other plans can be categorised as opposite. In this regard in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity: Individually the plan will give rise to negative effects on biodiversity arising from the cumulative effects of the significant quantum of dispersed development in the wider environment facilitated by the plan. This negative effect may be reinforced by negative effects arising from other plans owing to the connectivity between habitats and species between geographical areas. • Population and Human Health: Individually the plan will result in positive effects on populations and human health arising from, inter alia overall population and economic growth, additional quality and socially inclusive housing, improved active travel infrastructure, placemaking and associated quality of life and flood risk management policies. The positive effects of the plan are likely to be reinforced by positive effects of NPF, RSES and the RDS (NI) which will aid economic prosperity, infrastructural connectivity etc. • Soil: Individually the plan will have no significant effect on soils and geology as a result of, inter alia, overall extent of the soil and geology resource and lack of specific protection thresholds, avoidance of high landslide susceptibility areas for wind energy, overall focus on compact, brownfield and infill development rather than expansive greenfield development within Local Areas Plans and Settlement Frameworks, wastewater and SuDS policies. No significant effects on soils and geology were identified as a result of other relevant plans. • Water: Individually the plan is likely to have a negative effect on water quality given: the poor state of existing water quality in Donegal, the cumulative extent of rural housing and commercial development reliant on individual WWTSs facilitated by the plan, the overall quantum of development provided by the plan and associated risk of temporary construction related effects on water quality and the fact that 29 settlements in Donegal currently have no spare WWT capacity. This negative effect may be reinforced by negative effects arising from other plans owing to the hydrological connectivity within wide river catchments (e.g. water pollution within the wider Foyle and Erne Catchments and coastal areas).

Specific Other Action	Biodiversity Flora Fauna	Population Human Health	Soil	Water	Air	Climate	Material Assets	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Comments
										<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air: Individually the plan is likely to have a negative effect on air quality from the significant growth in population and development facilitated by the plan, the associated growth in travel demand, the significant amount of dispersed/car dependent development enabled by the plan, and the associated net growth in transport related air pollutions emissions particularly having regard to the new stricter WHO air quality guidelines. However negative effects arising from other plans have not been identified. • Climate: Individually the plan is likely to have a negative effect on climate factors arising, inter alia, from the significant population growth, range and quantum of development, and dispersed development facilitated by the plan and the associated significant additional construction, transport, housing, and commercial, and agricultural related greenhouses gas emissions. However negative effects on climate were not identified in other relevant plans. • Material Assets: Individually the plan is likely to have a positive effect on material assets as it will facilitate new and improved: housing, transport infrastructure, commercial and retail assets, education, recreational and community facilities and promote urban regeneration. In addition, the plan will protect the new and existing material assets through the application of flood risk management policies. The positive effects of the plan are likely to be reinforced by the positive effects of other plans (e.g. strategic roads projects). • Cultural Heritage: Individually the plan is likely to have a positive effect on Cultural Heritage arising from the extensive suite of architectural and archaeological protection objectives and policies including the identification of new Architectural Conservation Areas. In addition, the Gaeltacht provisions of the plan area likely to have a positive effect on its socio-economic and linguistic vibrancy. In addition, any positive effects of other plans (e.g., overarching planning frameworks such as the NPF and the RSES) may also reinforce this positive effect. • Landscape: Individually the plan is likely to have a negative effect on landscape having particular regard to the likely effects of the plan on areas of Especially High Scenic Amenity and High Scenic Amenity Arising from cumulative rural one-off housing development (both

Specific Other Action	Biodiversity Flora Fauna	Population Human Health	Soil	Water	Air	Climate	Material Assets	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Comments
										<p>existing and that facilitated by the plan). The negative effects of the plan are not likely to be reinforced by negative effects arising from other plans.</p>

8 Measures Envisaged to Prevent, Reduce and as Fully as Possible Offset Any Significant Adverse Environmental Effects on the Environment of the CDP 2024-2030

8.1 Introduction

Article 5(1) of the SEA Directive requires that an Environmental Report contains the information referred to in Annex 1 of the Directive. In turn Annex 1(g) of the Directive requires that 'the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme' be contained within the Environmental Report. The SEA Guidelines states that where the environmental assessment identifies significant adverse effects consideration should be given in the first instance to preventing such effects or, where this not possible for stated reasons to lessening or offsetting those effects.

Significant adverse environmental effects can be prevented, reduced, and offset through a wide range of plan making and associated implementation measures including:

- Environmentally sensitive land use zonings/spatial frameworks which avoid or reduce environmental effects in the first instance (e.g. avoiding developments on or adjacent to Natura 2000 sites, Natural Heritage Areas, Nature Reserves, or other biodiversity sensitive areas, reducing transport related air pollution and greenhouse emissions by providing for compact growth and ensuring new residential development is located within walking distance of services).
- The formulation and application of environmental protection policies and objectives (e.g. policies which require the retention of existing trees and hedgerows or the provision of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)/Nature Based Solutions in new development).
- The imposition and enforcement of planning conditions which prevent or reduce environmental impacts during the construction and operational phases of development (e.g. construction management and effluent treatment conditions).
- Policies and objective and spatial frameworks which offset other environmental effects of the plan by creating new environmental assets (e.g. policies which provide for new green infrastructure, new tree planting in new developments etc).

As such the following measures have been taken into account in the plan making phase, and may be taken in the plan implementation phase, to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse environmental effects related to the CDP 2024-2030.

8.2 Measures to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse environmental effects related to the CDP 2024-2030.

Prevention and Reduction of Significant Adverse Environmental Effects through Land Use Zonings:

Environmental issues were fully integrated into the plan making process from the outset to ensure that the plan minimises effects on key environmental receptors and otherwise promotes sustainable development. In this regard SEA scoping with the environmental authorities, desktop assessment, the

collation of environmental data, and on the ground research, enabled the identification and consideration of potential effects on key environmental receptors. Such receptors include Natura 2000 sites, proposed Natural Heritage Areas and Woodlands, at risk waterbodies, flood risk areas, built and archaeological heritage and scenic landscapes. In addition, the plan making team took best practice and planning guidance into account with regard to the promotion of sustainable development (e.g. National Planning Framework, Flood Risk Management Guidelines). This allowed the formulation of a spatial development framework which helps to prevent and reduce significant adverse environmental effects as detailed in the table below.

Table 8.1 Prevention and Reduction of Significant Adverse Environmental Effects through Land Use Zonings in the CDP 2024-2030

Potential Significant Adverse Environmental Effect	How Land Use Zoning Provision in the CDP 2024-2030 will Prevent and Reduce Significant Adverse Environmental Effects
Direct loss or fragmentation of habitat within designated biodiversity sites (e.g. SACs, SPAs, Ramsar Site, Nature reserves RNHAs, FPM catchments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buncrana: Avoiding direct impacts on the Lough Swilly SAC in the townlands of Tullyarvan and Ballynarry by zoning said parts of the SAC as High Amenity which precludes any significant development. • Ballybofey/Stranorlar: Avoiding direct impacts on the River Finn SAC and Drumboe Woods by zoning said sites as Open Space and Recreation which precludes any significant development. • Bundoran: Avoiding direct impacts on the Lough Melvin SAC by zoning said site as Open Space and Recreation which precludes any significant development. • Other Settlements: Avoiding direct impacts on SACs' SPA's, Nature Reserves, Natural Heritage Areas etc by not zoning such areas for significant development. • Open Countryside: Avoiding direct impacts on SACs, SPAs Ramsar Sites, Nature Reserves, NHAs and Fresh Water Pearl Mussel Catchments by zoning said areas as 'Not Normally Permissible' for Wind Energy Development.
Loss of Biodiversity in the rural hinterland of large Urban Settlements or settlements under Strong Holiday Home Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning areas in the rural hinterland of large settlements (e.g. Letterkenny, Derry, Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar, Donegal Town etc) as Areas Under Strong Urban Influence which restrict new rural housing to applicants, or whose parents or grandparents, have resided in said areas for at least 7 years thus limiting the overall quantum of new rural housing developments in such areas. • Zoning areas in the rural hinterland of Dunfanaghy, Downings, Rossnowlagh, Narin and Portnoo as Areas under Strong Holiday Home Influence which restricts new rural housing to the abovementioned applicants thus limiting the overall quantum of new rural housing developments in such areas.
Poor human health (e.g. obesity, poor cardiovascular functionality and respiratory diseases)	Zoning residential areas in compact locations close to services and amenities (e.g. Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Bundoran and other settlements) to encourage a modal shift to active travel modes (i.e. walking and cycling) and reduce overall vehicular traffic demand and associated PM and NOx pollution.
Air pollution (e.g. PM 2.5 and NOx) arising from vehicular emissions	Zoning residential areas in compact locations close to services and amenities (e.g. Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Bundoran and other settlements) to reduce journey length and encourage a modal shift to walking and cycling and thereby reduce transport related air pollution.
Greenhouse Gas emissions arising from vehicular emissions	Zoning residential areas in compact locations close to services and amenities (e.g. Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Bundoran and other settlements) to reduce journey length and encourage a modal

	shift to walking and cycling and thereby reduce transport related greenhouse gas emissions.
Flood Risk to new residential, commercial, and other development and increasing flood risk elsewhere.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buncrana: Avoiding flood risk for new developments by zoning flood risk areas adjacent to Lough Swilly, and the Owenkillev and Crana Rivers as Open Space and Recreation or Rural/Agricultural which preclude significant development. • Ballybofey/Stranorlar: Avoiding flood risk for new development in the flood plain of the River Finn by zoning such areas as Open Space and Recreation which precludes significant development. • Bundoran: Avoiding flood risk for new development in the flood plain of the River Bradoge by zoning said areas as Open Space and Recreation which precludes significant development. • Other Settlements: Avoiding flood risk for new development in other settlements by not including said areas within the settlement framework boundary (e.g. Kilmacrenan)
Loss of Architectural Heritage within Ardara, Ballyshannon, Buncrana, Letterkenny, Ramelton, Raphoe, and Moville	Designating areas of significant Built Heritage in the Ardara, Ballyshannon, Buncrana, Letterkenny, Ramelton, Raphoe, and Moville as Architectural Heritage Areas (ACAs) to preserve the special architectural heritage of said areas.
Loss of landscape character or scenic amenity in areas under Especially High Scenic Amenity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designating areas sublime natural landscapes of the highest quality that are synonymous with the identity of County Donegal as area of Especially High Scenic Amenity (EHSA) which are in turn protected by policy L-P-1 and other development management policies. • Designating said EHSA areas as 'Not Normally Permissible' for Wind Energy Development which will protect their landscape character and scenic amenity.
Loss of landscape character or scenic amenity in areas	Designating landscapes of significant aesthetic, cultural, heritage and environmental quality that are unique to their locality and form a fundamental element of the landscape and identity of County Donegal as High Scenic Amenity which are in turn protected by Policy L-P-2 and general development management considerations.

Prevention and Reduction of Significant Adverse Environmental Effects through Policies and Objectives

Environmental protection policies and objectives in land use plans are also important measures in avoiding and reducing adverse environmental effects in both the design and approval stages of new private and public developments. For example they can support projects which actively reduce environmental effects (e.g. public transport and active travel projects), at preplanning stage they can led to the formulation of more sustainable siting and design proposals (e.g. retaining existing on site environmental assets or achieving setbacks from water courses), whilst at planning assessment/approval stage they can be utilised to either modify design proposals to result in more environmental friendly developments or as appropriate to prevent unsustainable developments occurring. In addition, policies and objectives within land use plans can facilitate projects which in turn enable the avoidance or reduction environmental effects (e.g. the provision public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure).

As part of the plan making process a range of policies and objectives were devised which either directly or indirectly avoid or reduce effectss on key environmental receptors as detailed in the table below.

Table 8.2 Prevention and Reduction of Significant Adverse Environmental Effects through Policies and Objectives in the CDP 2024-2030

Potential Significant Adverse Environmental Effect	How Policies and Objectives in the CDP 2024-2030 will Prevent and Reduce Significant Adverse Environmental Effects (summary of policy/objective).
Adverse effects (e.g. loss/fragmentation of habitat, species disturbance, species population density, water quality impacts) within designated biodiversity sites (e.g. SACs, SPAs, Ramsar Site, Nature Reserves, NHAs, FPM catchments).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BIO-O-1: Preserve and enhance the biodiversity of the County in accordance with the relevant EU policies and national legislation. • BIO-P-X: Have regard to the objectives of the National Biodiversity Action Plan and National Peatlands Strategy. • BIO-P-1: Require all developments to comply with the habitats directive and Bird Directive • BIO-P-2: Require all developments to conserve/protect qualifying interests of Ramsar Sites, Nature Reserves, Natural Heritage Areas (NHA), proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA), and any species protected under the Wildlife Act.
Loss of Biodiversity (e.g. loss/Fragmentation of habitat and associated species) in the wider environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BIO-P-3: Policy to protect, where justified, local biodiversity features (e.g. hedgerows/field boundaries, trees, woodlands, wetlands, water bodies, riverbanks and peatlands), only requiring the removal of roadside hedgerow/field boundaries is so far it is necessary to safeguard public safety, requiring native planning and nature based solutions for new developments and no net biodiversity loss for larger developments. • BIO-P-4: Ensure that developments do not introduce or spread invasive species. • BIO-P-5: ensuring that new developments do not have an adverse impact on pollinator habitat and species. • BIO-P-X: Avoid adverse levels of light pollution in Donegal. • RH-P-1: Consider proposal for new one-off rural housing in areas under Strong Urban Influence only where applicants can demonstrate that they, their parents or grandparents have resided in the are for 7 years. Note: this policy in effect limits the amount of new rural housing and therefore prevents/reduces biodiversity impacts. • UB-P-7: Require multiple residential development to have due regard to ... biodiversity considerations. • RH-P-2: Consider proposals for new one-off rural housing in areas under strong holiday home influence only where applicants can demonstrate that they, their parents or grandparents have resided in the are for 7 years. Note: this policy in effect limits the amount of new rural housing and therefore prevents/reduces biodiversity impacts. • RH-P-9: Siting and design requirements for new rural housing including that such development must blend with the land form, existing trees and vegetation. • BS-RCNH-P-2: Requirements for Drumboe Castles and Environs Masterplan Area including the protection of the heavily wooded zone therein. • BS-RCNH-P-5: Requirements for the reuse of historic railway corridors including the protection of the existing mature trees along said corridors.
Poor human health (e.g. obesity, poor cardiovascular functionality and respiratory diseases)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CS-P-3: Facilitate active travel infrastructure in Wild Atlantic Way settlements. • UB-P-7: Require the design and layout of new multiple residential developments to have regard to active travel.
Air pollution (e.g. PM 2.5 and NOX) arising from vehicular emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T-O-2: Secure the development of strategic, coherent and high-quality walking and cycling networks.

Potential Significant Adverse Environmental Effect	How Policies and Objectives in the CDP 2024-2030 will Prevent and Reduce Significant Adverse Environmental Effects (summary of policy/objective).
Greenhouse Gas emissions arising from vehicular emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC-AT-O-X: Prepare a detailed Local Transport Plan for Buncrana. • T-O-3: Protect and acquire the land necessary for sustainable transport projects identified in the plan. • T-O-4: Provide safer routes to schools. • T-O-5: Retrospectively provide safe walking and cycling infrastructure segregated from other traffic. • T-P-3: Require development proposal to protect potential active travel linkages and that the design and layout of development incorporate provision for pedestrian movement. • T-P-X: Require new developments include a street network based on filtered permeability. • T-P-X: Support the principle of an active travel link between Ballyshannon and Belleek. • T-O-6: Support the provision of new and the expansion of existing public transport. • T-O-7: Secure the provision of a rail link between Letterkenny and Derry and Letterkenny and Sligo. • T-O-8: Develop a centrally located transport hub in Letterkenny. • T-P-5: Facilitate off street charging facilities. • CC-P-1: Support the provision of new social and community infrastructure in sustainable development in accordance with sequential test. • RS-P-3: Require retail proposals to be subject to a retail sequential test in accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines
Water Pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WW-O-1: Maintain, improve and enhance the quality of surface and ground waters in accordance with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. • WW-O-2: Provide adequate level of wastewater treatment in settlements. • WW-O-3: Provide adequate, reliable and clean supply of drinking water. • WW-P-1: Facilitate the provision of new and the upgrading of existing wastewater infrastructure. • WW-P-2: Ensure that developments do not have an adverse impact on surface and ground water quality and is not contrary to the Water Framework Objectives. • WW-P-4: Require development connecting to the public wastewater network to provide confirmation from Irish Water that the wastewater system in the area has treatment capacity and network availability to serve the development. • WW-P-5: Require larger developments (PE>10) in areas with no/inadequate wastewater treatment capacity/network to provide independent WWTS in accordance with EPA's Treatment systems for Small Communities, Business, Leisure Centres and Hotels manual or any subsequent or updated relevant code of practice. • WW-P-6: Facilitate single housing/developments with PE<10 in unsewered areas where they would provide effluent treatment in accordance with EPA's Code of Practice for Domestic Waste Water Treatment Systems (PE. ≤10) (EPA 2021) or any subsequent or updated code of practice.
Greenhouse Gas emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CA-O-1: promote sustainable settlement and transportation strategies in urban and rural areas including measures to reduce energy demand and reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gas

Potential Significant Adverse Environmental Effect	How Policies and Objectives in the CDP 2024-2030 will Prevent and Reduce Significant Adverse Environmental Effects (summary of policy/objective).
	<p>emissions and address the necessity of adaptation to climate change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CA-O-2: support and implement: the UN Sustainable Development Goals, NPF Climate Change National Policy Objectives, objectives in climate Action Plan 2021, relevant Regional Policy Objectives in the RSES, and actions in DCC’s Climate Adaptation Strategy • CA-P-X: Integrate green infrastructure into new developments.
<p>Flood Risk to new residential, retail, commercial, community and other development and increasing flood risk to existing properties and infrastructure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F-O-1: Ensure that new development does not cause unacceptable new flood risks or exacerbate existing flood risk. • F-P-1: Only permit development where flood or surface water management issues can be successfully addressed and/or where there is no unacceptable residual flood risk for the development or private property/public infrastructure elsewhere including adherence • F-P-2: Require the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage system for urban development proposals. • F-P-3: Support long and short term flood prevention works. • F-P-X: Minor Development 2 only be supported within Established Development 2 zonings. • F-P-X: Minor Developments Only will only be supported within Rural Agricultural 2 areas. • F-P-X: Within flood risk areas in Settlement Frameworks minor development only will only be supported in areas Established Development and water compatible uses will only be supported in new undeveloped areas.
<p>Loss of Cultural Heritage (e.g. Architectural and Archaeological)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AH-O-3: Protect all structures and parts of structures on the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) . • AH-P-3: Protect all structures or parts of structures on the RPS and require appropriate development of such structures. • AH-P-4: Extend the RPS and identify structures for inclusion on same based on Architectural Protection guidelines, NIAH and Ministerial Recommendations. • AH-P-5: Require works to RPS structures to provide endangerment, abandonment and/or dereliction of the structure. • AH-O-4: Preserve the special character of the Ardara, Ballyshannon, Bunrana, Letterkenny, Ramelton, Raphoe, and Moville Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs). • AH-P-6: Development Management requirements in relation to the protection of ACAs. • AH-P-7: Require appropriate development of NIAH structures. • AH-P-8: Ensure high quality design which may impact to • AYH-O-1: Conserve and Protect archaeological heritage. • AYH-P-1: Conserve and protect: all forms of archaeological heritage in accordance Archaeological Protection Guidelines, zones of archaeological protection in urban areas of Ballyshannon, Donegal Town, Killybegs, Lifford, Ramelton, Rathmullan and St. Johnston.
<p>Loss of landscape character/ scenic/visual amenity in scenic landscapes, coastlines, designated views and other sensitive areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L-P-1: Protect areas identified as Especially High Scenic Amenity. • L-P-2: Protect areas identified as High Scenic Amenity and Moderate Scenic Amenity.

Potential Significant Adverse Environmental Effect	How Policies and Objectives in the CDP 2024-2030 will Prevent and Reduce Significant Adverse Environmental Effects (summary of policy/objective).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L-P-3: Safeguard the scenic context, cultural landscape significant amenities, ... of the county’s coastline from inappropriate development. • L-P-4: Protect the character of approach roads to Glenveagh National Park. • L-P-5 Protect views to and from St John’s Point. • L-P-6: Safeguard prominent skylines and ridgelines from inappropriate development. • L-P-7: Preserve views of special amenity value. • L-P-8: Preserve scenic views between public roads and the sea, lakes and rivers. • TOU-P-2: Not to permit development which would materially detract from the visual and scenic amenities along the route of the Wild Atlantic Way. • TOU-P-3: Not to permit developments which would detract from the visual/scenic amenities on the approach roads to, the visual setting of, or the views to be had from significant tourism attractions.

Avoidance and Reduction of Significant Adverse Environmental Effects through Planning Approvals

In approving new developments planning authorities have the statutory power to impose environmental protection conditions which can avoid and reduce the environmental effects of such developments. Examples of the measures contained in such planning conditions include:

- Control measures to avoid/reduce sedimentation of surface waters such as avoiding effects on existing watercourses, diversion of surface waters away from work areas, careful stockpiling of spoil material away from watercourses, silt traps, and sedimentation ponds, controlled release to vegetation etc.
- Control measures to avoid/reduce water pollution including the provision of bunded storage facilities for hydrocarbons and chemicals significantly removed from watercourses.
- Adherence of site preparation and construction to best practice and the Inland Fisheries Ireland Requirements for the Protection of Fisheries Habitat during Construction and Development Works at River Sites.
- Provision of suitable specific effluent treatment system and approximately sized percolation areas.
- Direction and interception of surface waters from hardcore/concreted/tarmacadam via serviced sediment and oil interceptor traps.
- The timing of works to avoid any potential temporary negative noise effects on the qualifying interests of Natura 2000 sites (e.g. wintering birds).
- The timing of construction works to avoid temporary negative noise effects on local residential populations (e.g. specific days and times).
- The retention of existing trees, hedgerows and waterbodies within development sites.
- The provision of landscaping (e.g. planting of hedgerows trees etc) to help screen and reduce the visual impact of new developments.
- Archaeological monitoring during site excavation works.
- Invasive species management plans to control the spread of such species.

Measures to Offset Significant Adverse Environment

Land use plans can also play in role in offsetting the other adverse environmental effects of the plan by facilitating projects and planning measures which actively enhance existing or create new environmental assets. The CDP 2018-2024 contains a range of policies and objectives to this effect as summarised below:

- **WW-P-10:** Only permit developments where they provide nature based solutions in water management systems within public and private developments.

- **BIO-P-3:** Require that development proposals provide biodiversity enhancement measures (e.g. native tree and hedgerow planting, and nature-based water management solutions).
- **BIO-P-5:** Require pollinator friendly planting and management regimes as part of planting/landscaping schemes for new public development
- **CC-O-2:** provide a network of high-quality green, active and recreational infrastructure at sustainable and socially inclusive locations throughout the county
- **TOU-P-7:** Requirements for holiday resorts including natural boundary screening and internal planting
- **BS-RCNH-P-3:** Support the provision of a central urban public park in Ballybofey/Stranorlar.

9. Selection of Alternatives for the County Donegal Development Plan 2024-2030

9. Alternatives to the CDP 2024-2030

9.1 Introduction:

There may be a range of potential alternatives to achieve the strategic objectives of a land use plan and each of these alternatives may have varying levels of environmental impact. In this regard the assessment of alternatives is a key part of the overall Strategic Environmental Assessment process and the Environmental Report should broadly seek to document how key strategic decisions have been made including examining the environmental impacts of each alternative.

Article 5 of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive requires the Environmental Report identify, describe and evaluate, "*reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme*". Furthermore, the Schedule 2B(h) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001(as amended) requires that the Environmental Report contains '*an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken*'.

The SEA Guidelines further suggest that there are 3 stages to the consideration of Alternatives namely to:

1. **Identify reasonable alternatives:** Noting that the higher the level of the plan the more strategic the alternatives, in development plans alternatives may relate to various patterns of development, where a plan has limited strategic options(for example a development plan should be comply with strategic policy) a possible approach is to consider likely significant effects of different scenarios around the preferred strategic alternative, it is possible to rule out unreasonable alternatives at an early stage, and the "do-nothing" alternative is not a reasonable alternative.
2. **Assessing and Comparing Alternatives:** Advising that once reasonable alternatives have been identified they should be compared against each other, they should be assessed at a high level against the SEO's, an assessment matrix may be used, and the supporting text should identify the main differences between the environmental impacts of the alternatives.
3. **Providing Reasons for the choice of Preferred Alternatives:** Advises that the ER should why the preferred options was chosen and over other reasonable alternatives and refers to EPA guidelines on alternatives.

9.2 Identification of Alternatives

9.2.1 EPA SEA Guidance

The EPA's Guidance document *Developing and Assessing Alternatives in Strategic Environmental Assessment* advises that alternatives should be:

- Realistic: Achieve the plan's objectives.
 - Reasonable: Based on Socio-economic and environmental evidence.
 - Viable: Technically and institutional feasible.
 - Implementable: Realised within the plans timeframe and resources.
- and they should promote environmental benefits whilst fulfilling the plan's/programmers objectives.

9.2.2 Factors Influencing the Range of Potential Alternatives

As alluded to in the SEA Guidelines the range of available alternatives for a development plan is in effect constrained and limited by a number of factors including the need to comply with legislation,

national and regional planning frameworks, ministerial planning guidelines as well as geographical, infrastructural and environmental constraints (see below).

Legislative

- S.9(6) of the Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended) states that a Development Plan shall: *'in so far as is practicable be consistent with such national plans, policies or strategies as the Minister determines relate to proper planning and sustainable development'*
- Section 10(1A) of said Act requires a development plan includes a Core Strategy which *shows that the development objectives in the development plan are consistent, as far as practicable, with national and regional development objectives set out in the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy and with specific planning policy requirements specified in guidelines.* In addition S.10(1A)(f) requires that the Core Strategy also set out a Settlement Hierarchy.
- S.10(2) of said Act requires that development plan contain mandatory objectives including for: the provision of transport and energy infrastructure, the conservation and protection of the environment, compliance with surface and ground water regulations, social community and cultural requirements, preservation of the character of the landscape, protection of architectural and archaeological structures, the promotion of sustainable settlement and transportation strategies, and the preservation of public rights of way.

National, Regional and Countywide Planning Frameworks

The CDP 2024-2030 is therefore informed and guided by higher level planning frameworks and ministerial guidelines which limit the alternatives actually available for the plan. For example:

- **The National Planning Framework Project Ireland 2040:** Set outs National Strategic Outcomes including Compact Growth, Sustainable Mobility, Enhanced Amenity and Heritage, and Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society, targets 40% of all new housing to be delivered within the existing built-up areas of cities, towns and villages on infill and/or Brownfield sites and projects a projection of 183,500 persons for Donegal in 2031.
- **Climate Change Strategy:** The Low Carbon and Climate Change Act 2021 establishes a 'national climate objective', which commits to pursue and achieve no later than 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity-rich, environmentally-sustainable and climate-neutral economy. The Climate Action Plan 2023 sets out a number of 2030 goals including: 80% electricity generation from renewable sources, retrofitting insulation in 500,000 homes, and 500,000 extra sustainable transport journeys.
- **Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Regional Assembly area,** for example seeks to: ensure that at least 40% of new housing in Letterkenny and 30% of new homes within the settlements over 1,500 pop. are located within the built up urban footprint, grow Letterkenny as a Regional Centre to 27,300 residents by 2040, upgrade the Wild Atlantic Way Touring network, support a secure, reliable supply of renewable energy, protect, upgrade and expand the Key Fisheries Ports of Killybegs and Greencastle, and promote, enhance and protect the linguistic cultural and heritage value of Gaeltacht communities.
- **The Retail Planning Guidelines:** Aims to enhance the vitality and viability of city and town centres through sequential development. In this regard the guidelines identify town centres as the overall preferred location for new retail development.
- **The Flood Risk Management Guidelines:** Seeks to avoid development in areas at risk of flooding, particularly floodplains, unless it can be strategically justified and where the flood risk can be reduced or managed to an acceptable level without increasing flood risk elsewhere;

Geographic, Infrastructural and Environmental:

The future development alternatives for Donegal are further constrained and limited by:

- Geographical constraints (e.g. topography, hydrology and existing settlement patterns) which practically limit and guide where new development can occur.
- Infrastructural constraints (e.g. location and capacity of roads, footpaths, watermain, and wastewater network) which limit where new development can be facilitated. In addition, the identified location of planned new infrastructure (e.g. the TEN-T PRIPD Strategic Road Project) also limits the available alternatives.

- Natura 2000 sites which precludes developments which would have an adverse effect on these sites in accordance with the Habitats and Birds Directive.
- The Flood Risk Areas, in accordance, with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines, which effectively restricts most development types in such areas.

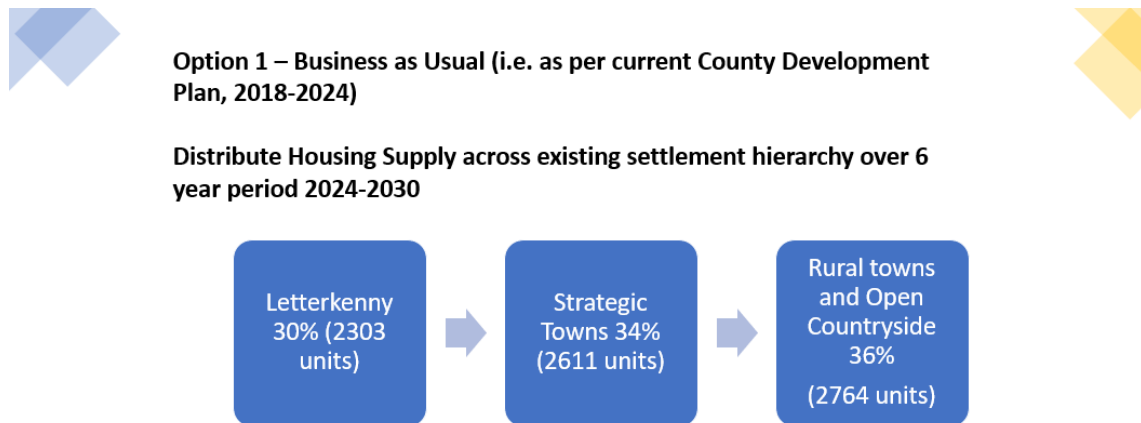
9.2.3 Methodology for Identifying Alternatives

The alternatives for the core strategy/settlement hierarchy, objectives and policies and geographic specific land use zoning for the CDP 2024-2030 were developed through the following process:

- **Initial Public Consultation:** A pre-draft public consultations was held from the 8th of April to the 3rd of June 2022 during which an Issues Paper was published on www.donegaldevplan.ie, 11 public drop in events were held and 120 submissions from both the public and prescribed bodies were received.
- **Consultation with Environmental Authorities:** As part of SEA Scoping submissions were received from a number of environmental authorities.
- **Assessment of Core Strategy/Settlement Framework Options:** A number of realistic reasonable, viable and implementable options for delivering growth in line with NPF/RSES targets were developed. In this regard alternatives involving the significant development of smaller settlements were ruled out as being unreasonable, unviable and unimplementable as evidence from the Irish Water Wastewater Treatment Capacity Register indicated that wastewater treatment capacity for such settlements would not be available during the lifetime of the plan.
- **Desktop/Field Research:** During the preparation of the Area Plans for Bunrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Bundoran and settlement frameworks a range of potential sites for, inter alia, new residential and economic development were identified for further assessment.

9.2.3 Alternatives Identified

On the basis of the above guidance, constraints and approach a number of Core Strategy/settlement hierarchy options, objectives and policies choices, and potential land use zonings were identified. The initial core strategy options are detailed below.



Strategic Towns

Layer 2A: [An Clochán Liath \(Dungloe\)](#), [Ballybofey-Stranorlar](#), [Ballyshannon](#), [Bunrana](#), [Bundoran](#), [Carndonagh](#), [Donegal Town](#), [Killybegs](#).

Layer 2B: [Ailt an Chorráin \(Burtonport\)](#), [An Bun Beg-Doirí-Beaga](#), [An Charraig](#), [An Fál Carrach](#), [Ardara](#), [Ballyliffen](#), [Bridgend](#), [Dunfanaghy](#), [Glenties](#), [Greencastle](#), [Lifford](#), [Malin](#), [Moville](#), [Ramelton](#), [Raphoe](#).

Figure 9.1 Core Strategy/Settlement Hierarchy Option 1

Option 2 – As per Table 4.5.1 of Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities (July 2022)

Settlement Typology	Defined in:	Population
(a) Cities and Metropolitan Areas	National/Regional Policy	NPF
(b) Regional Growth Drivers		NPF/RSES
(c) Key Towns		RSES
(e) Large Towns	Development Plan	>8-10,000
(f) Medium Towns		4-5,000 - 8-10,000
(g) Small Towns		1,500 - 4-5,000
(h) Rural Areas (settlements)		<1,500
(i) Rural Areas (rural housing)		Dispersed housing

Figure 9.2 Core Strategy/Settlement Hierarchy Option 2

Option 3 – As per Table 4.5.1 of Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities (July 2022) but incorporating local knowledge

Settlement Typology	Settlement Name
Regional Growth Driver	Letterkenny
Medium Towns	<u>Buncrana</u> , <u>Ballybofey-Stranorlar</u> , Donegal Town, Carndonagh, <u>Ballyshannon</u> , Bundoran
Small Towns	Lifford, <u>Killybegs</u> , <u>Dungloe</u> , Merville, <u>Ramelton</u> , <u>Raphoe</u> , <u>Bunbeg-Derrybeg</u> , <u>Newtowncunningham</u> , Milford, Muff,
Rural Areas (Settlements)	<u>Burtonport</u> , Carrick, <u>Falcarragh</u> , <u>Ardara</u> , <u>Ballyliffin</u> , <u>Bridgend</u> , <u>Dunfanaghy</u> , <u>Glenties</u> , <u>Greencastle</u> , <u>Malin</u> , <u>Doochary</u> , <u>Annagry</u> , <u>Fintown</u> , <u>Ballintra</u> , <u>Bruckless</u> , <u>Burnfoot</u> , <u>Carrigart</u> , <u>Carrigans</u> , <u>Kerrykeel</u> , <u>Castelfinn</u> , <u>Kilcar</u> , <u>Clonmany</u> , <u>Convoy</u> , <u>Creeslough</u> , <u>Culdaff</u> , <u>Dunkineely</u> , <u>Fahan</u> , <u>Frosses</u> , <u>Glencomicille</u> , <u>Gleneely</u> , <u>Gortahork</u> , <u>Killea</u> , <u>Killygordon</u> , <u>Kilmacrennan</u> , <u>Laghy</u> , <u>Loughanure</u> , <u>Manorcunningham</u> , <u>Mountcharles</u> , <u>Downings</u> , <u>Pettigo</u> , <u>Portnablagh</u> , <u>Portsalon</u> , <u>Quigley’s Point</u> , <u>Rathmullan</u> , <u>Rossnowlagh</u> , St. Johnston.
Rural Areas (Rural Housing)	N/A

Figure 9.3 Core Strategy/Settlement Hierarchy Option 3

Option 4 – Additional Focus on Towns that are Driving Growth

Settlement Typology	Settlement Name
Regional Growth Driver	Letterkenny
County Growth Drivers	<u>Buncrana</u> , <u>Ballybofey-Stranorlar</u> , Donegal Town, <u>Killybegs</u> , <u>Dungloe</u> .
Service Towns	Lifford, Carndonagh, <u>Ballyshannon</u> , Bundoran, Moville, <u>Ramelton</u> , <u>Raphoe</u> , <u>Bunbeg-Derrybeg</u> , <u>Newtowncunningham</u> , Milford, Muff.
Rural Areas (Settlements)	<u>Burtonport</u> , Carrick, <u>Falcarragh</u> , <u>Ardara</u> , <u>Ballyliffin</u> , <u>Bridgend</u> , <u>Dunfanaghy</u> , <u>Glenties</u> , <u>Greencastle</u> , <u>Malin</u> , <u>Doochary</u> , <u>Annagry</u> , <u>Fintown</u> , <u>Ballintra</u> , <u>Bruckless</u> , <u>Burnfoot</u> , <u>Carrigart</u> , <u>Carrigans</u> , <u>Kerrykeel</u> , <u>Castelfinn</u> , <u>Kilcar</u> , <u>Clonmany</u> , Convoy, <u>Creeslough</u> , <u>Culdaff</u> , <u>Dunkineely</u> , <u>Fahan</u> , <u>Frosses</u> , <u>Glencorcille</u> , <u>Gleneely</u> , <u>Gortahork</u> , <u>Killea</u> , <u>Killygordon</u> , <u>Kilmacrennan</u> , <u>Laghy</u> , <u>Loughanure</u> , <u>Manorcunningham</u> , <u>Mountcharles</u> , <u>Downings</u> , <u>Pettigo</u> , <u>Portnablagh</u> , <u>Portsalon</u> , <u>Quigley's Point</u> , <u>Rathmullan</u> , <u>Rossnowlagh</u> , St. Johnston.
Rural Areas (Rural Housing)	N/A

Figure 9.4 Core Strategy/Settlement Hierarchy Option 4

9.3 Evaluation/Assessment of Alternatives.

9.3.1 Assessment of Core Strategy/Settlement Hierarchy Options

The above core strategy/settlement hierarchy options set out strategic spatial alternatives for the distribution/allocation of development across the county including within the Regional Growth Driver County Growth Drivers and service towns, Satellite Settlements, Wild Atlantic Way Settlements, Border Settlements and Rural Settlements. These options were developed organically and assessed against a range of criteria (e.g. service and economic functions of different settlements, geographic spread of key settlements, and wastewater treatment capacity) and refined via a series of workshops with Elected Members. The final Core Strategy/settlement hierarchy selected represented a hybrid of the above options.

9.3.2 Assessment of Alternative Objectives and Policies

During the preparation of each chapter of the development plan a variety of alternative objectives and policies (and textual alternatives for same) were evaluated iteratively against a broad spectrum of criteria including: adherence to relevant European and National legislation, planning frameworks and guidelines, investment plans and local issues and the need to achieve wider development plan mandatory objectives. For example:

- Housing objectives and policies were assessed against NPF guidance with regard to compact, sequential, brownfield development and rural housing guidelines, infrastructural constraints etc and other mandatory development objectives (e.g. the conservation and protection of the environment, social community and cultural requirements).
- Biodiversity objectives and policies were assessed against relevant Habitats and Bird Directive Provisions, Wildlife Act and associated biodiversity designations, National Biodiversity Action Plan and other and the need to also facilitate other forms of development (e.g. provision of strategic infrastructure).

9.3.3 Assessment of Potential Residential Zonings

Within the Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Bundoran Area Plans a comprehensive range of alternative residential sites were assessed against a range of planning criteria in accordance with the

Best Planning Practice and the Methodology for a Tiered Approach to Land Zoning set out in Appendix 3 of the National Planning Framework. These criteria included:

- Compact Growth/Sequential development.
- Active/Sustainable Mobility
- Flood Risk.
- Availability of Transport Infrastructure (e.g. roads, footpaths, lighting)
- Availability of Wastewater infrastructure.
- Availability of Water Supply infrastructure.
- Surface Water drainage infrastructure.
- Cultural heritage.
- Planning history.
- Biodiversity constraints (e.g. Natura 2000 sites)
- Overall suitability for specific forms of development

This assessment informed the identification of the location of new residentially zoned land. The picture below illustrates part of the quantitative assessment of alternative sites for housing lands in Ballybofey/Stranorlar against the key criteria identified above.

Infrastructural Assessment of Potential Residential Sites Ballybofey/Stranorlar

Site No.	Site Area	Already Zoned for Res., Dev.	Flooding	Natura 2000	National Roads Policy	TEN-T PIPED Alignment	Compact Growth Score	Compact Score Weighted	Water Score	Wastewater Score	Road, Footpath, Surface Water Drainage Score	Tiered Approach T1=Service, T2=Serviceable, NS=Unserviceable	Active Travel Score	Topography	Physical Arrangement	Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses	Impact on Visual and Environmental Amenities	Architectural and Archaeological Heritage	Total	Total with Compact Weighting	Running Total	Proposed Residential
RG D2	0.2097	Y	✓	✓	✓	✓	10	30	10	10	10	T1	10	5	5	5	5	5	75	95	0.2097	Y
RW1	0.373		✓	✓	✓	✓	10	30	10	10	10	T1	10	5	5	5	5	5	75	95	0.5827	Y
DT1	0.4		✓	✓	✓	✓	10	30	10	10	10	T1	10	5	3	5	5	5	73	93	0.9827	Y

Figure 9.4 Extract of Assessment of Potential Residential Sites in Ballybofey/Stranorlar

9.4 Reasons for Identifying the Alternatives Chosen

Core Strategy Settlement Hierarchy:

The Core Strategy/Settlement Hierarchy detailed below was selected as it, inter alia:

- Delivers appropriate levels of growth throughout the settlement structure of County Donegal, on a proportionate basis and having regard to the particular characteristics and functions of settlements.
- Accords with the NPF/RSES vision of Letterkenny as the Regional Growth Driver.
- Recognises the important roles that Bunrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar Donegal Town, Killybegs and an Clochan Liath play as economic growth drivers and service centres in their respective localities and beyond.
- Recognises that there are smaller settlements with clearly identifiable strengths and functions that should be built upon over the lifetime of this Plan (e.g. Gaeltacht settlements, settlements with particular opportunities arising on foot of their border location, settlements located along the Wild Atlantic Way tourist route and settlements that are 'satellites' of larger towns).
- Acknowledges that there is a considerable number of smaller settlements where the focus must be on regeneration rather than seeking to significantly increase population levels particularly in view of the lack of suitable Wastewater Treatment Capacity in such settlements.
- Provides for the development of smaller settlements and the Open Countryside in accordance with the NPF National Strategic Objective of *strengthened rural economies and communities*.

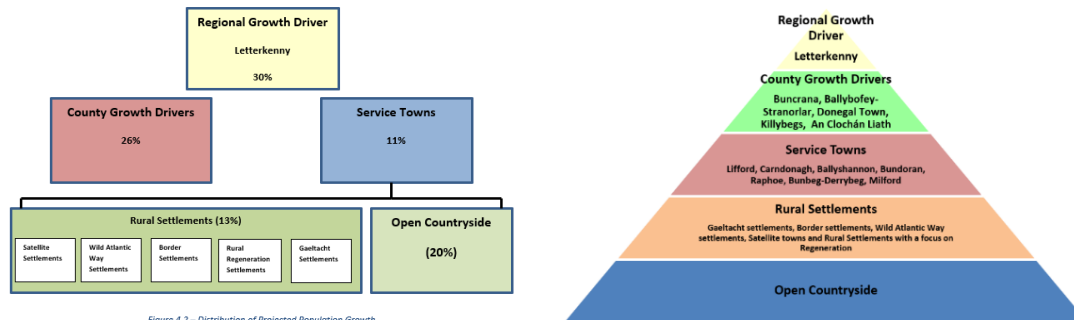


Figure 4.2 – Distribution of Projected Population Growth

Figure 9.5 Core Strategy/Settlement Hierarchy Selected for the Plan.

Objectives and Policies

In general the objectives and policies in the plan were selected as the optimal way in which balanced Proper Planning and Sustainable Development can be provided for commensurate with the need/opportunity to both provide for essential development (e.g. housing, commercial, retail, transport, community etc) at suitable and viable locations and protect important environmental assets/receptors (e.g. Natura 2000 sites, area of Especially High Scenic Amenity, At Risk Water bodies, residential amenity etc) in accordance with relevant legislation, policy and guidance. For example:

- TV-O-2: Support initiatives to strengthen and improve the physical environment of towns and villages and encourage positive place-making.
- UB-P-1: Facilitates the provision of multiple residential development in settlements.
- RH-P-1 Limits rural housing in area under strong urban influence to specific applicants.
- ED-O-17: support the strategic importance of Killybegs as a primary commercial fishing port, and as a hub for the development of the renewable energy sector.
- ED-O-10: Encourage enterprise and employment developments to located in brownfield sites and unoccupied buildings in town centres as a key measure to drive the economic activation of town centres.
- T-O-11: deliver improvements to the Trans European Transport Network (TEN-T),
- RS-P-1: consider proposals for large foodstores, in *Letterkenny and the County Growth Drivers*
- T-O-2: secure the development of strategic, coherent and high-quality walking and cycling networks.
- WW-P-1: Support and facilitate the provision of new, and the upgrading of existing, water and wastewater infrastructure.
- F-P-1: Only permit development where flood or surface water management issues can be successfully addressed and/or where there is no unacceptable residual flood risk for the development or development elsewhere.
- BIO-P-1: Requires all development to comply with the Habitats and Birds directive.
- L-P-1: Protects areas of Especially High Scenic Amenity.

Land Use Zoning Frameworks for Area Plans and Settlements:

The Land Use Zoning Frameworks for the Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar, and Bundoran LAPs and other settlements were chosen for a variety of reasons including the geographical constraints and opportunities specific to each location and the need to accord with the objectives, targets and guidance set out National and Regional planning frameworks, national planning guidance, wider government policy and the abovementioned Core Strategy in respect to the overall quantum of land use zonings. These reasons are broadly summarised below:

- The need to achieve the NPF’s National Strategic Outcome of compact growth and the associated Tiered Approach in terms of locating New Residential Zonings in compact and serviced locations.
- The need to both provide sufficient residentially lands in accordance with the Core Strategy Land Zoning Requirements and retain existing zoned, serviced and developable lands on a phased basis in accordance with section 4.4.1 of the Development Plan Guidelines.
- The requirement in RPO 3.2 of the NWRA RSES to provide 30% of homes within brownfield and infill locations.
- The need to achieve sustainable mobility (e.g. the provision of compact urban forms, the provision, the identification of specific Sustainable Mobility/Active Travel projects in the above LAPs).

- The requirement to reserve lands for key/strategic infrastructure projects (e.g. Section 1 TEN-T PRIPD Route Corridor in Ballybofey/Stranorlar and the Outer and Inner Relief Roads in Bunrana).
- The opportunity to support transformative urban regeneration projects (e.g. SEED Project in Ballybofey/Stranorlar and the 'Repowering Bunrana' Project).
- The requirement to protect designated biodiversity sites (e.g. the High Amenity Zoning on the Lough Swilly SAC in Bunrana and the Open Space and Recreational zonings on the River Finn SAC in Ballybofey/Stranorlar).
- The need to protect and, where appropriate, sustainably develop key environmental/recreational assets (e.g. zoning Drumboe Woods in Ballybofey/Stranorlar as Open Space and Recreation and the coastal zone in Bundoran as High Amenity).

Conclusion

As outlined above the specific objectives, policies and land use zoning identified in the plan were selected based on the requirement to accord with planning legislation, national and regional planning framework and guidelines, local geographic, infrastructural, and environmental constraints, as assessment of various core strategy/settlement hierarchy options, the input of the Elected Members and following consultation with environmental authorities. The likely significant effects of said selected option (i.e. plan) is assessed in Section 7 of this report.

10 Monitoring of Significant Environmental Effects

Legislative Requirements

Article 10 of the SEA Directive requires that member states '*monitor the significant environmental effect of the implement of plan in order to **identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects** and to be able to **undertake appropriate remedial action***'. In addition, Schedule 2B(i) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001(as amended) requires the Environmental Report to include '*a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring the significant environments effects of the implementation of plan or programme*'.

Why Monitor?

The SEA Guidelines states that primary purpose of monitoring is to cross check significant environmental effects which arise during implementation stage against those predicted during the plan preparation stage. The EPA SEA Guidance document '*Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment Statements and Monitoring*' states inter alia that monitoring can reveal the 'real' effects implementing a plan/programme, identify long term positive and negative changes, any unforeseen effects, and the need for additional mitigation measures and inform plan review.

Who Monitors and When?

The SEA guidelines state that planning authorities should be responsible for devising monitoring programmes, collecting monitoring data and evaluating the results and that monitoring should begin when the plan is adopted and should in general continue over the period of the plan.

How and What to Monitor?

The SEA guidelines state that: the scope, depth and method of monitoring will **depend on the type of plan**, monitoring does not necessarily require new research, that **existing sources of information can be used** and that one monitoring arrangement may cover several plans. The guidelines also state that monitoring must be **linked to** earlier stages in the SEA process in particular the **environmental objectives and issues** identified during the preparation of the environmental report and should **concentrate on the significant environmental effects**, and the measures to prevent, reduce and offset any significant adverse effects. Said Guidelines also advise that monitoring is often based on indicators which measure changes in the environment especially changes which are critical in terms of environmental quality (such as air or water pollution levels).

The abovementioned EPA guidance inter alia also states that monitoring should:

- Typically entail measuring established indicators on a regular basis.
- Focus on the environmental impacts of the plan rather than plan implementation.
- Focus on monitoring identified potential significant environmental effects not the strategic environmental objectives used in the assessment.
- Include a suitably small set of highly relevant and meaningful indicators which monitor/measure potential environment impacts of the plan and which are aligned to the scope and nature of the plan. In this regard local-level plans should focus on both local issues (e.g. specific areas of poor air quality) and larger scale problems that are relevant to the plan area (e.g. proportion of car journeys made by car).
- Utilise existing monitoring programmes and use spatial information for spatial plans.
- Set out the frequency at which indicators should be monitored.
- Identify who is responsible for carrying out monitoring.
- Test and document a plan's impact in relation to targets and thresholds. (e.g. climate, air, water quality) and use international and national thresholds.
- Set out the thresholds/targets/indicators above which remedial action is required.
- Define remedial actions should involve and who is responsible.
- Include a commitment to reporting on findings.
- Refer to previous monitoring programmes.
- Include a monitoring programme in the plan.

- Not be used as a mitigation measure.

As such monitoring of the implementation of the plan is required in order to properly consider the effects of the implementation of the plan, and identify remedial actions, and areas that need to be considered for review.

In this regard the CDP 2024-2030 is one of many plans and projects which may affect the achievement of specific environment targets (e.g. maintaining and restoring the favourable conservation status of species listed in Habitat Directive or achievement of 'Good' Water Framework Directive Water quality status). Consequently, the remedial actions identified below are those in which the Donegal County Council has a direct statutory role in delivering or an indirect role in helping to deliver.

Table 10.1: Monitoring Programme for the CDP 2024-2030

Environmental Category	Targets/Thresholds (e.g. Good Water Quality Status)	Indicators (e.g. WFD Water Quality Status)	Monitoring Agency (e.g. DCC, NPWS etc)	Monitoring Frequency (e.g. Annual)	Remedial Actions
Biodiversity	Maintain or restore of favourable conservation status of the Qualifying Interests of all Natura 2000 sites. (Article 2 of Habitats Directive Refers)	Status and Trends of Qualifying Interests (Habitats and Species) related to Natura 2000 sites affected by the CDP 2024 detailed in reports and conservation assessments prepared under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive.	NPWS	Article 17 Reporting every 6 years	Rigorous assessment of proposed developments and enforcement of planning requirements related to permitted developments within the zone of influence of Natura 2000 sites or likely to impact upon the Qualifying Interests of Natura 2000 sites.
	Take the requisite measures to maintain the population of the species referred to in Article 1 at a level which corresponds in particular to ecological, scientific and cultural requirements, while taking account of economic and recreational requirements, or to adapt the population of these species to that level. (Article 2 of Bird Directive refers) Preserve, maintain or re-establish a sufficient diversity and area of habitats for all the species of birds referred to in Article 1 of the Bird Directive. (Article 3 of Bird Directive refers).	Status and trends of bird species related to Natura 2000 sites affected by the CDP 2024 detailed in reports prepared under Article 12 of the Bird Directive Irish Wetland Bird Survey (I-WeBS) Results in relation to bird species constituting the qualifying interests in Natura 2000 sites.	NPWS	Article 12 Reporting every 6 years	Rigorous assessment of proposed developments and enforcement of planning requirements related to permitted developments within the zone of influence of Natura 2000 sites or likely to impact upon the Qualifying Interests of Natura 2000 sites.
	Protect the habitat and species of Ramsar Sites, Nature Reserves Natural Heritage Areas, and proposed Natural Heritage Areas.	Overall extent of woodland habitat and diversity of species within Ramsar Sites, Nature Reserves Natural Heritage Areas, and proposed Natural Heritage Areas	NPWS and DCC	Biannual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rigorous assessment of proposed developments and enforcement of planning requirements related to permitted developments to ensure that do not negatively impact on Ramsar Sites, Nature Reserves Natural Heritage Areas, and proposed Natural Heritage Areas.
	Compliance with the Pollution Reduction Programme for the Designated Shellfish Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WFD Waterbody Status for rivers, lakes, transitional and coastal water bodies. Annual Environment Reports for Irish Water WWTPs. DCC compliance data arising from the National Inspection Plan for 	EPA and DCC	Every 5 Years Annual Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with Irish Water to ensure compliance with WWTP Wastewater Discharge Licence Emission Limit Values. Rigorous assessment of proposals for domestic WWT systems vis-a-vis EPA Code of Practice Wastewater Treatment Systems for Single Houses.

Environmental Category	Targets/Thresholds (e.g. Good Water Quality Status)	Indicators (e.g. WFD Water Quality Status)	Monitoring Agency (e.g. DCC, NPWS etc)	Monitoring Frequency (e.g. Annual)	Remedial Actions
		Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information from DCC Environment Section with regard to compliance with Section 4 Wastewater Discharge Licences. Quality of shellfish Growing Areas as reported by DEHLG. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure compliance with relevant Water Pollution legislation vis-a-vis domestic WWT systems through DCC environment section. Ensure compliance with Commercial Wastewater Discharges Licences to Groundwater issued under Section 4 of the Water Pollution Act through DCC environment section.
	Maintain or Restore the favourable conservation status of the Freshwater Pearl Mussel of all affected Natura 2000 sites. Compliance with Sub-Basin Management Plan Catchment Plans for Freshwater Pearl Mussel. Compliance with the measures detailed in the River Basin Management Plan.	Freshwater Pearl Mussel status and Trends detailed in reports and conservation assessments prepared under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive.	NPWS	Every 5 Years	
	Ensure conservation of species protected under the Wildlife Act 1976(as amended)	Species data available on the National Biodiversity Data Centre website: https://www.biodiversityireland.ie/	Heritage Council, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Ongoing	Rigorous assessment of proposed development and enforcement of planning requirements/conditions related to permitted developments in relation to species Protected Under the Wildlife Act.
	Conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider countryside and the marine environment in accordance with 4 th National Biodiversity Action Plan	Species data available on the National Biodiversity Data Centre website: https://www.biodiversityireland.ie/	Heritage Council, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Ongoing	Ensure minimal impact on existing biodiversity and provision of additional biodiversity assets through the rigorous protection of biodiversity in the development management and planning enforcement systems.
Population and Human Health	Increase population in Donegal in accordance with growth projections set out in the NPF Implementation Roadmap.	Census Results for Donegal	CSO	Every 5 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure full implementation of the Housing for All Plan at the local level including as appropriate the

Environmental Category	Targets/Thresholds (e.g. Good Water Quality Status)	Indicators (e.g. WFD Water Quality Status)	Monitoring Agency (e.g. DCC, NPWS etc)	Monitoring Frequency (e.g. Annual)	Remedial Actions
	Growth in employment opportunities	Employment Growth	CSO	Monthly	utilisation of site activation measures (e.g. Compulsory Purchase Orders). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure delivery of key transport infrastructure projects (e.g. TEN-T PRIPD, sustainable and active travel projects in settlements) Ensure implementation of key urban regeneration projects. Collaborate with Irish Water to ensure delivery of the requisite Water and Wastewater infrastructure to facilitate new development. Review spatial allocation of residential and general employment lands.
	Promotion of Social Inclusion and reduction in social deprivation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix of housing types, tenures, densities, and size (including proportion of social and affordable housing) in newly permitted developments. Distance from newly permitted residential areas to local services (e.g. schools, neighbourhood centre, healthcare facilities etc). 	DCC and Department of Housing,	Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure appropriate mix of housing types, tenures densities and sizes (including the provision of social and affordable housing) is provided in suitably located residential areas through the Development Management process. Ensure deliver of the Housing For All plan at the local level including provision of social and affordable housing projects. Utilise state funding mechanisms such as the Buy and Renew Scheme to refurbish vacant housing for social housing use.
	Growth in active travel	Proportion of people walking and cycling to work/school etc in Donegal.	DCC, CSO		Ensure delivery of walking and cycling infrastructure within settlements.
	Compliance with the European Drinking Water Directive.	EPA Annual Drinking Water Quality Reports	EPA	Annual	Collaborate with Irish Water with regard to delivering the infrastructure necessary to improve drinking water supplies.
	Limit Noise Pollution	Noise Mapping prepared for the Draft Donegal Noise Action Plan 2018-2023.	DCC	Every 5 Years	Ensure full implementation of the measures contained in the Draft Donegal Noise Action Plan 2018-2023 as appropriate and where practicable.
	Air Quality	See Section on Air Quality			
	Water Quality	See Section on Water Quality			
Soil	To Protect Soils and Geology	EPA/Teagasc Soil Mapping Project. Geological Heritage Sites	Teagasc, Geological Survey of Ireland		Ensure minimal impact on soils and geology through rigorous assessment of new development proposals within the development management system.
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with the Water Framework Directive in respect of surface waters, transitional bodies and ground water including achieving 'good' status in all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Framework Directive Surface Water and At Risk Status for rivers, lakes, transitional and coastal water bodies. Annual Environment Reports for WWTPs. 	EPA and DCC Irish Water	Every 5 Years Annual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with Irish Water to ensure compliance with WWTP Wastewater Discharge Licence Emission Limit Values. Rigorous assessment of proposals for new domestic and commercial independent WWT systems vis-a-vis relevant EPA Code of Practices.

Environmental Category	Targets/Thresholds (e.g. Good Water Quality Status)	Indicators (e.g. WFD Water Quality Status)	Monitoring Agency (e.g. DCC, NPWS etc)	Monitoring Frequency (e.g. Annual)	Remedial Actions
	<p>waters and otherwise ensuring that water quality does not deteriorate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with the Emission Limit Values for the Wastewater Treatment Plants Compliance with individual Commercial Wastewater Discharge Licences to Groundwater issued under Section 4 of the Water Pollution Act 1977. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DCC compliance data arising from the National Inspection Plan for Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems. DCC Compliance data with regard individual Commercial Wastewater Discharge Licences to Groundwater issued under Section 4 of the Water Pollution Act 1977. Upgrading of existing and provision of new Wastewater Treatment Plants. 	<p>DCC</p> <p>DCC</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure compliance with relevant Water Pollution legislation vis-a-vis existing domestic WWT systems through DCC environment section. Ensure compliance with individual Commercial Wastewater Discharge Licences to Groundwater issued under Section 4 of the Water Pollution Act 1977 through DCC environment section. Review approval of further independent WWT systems for commercial premises.
Air	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with the Ambient Air Quality and Cleaner Air For Europe (CAFE) Directive including associated limit values for specific pollutants (e.g. PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀ and SO₂) Compliance with the WHO Air Quality Guidelines for specific pollutants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air Quality Index for Health (AQIH) rating for the Letterkenny and Bunrana Air Quality Monitoring station. PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀ and SO₂ emission levels as measured at the Air Quality Monitoring station. 	EPA	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce PM pollution by ensuring full implementation of the Smokey Coal ban including fuel supply, distribution and use of fuels through the DCC Environment Section. Reduce transport related air pollution by promoting more sustainable modes of transportation through full implementation of transport related elements of plan including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compact growth through strict adherence to the zoning and policy framework within the plan. The provision of a local transport interchange hub. The delivery of a local public transport system. The provision of a local walking and cycling links including intra neighbourhood links. Provision of public electric charging infrastructure.
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute toward achievement of International, European and National Greenhouse Gas Emission targets (e.g. 51% reduction in Greenhouse gases by 2030 and a climate neutral economy by 2050) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National greenhouse gas emission data. Increase in no. of persons commuting by sustainable travel modes (e.g. public transport walking and cycling). Proportion of new residential units granted within walking (400m) or cycling (800m) distance of public transport or local services. No. of developments permitted within Flood Zones A and B. 	<p>EPA</p> <p>CSO</p> <p>DCC</p> <p>DCC</p>	<p>Annual</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Biennial</p> <p>Biennial</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce transport related Greenhouse Gas Emissions by promoting more sustainable modes of transportation through full implementation of transport related elements of plan including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compact growth through strict adherence to the zoning and policy framework within the plan. The provision of a local transport interchange hub. The delivery of a local public transport system.

Environmental Category	Targets/Thresholds (e.g. Good Water Quality Status)	Indicators (e.g. WFD Water Quality Status)	Monitoring Agency (e.g. DCC, NPWS etc)	Monitoring Frequency (e.g. Annual)	Remedial Actions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of developments permitted utilising SUDS flood attenuation solutions. 	DCC	Biennial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The provision of a local walking and cycling links including intra neighbourhood links. ○ Provision of public electric charging infrastructure. • Reducing greenhouse gas emissions in new residential and commercial developments through achieving greater energy efficiency in the siting, orientation and design of new developments. • Carbon sequestration through the provision of tree planting and the retention of existing trees as an integral part of new developments as part of the development management process. • Rigorous assessment of new development proposals vis-a-vis climate related flood risk (e.g. fluvial, pluvial and coastal). • Enhanced use of SUDS flood attenuation measures through the development management process.
Material Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Delivery of strategic road projects (e.g. TEN-T PRIPD). ○ Delivery of new walking and cycling and public transport infrastructure including a local transport hub. ○ Delivery of key urban regeneration projects (e.g. SEED Project, Empowering Buncrana) ○ Delivery new of public and private housing units completed in line with growth ambition detailed in the Core Strategy. ○ No. and floor space of new retail and commercial developments. ○ Reduction in retail and commercial vacancy levels. ○ Extension of the water and wastewater infrastructure to poorly or unserved areas ○ Provision of new green infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Progress on strategic road projects (e.g. TEN-T PRIPD) ○ Progress on new walking and cycling and public transport infrastructure ○ Completion of key urban regeneration projects (e.g. SEED Project, Empowering Buncrana) ○ No. of new of public and private housing units completed. ○ No. and floor space of new retail and commercial developments. ○ Retail and commercial vacancy levels. ○ Upgrading of existing and provision of new Wastewater Treatment Plants. ○ Completion of the Flood Relief Scheme. ○ No. of buildings and infrastructure assets damaged by flooding. 	DCC, OPW, TII and NWRA	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collaborate with strategic partners (e.g. TII, Department of Transport etc) to ensure full delivery of strategic roads projects. ○ Collaborate with strategic partners (e.g. National Transport Authority, Department of Transport) to ensure delivery of new walking and cycling and public transport infrastructure. ○ Utilise funding streams such as the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund to ensure delivery of key urban regeneration projects. ○ Ensure full implementation of the Council's public housing programme including collaborating with the Department of Housing. ○ Collaborate with private developers in relation to the provision of new private housing development including the provision of enabling infrastructure. ○ Collaborate with Irish Water in relation to the upgrading and provision of water and wastewater infrastructure to facilitate new residential and commercial development. ○ Collaborate with strategic partners to ensure delivery new green infrastructure. ○ Collaborate with strategic partners (e.g. OPW) to ensure delivery of Flood Relief Schemes.

Environmental Category	Targets/Thresholds (e.g. Good Water Quality Status)	Indicators (e.g. WFD Water Quality Status)	Monitoring Agency (e.g. DCC, NPWS etc)	Monitoring Frequency (e.g. Annual)	Remedial Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Delivery of the Flood Relief schemes. ○ Reduction in flood damage to buildings and infrastructure. 				
Cultural Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Protect and preserve architectural heritage including structures on the Record of Protected Structures, vernacular and historic structures. ○ Protect and enhance the Cathedral Quarter Architectural Conservation Area. ○ Protect and enhance the integrity of Archaeological Monuments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No. and condition of structures on the Record of Protected Structures and other vernacular and historic structures within Donegal. ○ No. and condition of historic structures within the Cathedral Quarter Architectural Conservation Area. ○ No. and condition of archaeological monuments within Donegal. 	DCC, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Utilise built heritage funding (e.g. Built Heritage Investment Scheme and Historic Structures Fund) to maintain and improve the condition of existing built heritage. ○ Ensure compliance of new developments proposals with built heritage protection policies of the plan through the development management process. ○ Expeditious use of the planning enforcement system to prevent unauthorised loss of built and archaeological heritage.
Landscape	To protect and manage the local landscape including landscape and visual features elements and characteristics of specific relevance to Donegal	Impact of new developments on landscape and visual features elements and characteristics.	DCC	Biennial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure rigorous assessment of development proposals in Especially High Scenic Amenity and High Scenic Amenity areas. ○ Ensure compliance with the zonings objective of areas zoned Open Space and Recreation. ○ Review zonings on lands which spatially interact with key landscape and visual features, elements and characteristics as necessary.

11 Non-Technical Summary and Conclusion

Annex I(j) of the SEA Directive requires that an Environmental Report contain a non-technical summary of the information provided in the report under the other Annex I headings (e.g. outline of the plan, the current state of the environment, the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan etc). Consequently, a non-technical summary of this report including the key conclusions reached within same is therefore provided underneath. In particular the non-technical summary of Section 7 contains the conclusions of the report in respect of the likely significant effects of the plan on the key aspects of the environment.

Section 1: Introduction.

This section notes that:

- The CDP 2024-2030 is a statutory land use plan which sets out detailed planning objectives, policies and land use zonings for Donegal the having regard to the requirement of the Planning and Development Act 2000(As Amended), National and Regional Planning Frameworks and planning guidance.
- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a systematic and multistage process to ensure environmental issues are taken into account in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and review of plans. The preparation of this Environmental Report is a key part of the SEA process. An Environmental Report was required for the CDP 2024-2030 in accordance with the Planning and Development Regulations 2001(as amended) as the population of the Donegal is more than 10,000 persons SEA scoping in relation to the scope and level of detail to be included in the report was carried out prior to, and taken into account during, the preparation of this report.

Section 2: Outline of the Content of the Main Objectives of the Plan and Relationship with Other Plan.

This section outlines the main objectives of the plan and its relationship with other plans including outlining the objectives of the plan in relation to: the Core Strategy, Climate Change, Towns and Villages, Housing, Economic Development, Infrastructure, Natural Resource Development, Wind Energy, Natural and Built Heritage, Tourism, Community and Culture, An Gaeltacht, Marine Resource Coastal Management and the Islands, Public Rights of Way, and the Bunrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Bundoran Area Plans. This section also outlines the relationship of the plan with the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Assembly Area.

Section 3: Relevant Aspects of the Current State of the Environment and Likely Evolution thereof without Implementation of the Plan.

This section outlines the Current state of the Environment in relation to the following Environmental topics:

- **Biodiversity:** Provides an overview of Natura 2000/European Sites in Donegal, details the current national status and trends EU Protected Habitats and Species present in Donegal noting that many have an inadequate or bad status and a declining trend, provides information on Wetland Bird Species in Donegal noting whilst many are stable or increasing certain species have suffered moderate and large declines, affords specific information on threatened species such as the Corncrake and the Freshwater Pearl Mussel, provides an overview of other designated sites such as Ramsar Sites, Natural Heritage Areas and Nature Reserves.
- **Population and Human Health:** Outlines the key populations statistics and trends for Donegal including noting: that the population increased by 4.5% to 166,231 between 2016 and 2022, Donegal, Donegal had an above average total dependency ratio of 60.5%, Census 2016 recorded that the substantial majority of Donegal's population had *Very Good* or *Good* health, but that Donegal had above average relative deprivation score (-6.4), age dependency ratio, and lower educational attainment and higher employments rates that the state average.

- **Soils and Geology:** Details the location and extent of the major soil types and geological formations within Donegal including the location of County Geological Sites and a map of landside susceptibility areas.
- **Water Quality:** Notes that the Water Framework Directive (WFD) requires the achievement of good status in all waters and that the status of water bodies does not deteriorate, the high number of WFD Protected Water Bodies (138) and High Status Waterbody Objective (26) in Donegal, a significant number of water bodies in parts of the east, northeast and west and south west of the County have a moderate or poor water quality status, overall 55.7% of monitored river bodies, 20.7% of lake water bodies, and 20.5% of Transitional and Coastal water bodies have a less than good status and that agriculture, that hydromorphology, forestry, anthropogenic pressures, urban wastewater and domestic wastewater are the most significant pressures affecting WFD 'At Risk' waterbodies in Donegal, a significant number of larger urban areas and smaller towns and villages had no spare wastewater treatment capacity but that save Lady's Bay Buncrana all bathing water sites in Donegal had a good or excellent status.
- **Air Quality:** Notes that Particular Matter (PM) (mainly from the burning of fossil fuels for home heating) and Nitrogen Oxides (NO) (mainly from traffic emissions) are the key sources of air pollution in Ireland. Provides air quality data for Letterkenny in 2021 (the only Air Monitoring Station with complete data in Donegal) including that for:
 - PM_{2.5}, there were 64 exceedances of the new tougher WHO Air Quality Guidelines Daily (24hr) Mean of 15µg/m³,
 - PM₁₀ there were 10 exceedances of the new tougher WHO Air Quality Guidelines Daily (24hr) Mean of 45µg/m³.
 - SO₂ there were 12 exceedances of the new tougher WHO Air Quality Guidelines Daily (24hr) Mean of 40µg/m³.
- **Climate Factors:** Details current and future climates changes trends including the likely impacts on Ireland (e.g. a temperate increase of 1-1.6oC, more extreme weather events), outlines Ireland's greenhouse gas emissions profiles, trends, projections and targets including the target in the Low Carbon and Climate Act 2021 of a 51% reduction in Greenhouse gases by 2030 (relative to 2018 emissions).
- **Material Assets:** Details the key existing material assets in Donegal (e.g. transport, housing, commercial, water and wastewater, electricity, telecoms, education and healthcare).
- **Cultural Heritage:** Notes that Donegal cultural heritage includes, 480 structures on the Record of Protected Structures, 7 Draft Architectural Conservation Areas, a significant number of structures on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, a significant number of Recorded Monuments, 34 Historic Monuments, 17 National Monuments and 50 Historic Graveyards.
- **Landscape and Visual:** Provides an overview of landscape and visual features of relevance to the CDP 2024-2030 including that Donegal contains 23 landscape character types, 44 individual character areas, and the Draft CDP 2024-2030 identifies area of Especially High Scenic Amenity, High Scenic Amenity and Moderate Scenic Amenity and designated views and prospects.

Section 3 also outlines the likely evolution of the environment without the implementation of the CDP 2024 (i.e. in the context of the CDP 2018-2024) noting inter alia, that: Biodiversity in the open countryside would be negatively impacted by development pressures, population growth would be facilitated, there would be insignificant effects on soil, negative and positive impacts on water quality, there may be additional air pollution including PM and NO_x, significant additional greenhouse gas emissions, a range of new material assets would be provided, cultural heritage would continue to be largely protected and there would be further cumulative landscape and visual impacts.

Section 4: Environmental Characteristics of Areas Likely to be Significantly Affected

This section:

- identifies the area likely to be significantly affected including: areas in which significant development is proposed e.g. Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar, Bundoran, other settlements, the open countryside and within peatlands, the likely significant effects arising (e.g. loss of habitats, water pollution, greenhouse gas emissions) and any associated designated/sensitive areas (e.g.

- Natura 2000 sites, At Risk WFD Waterbodies and waterbodies with a less than good status, EHSA and HAS areas, Freshwater Pearl Mussel catchments etc).
- Describes the characteristics of these areas (e.g. brownfield lands within urban areas, agricultural pasture lands on edge of settlements, the landcover, the biodiversity, soil types, water bodies, cultural heritage, and landscape in rural areas, habitats/species in Natura 2000 sites, and scenic areas types etc).

Section 5: Existing Environmental Problems of Relevance

This section outlines a number of environmental problems relevant to the plan area including inter alia:

- Biodiversity: cumulative loss of habitats and biodiversity to dispersed developments and threats to biodiversity arising from disturbance, water pollution, and invasive species.
- Population/Human Health: Inadequate housing completion, high social deprivation rates, urban sprawl, substandard strategic roads, public transport and active travel.
- Soil: Disturbance/depletion of soil resource, loss of soil functionality, and soil contamination.
- Water: Poor WFD water quality status arising from agricultural developments, ineffective wastewater treatment in urban and rural areas, and diffuse urban run-off.
- Air: Particulate Matter (PM) and SO2 pollution in town and villages predominately linked to the burning of fossil fuels for home heating.
- Climate: Extreme pluvial weather events, increasing vulnerability due to fluvial and coastal flooding, and dispersed/low density development leading to car dependency and transport related greenhouse gases.
- Material Assets: Poor quality urban environment and high levels of vacancy and dereliction, extreme flooding events in recent years, and the defective blocks crisis.
- Cultural Heritage: Loss of RPS, NIAH and vernacular buildings as a result of neglect or unauthorised redevelopment/demolition.
- Landscape and Visual: Cumulative growth of one-off housing impacts rural character of certain areas, proliferation of second homes impacting on the scenic character of visual amenity of coastal area and non-sequential development on edge of settlements, and eroding rural/urban landscape definition.

Section 6: Environmental Protection Objectives of Relevance

This section and the associated Table in Appendix A details the wide range of Environmental Protection objectives contained within a wide variety of International Conventions EU and Irish Legislation. Appendix A also sets out the way in which those objectives have been taken into account in the Plan (e.g. not zoning biodiversity areas for development, protecting environmental assets through specific policy safeguards, the zonings of lands for housing, community, education and employment generating purposes, the provision of new strategic transport links, the provision of a compact development form and new public transport services to aid sustainable mobility, aligning new residential development with the provision of the necessary water and waster infrastructure etc).

Section 7: Assessment of the Likely Significant Effects on the Environment of Implementing the CDP 2024-2030

This section outlines the assessment methodology including detailing the Strategic Environmental Objectives which act as a manageable environmental test criteria to assess the likely significant effects of the plan. This section also provides an assessment of the likely significant effects of the plan in relation to key environmental aspects including in combination with other relevant actions. The conclusions of this assessment are summarised in text the table below and are also colour coded on the basis of their overall cumulative effect (in combination with other actions).

Key

	Significant Positive Effect
	Positive Effect
	No Relationship/Insignificant Effect
	Negative Effect
	Significant Negative Effect

Key Environmental Aspect	Summary of Assessment of Likely Significant Effects of the CDP 2024-2030 (including cumulatively in combination with other relevant actions).
Biodiversity, Flora & Fauna	Individually the plan will give rise to negative effects on biodiversity arising from the cumulative effects of the significant quantum of dispersed development in the wider environment facilitated by the plan. This negative effect may be reinforced by negative effects arising from other plans owing to the connectivity between habitats and species between geographical areas.
Population/ Human Health	Individually the plan will result in positive effects on populations and human health arising from, inter alia overall population and economic growth, additional quality and socially inclusive housing, improved active travel infrastructure, placemaking and associated quality of life and flood risk management policies. The positive effects of the plan are likely to be reinforced by positive effects of NPF, RSES and the RDS (NI) which will aid economic prosperity, infrastructural connectivity etc.
Soil and Geology	Individually the plan will have no significant effect on soils and geology as a result of, inter alia, overall extent of the soil and geology resource and lack of specific protection thresholds, avoidance of high landslide susceptibility areas for wind energy, overall focus on compact, brownfield and infill development rather than expansive greenfield development within Local Areas Plans and Settlement Frameworks, wastewater and SuDS policies. No significant effects on soils and geology were identified as a result of other relevant plans.
Water	Individually the plan is likely to have a negative effect on water quality given: the poor state of existing water quality in Donegal, the cumulative extent of rural housing and commercial development reliant on individual WWTSs facilitated by the plan, the overall quantum of development provided by the plan and associated risk of temporary construction related impacts on water quality and the fact that 29 settlements in Donegal currently have no spare WWT capacity. This negative effect may be reinforced by negative effects arising from other plans owing to the hydrological connectivity within wide river catchments (e.g. water pollution within the wider Foyle and Erne Catchments and coastal areas).
Air	Individually the plan is likely to have a negative effect on air quality from the significant growth in population and development facilitated by the plan, the associated growth in travel demand, the significant amount of dispersed/car dependent development enabled by the plan, and the associated net growth in transport related air pollutions emissions particularly having regard to the new stricter WHO air quality guidelines. However negative effects arising from other plans have not been identified.
Climate	Individually the plan is likely to have a negative effect on climate factors arising, inter alia, from the significant population growth, range and quantum of development, and dispersed development facilitated by the plan and the associated significant additional construction, transport, housing, and commercial, and agricultural related greenhouses gas emissions. However negative effects on climate were not identified in other relevant plans.
Material Assets	Individually the plan is likely to have a positive effect on material assets as it will facilitate new and improved: housing, transport infrastructure, commercial and retail assets, education, recreational and community facilities and promote urban regeneration. In addition, the plan will protect the new and existing material assets through the application of flood risk management policies. The positive effects of the plan are likely to be reinforced by the positive effects of other plans (e.g. strategic roads projects).
Cultural Heritage	Individually the plan is likely to have a positive effect on Cultural Heritage arising from the extensive suite of architectural and archaeological protection objectives and policies including the identification of new Architectural Conservation Areas. In addition, the Gaeltacht provisions of the plan area likely to have a positive effect on its socio-economic and linguistic vibrancy. In addition, any positive effects of other plans (e.g. overarching planning frameworks such as the NPF and the RSES) may also reinforce this positive effect.
Landscape and Visual	Individually the plan is likely to have a negative effect on landscape having particular regard to the likely effects of the plan on areas of Especially High Scenic Amenity and High Scenic Amenity Arising from cumulative rural one-off housing development (both existing and that facilitated by the plan). The negative effects of the plan are not likely to be reinforced by negative effects arising from other plans.

Section 8: Measures Envisaged to Prevent, Reduce, and as Fully as Possible Offset Any Significant Adverse Environmental Effects on the Environment of the CDP 2024-2030.

This section outlines a range of measures which have been, and can be, employed to prevent and reduce and offset the adverse environmental effects of the plan including:

- Avoidance and Reduction of Significant Adverse Environmental Effects through:

- Land Use Zonings: For example; avoiding direct impacts on Natura 2000 and pNHA sites by not facilitating development on said lands, avoiding vulnerable development in flood risk areas,
- Policies and Objectives: For example, those in relation Biodiversity protection, active/sustainable travel, wastewater treatment, climate change mitigation, architectural and archaeological protection, and landscape protection
- Planning Approvals: For example, planning conditions to; reduce impacts on water quality during construction, provide specific effluent treatment systems, provide systems to intercept and treat surface water prior to discharge and retain existing trees and hedgerows.
- Offsetting of Significant Environmental Effects: For example, policies which: require the use of Nature Based Solutions in water management system, biodiversity enhancement measures, pollinator friendly planting as part of planting/landscaping schemes, provide new green infrastructure.

Section 9: Selection of Alternatives

This section outlines how: alternatives were identified (including considering EPA SEA guidance, legislation, national and regional frameworks, ministerial guidelines, geography, topography, infrastructure projects), core strategy options, policy alternatives and landuse zoning options were assessed and provides the reasons for identifying the alternatives chosen.

Section 10: Monitoring of Significant Environmental Effects

This section outlines the legislative requirements and best practice guidance in respect of SEA Monitoring. It also provides a detailed monitoring programme for all environmental aspects of the plan (biodiversity, water, air, etc) in accordance with the abovementioned best practice this monitoring programme includes inter alia:

- Specific environmental indicators: For example; Article 17 and Article 12 Reports on the status and trends of habitats and species related to the Lough Swilly SAC and SPA, the Water Framework Directive water quality status for the Lough Swilly Estuary, census population data, EPA air quality monitoring data for PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀ and SO₂ pollution levels EPA greenhouse gas emissions, DCC data on the number and conditions of structures on the Record of Protected structures etc.
- Remedial Actions: For example: Rigorous assessment of proposed developments and enforcement of planning conditions related to permitted developments which may affect Natura 2000 sites, ensuring compliance with water pollution legislation in respect of domestic and commercial independent WWTS, ensuring the implementation of regional transport hub, local public transport services and new walking and cycling infrastructure and utilising built heritage funding to improve the conditions of existing built heritage.

Appendix A:
Environmental Protection Objectives
and the way those objectives have
been taken into account during the
preparation of the CDP 2024

Table A.1 Environmental Protection Objectives Established at An International, European Union or National Level Which Are Relevant To The CDP 2024-2030 And The Way Those Objectives And Any Environmental Considerations Have Been Taken Into Account During The Preparation Of Plan

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna			
International			
UN Convention on Biological Diversity (1992)	The objectives of this Convention, to be pursued in accordance with its relevant provisions, are the conservation of biological diversity. the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies, taking into account all rights over those resources and to technologies, and by appropriate funding.	Environmental Protection Objectives (EPOs) and associated environmental considerations related to Biodiversity have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Donegal Development plan 2024-2030 through the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not zoning any Natura 2000 (including all Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Area) for development in the Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Bundoran Area Plans and the Settlement Frameworks. • Requiring all developments to comply with the requirements of the EU Habitats and Birds Directive. (BIO-P-1 refers) • Ensuring the at all developments seeks to conserve/protect the qualifying the qualifying interests of Ramsar Sites, Nature Reserves, Natural Heritage Areas (NHA), proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA), and any species protected under the Wildlife Act (BIO-P-2 refers). • Protecting, where justified, features of local biodiversity value (e.g. hedgerows/field boundaries, trees, woodlands, wetlands, water bodies, riverbanks and peatlands) which make a significant contribution to the biodiversity, ecological connectivity, and associated visual amenity and/or rural character of the area (BIO-P-3) refers). 	The various Environmental Protection Objectives listed opposite are reflected in the Biodiversity Flora and Fauna SEO namely: <p><i>To conserve, protect, maintain, and where appropriate restore biodiversity, flora and fauna, natural habitats and ecosystems particularly species and habitats subject to statutory protection.</i></p>
Draft Global Biodiversity Framework Strategic Plan	The Strategic Plan set out 4 long terms goals namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal A: The integrity of all ecosystems is enhanced, with an increase of at least 15 per cent in the area, connectivity and integrity of natural ecosystems, supporting healthy and resilient populations of all species, the rate of extinctions has been reduced at least tenfold, and the risk of species extinctions across all taxonomic and functional groups, is halved, and genetic diversity of wild and domesticated species is safeguarded, with at least 90 per cent of genetic diversity within all species maintained. • Goal B: Nature’s contributions to people are valued, maintained or enhanced through conservation and sustainable use supporting the global development agenda for the benefit of all; • Goal C: The benefits from the utilization of genetic resources are shared fairly and equitably, with a substantial increase in both monetary and non-monetary benefits shared, including for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. • Goal D: The gap between available financial and other means of implementation, and those necessary to achieve the 2050 Vision, is closed. 		In this regard for example the fundamental objective of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UN Convention on Biological diversity 1992 is embodied in the text ‘Conserve’ and ‘Biodiversity’. • The EU Biodiversity Strategy is embodied in the text ‘restore’ and ‘biodiversity’. • The Habitats Directive is embodied in the text ‘conserve’, ‘maintain’, and ‘restore’, ‘biodiversity’ ‘natural habitats’ and ‘species and habitats subject to statutory protection’. • The Birds Directive is embodied in the text ‘Conserve’ ‘maintain’ and ‘restore’ and ‘species and habitats subject to statutory protection’.

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
Ramsar Convention	The Ramsar convention desires to stem the progressive encroachment on and loss of wetlands now and in the future and requires each party to designate suitable Wetlands of International Importance within their territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requiring that development proposals provide biodiversity enhancement measures (e.g. native tree and hedgerow planting, and nature-based water management solutions (BIO-P-3 c) refers). • Ensuring that any development proposals do not lead to the introduction or spread of invasive species. Where invasive species are present, development proposals may be required to be submit an appropriate control and management programme (BIO-P-4 refers). • Ensuring that new developments do not have a significant adverse impact on pollinator habitat and species, including protecting rare pollinators listed under the Wildlife Act (BIO-P-5 refers). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Wildlife Act is embodied in the text 'Conserve' and 'species and habitat subject to statutory protection'. • The 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan is embodied in the text 'conserve' and 'restore'.
	The aims of this Convention are to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats, especially those species and habitats whose conservation requires the co-operation of several States, and to promote such co-operation.		
European Union			
Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna (Habitats) Directive (92/43/EEC)	<p>Article 2 of the directive states that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The aim of this Directive is to contribute towards ensuring bio-diversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora in the European territory of the Member States to which the Treaty applies. 2. Measures taken pursuant to this Directive shall be designed to maintain or restore, at favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of Community interest 		
Conservation of Wild Birds Directive (2009/147/EEC) (Birds Directive)	<p>The central objectives of this Directive are that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member States take the requisite measures to maintain the population of the species referred to in Article 1 of the directive at a level which corresponds in particular to ecological, scientific and cultural requirements, while taking account of economic and recreational requirements, or to adapt the population of these species to that level. • Member States shall take the requisite measures to preserve, maintain or re-establish a sufficient diversity and area of habitats for all the species of birds referred to in Article 1 of the directive: <p>Note: Article 1 relates to relates to the conservation of all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state in the European territory of the Member States to which the Treaty applies. It covers the protection, management and control of these species and lays down rules for their exploitation.</p>		

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2030	<p>Aims to ensure that Europe's biodiversity will be on the path to recovery by 2030 for the benefit of people, the planet, the climate and our economy.</p> <p>It contains 3 key nature protection commitments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Legally protect a minimum of 30% of the EU's land area and 30% of the EU's sea area and integrate ecological corridors, as part of a true Trans-European Nature Network. 2. Strictly protect at least a third of the EU's protected areas, including all remaining EU primary and old-growth forests. 3. Effectively manage all protected areas, defining clear conservation objectives and measures, and monitoring them appropriately. 		
National			
The Wildlife Act 1976	<p>Section 11 of the act (as consolidated) states that:</p> <p>11.—(1) It shall be a function of the Minister to secure the conservation of wildlife and to promote the conservation of biological diversity.</p>		
4 th National Biodiversity Action Plan	<p>The action plan sets out a number of planning related objectives including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Adopting a whole of government/society approach</u> including preparing local authority biodiversity actions plans by 2026. • <u>Meeting urgent conservation/restoration needs</u> noting the crucial importance of the protection and restoration of designated areas and species the equal importance of biodiversity conservation/restoration in the wider countryside, supporting nature tree planning, achieving good water quality status and invasive species management. • <u>Securing nature's contributions to people</u> noting planning's important role in safeguarding biodiversity, delivering biodiversity as part of new applications, and promoting green infrastructure and nature based solutions. • <u>Embedding biodiversity at the heart of climate action</u> including ensuring that the transition to carbon neutrality does not come at the expense of biodiversity. 		

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
European Communities Environmental Objectives (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) Regulations 2009 (S.I. 296/2009)	Article 2 of said regulations states that: The purpose of these Regulations is to support the achievement of favourable conservation status for freshwater pearl mussels.		
All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025	This plan has 6 objectives: 1. Making farmland pollinator friendly 2. Making public land pollinator friendly 3. Making private land pollinator friendly 4. All-Ireland Honeybee Strategy 5. Conserving rare pollinators 6. Strategic coordination of the Plan		
National Peatland Strategy (DAHG, 2015)	The vision statement of the National Peatlands Strategy states that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This Strategy aims to provide a long-term framework within which all of the peatlands within the State can be managed responsibly in order to optimise their social, environmental and economic contribution to the well-being of this and future generations. 		
Population and Human Health			
Healthy Ireland – a Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2015-2025	The 4 stated Goals of Healthy Ireland are to: 1. Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life. 2. Reduce health inequalities. 3. Protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing. 4. Create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland.	EPOs and associated environmental considerations related to Population and Human Health have been taken into account during the preparation of the CDP 2024-2030 through the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A compact spatial development framework for Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar, Bundoran and other settlements. which limits physical distances to key destinations (e.g. town centre, education, employment centres, local services and recreation facilities) and thereby encourages active/healthy travel modes (i.e. walking and cycling). Zoning of lands as Open Space and Recreation in Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Bundoran whose 	The various Environmental Protection Objectives listed opposite and related to water, air pollution, climate change, flooding are reflected in the Population and Human Health SEO. For example: the fundamental objective of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Ireland is embodied in the text: <i>Provide an environment increases the number of Donegal's citizens who are healthy at all stages of life, and promotes an active and high quality lifestyle in Donegal.</i>
Directive (EU) 2020/2184 Of the European Parliament And Of The Council of 16 December 2020 on the quality of water intended for human consumption	Article 1 Objectives states: 1. This Directive concerns the quality of water intended for human consumption for all in the Union. 2. The objectives of this Directive are to protect human health from the adverse effects of any contamination of water intended for human consumption by ensuring that it is wholesome and clean, and to improve access to water intended for human consumption.		

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
Environmental Directive (2002/49/EC) Noise (END)	The aim of this Directive (Article 1) refers is to: Define a common approach intended to avoid, prevent or reduce on a prioritised basis the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to exposure, to environmental noise.	zoning objective is to: <i>Preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EU Directives in Relation to Water, Drinking Water, Noise and Air Quality are embodied in the text <i>Safeguard the Donegal's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and well-being including air, water and noise pollution, climate change and flooding.</i>
Air Quality	See section on Air	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zoning land for Community Infrastructure in said towns whose zoning objective is to <i>Provide for and protect civic, religious, community, health care, educational and social infrastructure</i> 	
Water Quality	See Section on Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing for employment generating needs by zoning land as Business/Enterprise in said towns whose zoning objective is to <i>'Provide opportunities for general enterprise and business development</i> 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitating strategic road projects (e.g. TEN-T PRIPD), which will remove strategic traffic from built up urban areas and thus reduce impacts on sensitive noise receptors. In this regard the European Environment Agency reports that Noise pollution remains a major environmental health problem in Europe, with the transport sector being a major cause. Reduction in air pollution through the encouragement of sustainable travel modes (e.g. walking, cycling and public transport) through facilitating new walking and cycling infrastructure. Reducing water pollution through ensuring that the public wastewater system has adequate treatment capacity to serve proposed new developments (WW-P-4 refers) and that independent wastewater treatment systems for single dwellings are compliant with the EPA Code of Practice (WW-P-5). 	
Climate Change	See Section on Climate Change		
Soil and Geology			

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
EU 8 th Environment Action Programme	<p>Article 2(2) of the Decision of the European Parliament and council on a General Union Environment Action Programme to 2030 states that said programme shall contained the following priority objectives up to 31 December 2030:</p> <p><i>(d) pursuing zero pollution, including in relation to harmful chemicals, in order to achieve a toxic-free environment, including for air, water and soil, as well as in relation to light and noise pollution, and protecting the health and well-being of people, animals and ecosystems from environment-related risks and negative impacts;</i></p> <p><i>(e) protecting, preserving and restoring marine and terrestrial biodiversity and the biodiversity of inland waters inside and outside protected areas by, inter alia, halting and reversing biodiversity loss and improving the state of ecosystems and their functions and the services they provide, and by improving the state of the environment, in particular air, water and soil, as well as by combating desertification and soil degradation;</i></p>	<p>EPOs and associated environmental considerations related to Soils and Geology have been taken into account during the preparation of the CDP 2024-2030 through the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing the impact on soil resources and soil services associated with greenfield development by providing for a more compact spatial development framework in Buncrana, including a focus on brownfield and infill development. Zoning land as Open Space Recreation whose zoning objective provides for Limited Development and therefore limits impact on the soil resource. Zoning land as Rural/Agricultural whose zoning objective provides for limited development and therefore limits impact on the soil resource. 	<p>The various Environmental Protection Objective listed opposite is directly reflected in the consolidated EPO related to Soils and Geology namely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Protect soils against pollution, and prevent degradation of the soil resource and associated ecosystem services</i> <i>Safeguard areas of prime agricultural land and designated geological sites</i>
Water			
European Union			
Water Framework Directive (WFD) (2000/60/EC) (as amended by Decision 2455/2001/EC and Directives 2008/32/EC, 2008/105/EC and 2009/31/EC The following Directives have been subsumed into	<p>Article 1 of the Directive describes the purpose of the objective as follows: The purpose of this Directive is to establish a framework for the protection of inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater which:</p> <p>a) prevents further deterioration and protects and enhances the status of aquatic ecosystems and, with regard to their water needs, terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands directly depending on the aquatic ecosystems;</p>	<p>EPOs and associated environmental considerations related to Population and Human Health have been taken into account during the preparation of the CDP 2024-2030 through the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A spatial development framework which aligns the location of significant new development (residential, commercial, retail etc) with areas which can be serviced by existing wastewater infrastructure. 	<p>The various Environmental Protection Objectives listed opposite are reflected in the Water SEO. In this regard for example the fundamental objectives of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Water Framework Directive, the River Basin Management Plan and the Surface and Ground Water Regulations, are all embodied in the text <i>'avoid deterioration of</i>

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
<p>the Water Framework Directive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Drinking Water Abstraction Directive; • The Sampling Drinking Water Directive; • The Exchange of Information on Quality of Surface Freshwater Directive; • The Shellfish Directive ; • The Freshwater Fish Directive; • The Groundwater (Dangerous Substances) Directive; and The Dangerous Substances Directive. 	<p>b) promotes sustainable water use based on a long-term protection of available water resources;</p> <p>c) aims at enhanced protection and improvement of the aquatic environment, inter alia, through specific measures for the progressive reduction of discharges, emissions and losses of priority substances and the cessation or phasing-out of discharges, emissions and losses of the priority hazardous substances;</p> <p>d) ensures the progressive reduction of pollution of groundwater and prevents its further pollution, and</p> <p>e) contributes to mitigating the effects of floods and droughts</p> <p>and thereby contributes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the provision of the sufficient supply of good quality surface water and groundwater as needed for sustainable, balanced and equitable water use, • a significant reduction in pollution of groundwater, • the protection of territorial and marine waters, and • achieving the objectives of relevant international agreements, including those which aim to prevent and eliminate pollution of the marine environment, by Community action under Article 16(3) to cease or phase out discharges, emissions and losses of priority hazardous substances, with the ultimate aim of achieving concentrations in the marine environment near background values for naturally occurring substances and close to zero for man-made synthetic substance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing water pollution by ensuring that the public wastewater system has adequate treatment capacity to serve proposed new developments (WW-P-4 refers) and that independent wastewater treatment systems for single dwellings are compliant with the EPA Code of Practice (WW-P-5 refers). • Not permitting developments to connect to existing, or proposals for new, communal wastewater treatment systems (WW-P-9 refers). • Requiring the use of Water Sensitive Urban Design/Nature Based Solutions in surface water management systems within public and private developments and within the public realm (WW-P-10 refers). 	<p><i>and, as appropriate, restore/enhance the quality of surface, ground, and marine waters.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth - An Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland (2012) is embodied in the text '<i>Protect</i>' and '<i>Marine Waters</i>' and '<i>Protect the coastal environment based on an ecosystem approach</i>'. • The River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) is embodied in the text '<i>Protect</i>' and '<i>Avoid Deterioration</i>'.
<p>Urban Wastewater Framework Directive (91/271/EEC)</p>	<p>Article 1 of the Directive states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This Directive concerns the collection, treatment and discharge of urban waste water and the treatment and discharge of waste water from certain industrial sectors.</i> • <i>The objective of the Directive is to protect the environment from the adverse effects of the abovementioned waste water discharges.</i> 		
<p>Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) (2008/56/EC)</p>	<p>Article 1 of the directive states that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This Directive establishes a framework within which Member States shall take the necessary measures to 		

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
	<p>achieve or maintain good environmental status in the marine environment by the year 2020 at the latest.</p> <p>2. For that purpose, marine strategies shall be developed and implemented in order to:</p> <p>a) protect and preserve the marine environment, prevent its deterioration or, where practicable, restore marine ecosystems in areas where they have been adversely affected;</p> <p>b) prevent and reduce inputs in the marine environment, with a view to phasing out pollution as defined in Article 3(8), so as to ensure that there are no significant impacts on or risks to marine biodiversity, marine ecosystems, human health or legitimate uses of the sea.</p>		
Bathing Water Directive (2006/7/EC)	<p>Article 1 of this directive states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of this Directive is to preserve, protect and improve the quality of the environment and to protect human health by complementing Directive 2000/60/EC. 		
Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC)	<p>Article 1 of this directive states its purpose as follows:</p> <p>1. This Directive establishes specific measures as provided for in Article 17(1) and (2) of Directive 2000/60/EC in order to prevent and control groundwater pollution. These measures include in particular:</p> <p>a. criteria for the assessment of good groundwater chemical status; and</p> <p>b. criteria for the identification and reversal of significant and sustained upward trends and for the definition of starting points for trend reversals.</p> <p>2. This Directive also complements the provisions preventing or limiting inputs of pollutants into groundwater already contained in Directive 2000/60/EC, and aims to prevent the deterioration of the status of all bodies of groundwater.</p>		
National			
Draft River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) 2022-2027	<p>The introduction to the plan states that it's overall aim is to: <i>ensure that our natural waters are sustainably managed and that freshwater resources are protected so as to maintain and improve Ireland's water environment.</i></p>		

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
	<p><i>In addition, Section 2.4 What we Want to achieve states that: This plan must include 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).</i></p>		
(Surface Water) Regulations 2009 (S.I. 272/2009)	<p>PART III of these Regulations sets out the following Environmental Objectives 28. The following environmental objectives are hereby established for surface waters— (1) A surface water body whose status is determined to be high or good (or good ecological potential and good surface water chemical status as the case may be) when classified by the Agency in accordance with these Regulations shall not deteriorate in status. (2) A surface water body whose status is determined to be less than good (or good ecological potential and good surface water chemical status as the case may be) when classified by the Agency in accordance with these Regulations shall be restored to at least good status (or good ecological potential and good surface water chemical status as the case may be) by not later than 22 December 2015 unless otherwise provided for by these Regulations. Artificial and heavily modified water bodies</p>		
European Communities Environmental Objectives (Groundwater) Regulations 2010. (S.I. No. 9/2010)	<p>Part II of these regulations contain the following Environmental Objectives for Groundwater: Duty on Public Authorities 4. A public authority shall, insofar as its functions allow and subject to any provisions and limitations listed elsewhere in this Part, promote compliance with the requirements of these Regulations and take all reasonable steps including, where necessary, the implementation of programmes of measures, to: a) prevent or limit, as appropriate, the input of pollutants into groundwater and prevent the deterioration of the status of all bodies of groundwater;</p>		

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
	<p>b) protect, enhance and restore all bodies of groundwater and ensure a balance between abstraction and recharge of groundwater with the aim of achieving good groundwater quantitative status and good groundwater chemical status by not later than 22 December 2015;</p> <p>c) reverse any significant and sustained upward trend in the concentration of any pollutant resulting from the impact of human activity in order to progressively reduce pollution of groundwater;</p> <p>d) achieve compliance with any standards and objectives established for a groundwater dependant protected area included in the register of protected areas established under Regulation 8 of the 2003 Regulations by not later than 22 December 2015, unless otherwise specified in the Community legislation under which the individual protected areas have been established.</p> <p>5. A public authority shall not, in the performance of its functions, undertake those functions in a manner that knowingly causes or allows deterioration in the quantitative status or chemical status of a body of groundwater.</p>		
<p>Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth - An Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland (2012)</p>	<p>Goal 2 of said Plan is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Achieve healthy ecosystems that provide monetary and non-monetary goods and services (e.g. food, climate, health and well-being).</i> 		
<p>National Marine Planning Framework (DoHLGH)</p>	<p>Section 05 Environmental Ocean Health contains the following objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Comprehensive, integrated management of human activities-based on the best available scientific knowledge about the ecosystem and its dynamics, in order to identify and take action on influences which are critical to the health, diversity and productivity of marine ecosystems, thereby achieving sustainable use of ecosystem goods and services and the maintenance of ecosystem integrity.</i> 		
<p>Recommendation Of The European Parliament And Of The Council of 30 May</p>	<p>Chapter 1 recommends that Member States: take a strategic approach to the management of their coastal zones, based on inter alia:</p>		

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
2002 concerning the implementation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Europe (2002/413/EC)	(a) protection of the coastal environment, based on an ecosystem approach preserving its integrity and functioning, and sustainable management of the natural resources of both the marine and terrestrial components of the coastal zone; (c) appropriate and ecologically responsible coastal protection measures, including protection of coastal settlements and their cultural heritage;		
Air			
International			
World Health Organisation (WHO) Air Quality Guidelines (1999) (updated 2005) and Guidelines for Europe (1987)	The WHO air quality guidelines (AQGs) support actions to achieve air quality that protects public health in different context including the setting of air quality guidelines for specific pollutants.	EPOs and associated environmental considerations related to air have been taken into account during the preparation of the plan through the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The provision of a compact spatial development framework which minimises physical travel distances to key destinations (e.g. town centre, education, employment centres, local services and recreation facilities) enables sustainable travel modes (e.g. walking, cycling and public transport) and thereby reduce transport related air emissions overall. • The provision of new walking and cycling infrastructure and connections which will facilitate a modal shift towards more sustainable travel modes and thereby reduce transport related emissions. (e.g. Active Travel Schemes identified in the Buncrana, Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Bundoran LAPs and within the Transport Chapter). ○ The facilitation of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal which will reduce congestive queuing related air pollution and free up road space within Ballybofey/Stranorlar and Letterkenny. for 	The various Environmental Protection Objectives listed opposite are reflected in the air SEO namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Avoid, prevent and reduce air pollution and environmental noise in order to maintain and improve air quality and reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment.</i> • <i>Achieve compliance with relevant CAFÉ and WHO air quality limits and guidelines particularly in urban areas.</i> <p>In this regard the fundamental objective of Directive 2008/50/EC Of The European Parliament And Of The Council of 21 May 2008 on Ambient Air Quality And Cleaner Air For Europe, the Clean Air Package for Europe (2013) and A Clean Air Programme for Europe (COM(2013) 918) are all embodied in the above SEO</p>
The Gothenburg Protocol (1999)	The objective of the Protocol is to control and reduce emissions of sulphur, nitrogen oxides, ammonia and volatile organic compounds that are caused by anthropogenic activities and are likely to cause adverse effects on human health, natural ecosystems, materials and crops, due to acidification, eutrophication or ground-level ozone as a result of long-range transboundary atmospheric transport, and to ensure, as far as possible, that in the long term and in a stepwise approach, taking into account advances in scientific knowledge, atmospheric depositions or concentrations do not exceed the thresholds set out in the protocol.		
The 1979 Geneva Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP)	The principle aim of this Convention as expressed in Article 2 is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limit and, as far as possible, gradually reduce and prevent air pollution including long-range transboundary air pollution. 		
European Union			
Clean Air Package for Europe (2013)	The clean air package aims to substantially reduce air pollution across the EU. The proposed strategy sets out objectives for reducing the health and environmental impacts		

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
	<p>of air pollution by 2030, and contains legislative proposals to implement stricter standards for emissions and air pollution. The clean air package is made up of several elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the clean air programme for Europe - a Commission strategy outlining measures to ensure that existing targets are met and setting out new air quality objectives for the period up to 2030 • a revised national emission ceilings directive, with strict emissions ceilings for the six main pollutants • a proposed directive to reduce pollution from medium-sized combustion plants • a proposal to approve amended international rules on long-range transboundary air pollution (the Gothenburg Protocol) at EU level 	<p>more sustainable transportation modes and will provide sustainable travel infrastructure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The roll out of additional charging points for electric vehicles. <p>In this regard the European Environment Agency reports that: transport is responsible for more than two thirds of all NOx emissions and accounts for a significant proportion (around 10 % or more) of the total emissions of other pollutants, and road transport, in particular, continues to account for a significant proportion of emissions of all the main air pollutants³⁷.</p>	
<p>A Clean Air Programme for Europe (COM(2013) 918)</p>	<p>The Clean Air Programme for Europe aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackles the reasons for the widespread non-compliance with air quality standards • Proposes legislation to reduce harmful emissions in the longer term which contribute to poor air quality and damage the natural environment. <p>Promote measures which also mitigate atmospheric warming and climate change.</p>		
<p>Directive 2008/50/EC Of The European Parliament And Of The Council of 21 May 2008 on Ambient Air Quality And Cleaner Air For Europe</p>	<p>This Directive lays down measures aimed at the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. defining and establishing objectives for ambient air quality designed to avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects on human health and the environment as a whole; 2. assessing the ambient air quality in Member States on the basis of common methods and criteria; 3. obtaining information on ambient air quality in order to help combat air pollution and nuisance and to monitor long-term trends and improvements resulting from national and Community measures; 		

³⁷ <https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/transport-emissions-of-air-pollutants-8/transport-emissions-of-air-pollutants-8>

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. ensuring that such information on ambient air quality is made available to the public; 5. maintaining air quality where it is good and improving it in other cases; 6. promoting increased cooperation between the Member States in reducing air pollution. 		
Environmental Noise Directive (END) (2002/49/EC)	The aim of this Directive (Article 1) refers is to: Define a common approach intended to avoid, prevent or reduce on a prioritised basis the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to exposure, to environmental noise.		
National Emissions Ceiling Directive (2016/2284/EU)	<p>Article 1 of the Directive states that Objectives of the Directive are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In order to move towards achieving levels of air quality that do not give rise to significant negative impacts on and risks to human health and the environment, this Directive establishes the emission reduction commitments for the Member States' anthropogenic atmospheric emissions of sulphur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), non-methane volatile organic compounds (NMVOC), ammonia (NH₃) and fine particulate matter (PM_{2,5}) and requires that national air pollution control programmes be drawn up, adopted and implemented and that emissions of those pollutants and the other pollutants referred to in Annex I, as well as their impacts, be monitored and reported. 2. This Directive also contributes to achieving: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the air quality objectives set out in Union legislation and progress towards the Union's long-term objective of achieving levels of air quality in line with the air quality guidelines published by the World Health Organisation; b) the Union's biodiversity and ecosystem objectives in line with the 7th Environment Action Programme; c) enhanced synergies between the Union's air quality policy and other relevant Union policies, in particular climate and energy policies. 		
DIRECTIVE 2004/107/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF	Article 1 of the directive states that the objectives of this Directive shall be to:		

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
<p>THE COUNCIL of 15 December 2004 relating to arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in ambient air</p>	<p>(a) establish a target value for the concentration of arsenic, cadmium, nickel and benzo(a)pyrene in ambient air so as to avoid, prevent or reduce harmful effects of arsenic, cadmium, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons on human health and the environment as a whole;</p> <p>(b) ensure, with respect to arsenic, cadmium, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, that ambient air quality is maintained where it is good and that it is improved in other cases;</p> <p>(c) determine common methods and criteria for the assessment of concentrations of arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in ambient air as well as of the deposition of arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons;</p> <p>(d) ensure that adequate information on concentrations of arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in ambient air as well as on the deposition of arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons is obtained and ensure that it is made available to the public.</p>		
Climate Change			
International			
<p>Paris Agreement (UNFCCC, 2015)</p>	<p>This Agreement aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, including by:</p> <p>a) Holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change;</p> <p>b) Increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production; and</p> <p>c) Making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development.</p>	<p>EPOs and associated environmental considerations related to Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation have been taken into account during the preparation of the CDP 2024-2030 including through the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The provision of a compact spatial development framework in settlements which minimises physical travel distances to key destinations (e.g. town centre, education, employment centres, local services and recreation facilities), enables sustainable travel modes (e.g. walking, cycling and public transport) and thereby reduces transport related greenhouse gas emissions. 	<p>The various Environmental Protection Objectives listed opposite are reflected in the Climate Change SEO namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions in order to help mitigate climate change and meet our relevant International, European and National climate change obligations and targets including achieving the National Climate Objective.</i> • <i>Pursue development strategies which increase our ability to</i>

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
<p>European Union</p> <p>European Climate Law (Regulation (EU) 2021/1119)</p>	<p>Article 2 of the European Climate Law sets out the following climate neutrality objective:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Union-wide greenhouse gas emissions and removals regulated in Union law shall be balanced within the Union at the latest by 2050, thus reducing emissions to net zero by that date, and the Union shall aim to achieve negative emissions thereafter.</i> 2. <i>The relevant Union institutions and the Member States shall take the necessary measures at Union and national level, respectively, to enable the collective achievement of the climate-neutrality objective set out in paragraph 1, taking into account the importance of promoting both fairness and solidarity among Member States and cost-effectiveness in achieving this objective</i> <p>Furthermore Article 4 sets out the following Intermediate Union Climate Target:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>In order to reach the climate-neutrality objective set out in Article 2(1), the binding Union 2030 climate target shall be a domestic reduction of net greenhouse gas emissions (emissions after deduction of removals) by at least 55 % compared to 1990 levels by 2030.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of new walking and cycling infrastructure and connections which will facilitate a modal shift towards more sustainable travel modes and thereby reduce transport related greenhouse gas emissions. (e.g. Active Travel Schemes identified in the LAPs and Transport chapter). ○ The overall spatial development framework for the plan which avoids specific forms of developments in certain Flood Risk Zones in accordance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. 	<p><i>adapt to climate change and improve climate resilience.</i></p> <p>In this regard said SEO fundamentally embodies all existing and future international, European and National climate change targets. In addition, the text specifically cites the National Climate Objective which is contained within the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021. Finally, the text also embodies the climate adaptation agenda.</p>
<p>The EU Policy Framework for Climate and Energy in the period from 2020 to 2030</p>	<p>In December 2020, in light of the need to increase climate ambition, also as required by the Paris Agreement, the European Council endorsed a new 2030 target for emission reduction. EU leaders agreed on a binding EU target for a net domestic reduction of at least 55% in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 compared to 1990.</p> <p>The greenhouse gas target is implemented by the EU Emissions Trading System, the Effort Sharing Regulation with Member States' emissions reduction targets and the Land use, land use change and forestry Regulation.</p> <p>The EU Emissions Trading System, limits emissions from more than 11,000 heavy energy-using installations (power stations & industrial plants) and airlines operating between these countries</p>		

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
	<p>The Effort Sharing legislation establishes binding annual greenhouse gas emission targets for Member States for the periods 2013–2020 and 2021–2030. These targets concern emissions from most sectors not included in the EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS), such as transport, buildings, agriculture and waste.</p> <p>All three pieces of climate legislation will now be updated with a view to implement the proposed at least 55% net greenhouse gas emissions reduction target. The Commission will come forward with the proposals by June 2021.</p>		
The EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change 2013	<p>The EU Adaptation Strategy has three objectives.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promoting action by Member States: The Commission encourages all Member States to adopt comprehensive adaptation strategies (15 had strategies as of mid-2013) and will provide guidance and funding to help them build up their adaptation capacities and take action. The Commission will also support adaptation in cities by launching a voluntary commitment based on the Covenant of Mayors initiative. 2. Promoting better informed decision-making by addressing gaps in knowledge about adaptation and further developing the European Climate Adaptation Platform (Climate-ADAPT) as the 'one-stop shop' for adaptation information in Europe. 3. Promoting adaptation in key vulnerable sectors through agriculture, fisheries and cohesion policy, ensuring that Europe's infrastructure is made more resilient, and encouraging the use of insurance against natural and man-made disasters. 		
National			
Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021	<p>Section 3. (1) of the Bill establishes the following National Climate Change objective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The State shall, so as to reduce the extent of further global warming, pursue and achieve, by no later than the end of the year 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable 		

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
	and climate neutral economy (in this Act referred to as the 'national climate objective').		
National Adaptation Framework Planning for a Climate Resilient Ireland	The overall objective of this Framework is to enable the State to pursue the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050.		
Climate Action Plan 2023 (Government of Ireland)	<p>The Climate Action Plan 2023 contains the following key sectoral targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Sector: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the public sector by 51% and Increase the improvement in energy efficiency in the public sector from the 33% target in 2020 to 50% by 2030 • Electricity: 75% Reduction in emissions by 2030 and 80% of all electricity be generated from renewable sources by 2030. • Industry: 35% reductions in emissions by 2030. • Built Environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All new dwellings designed and constructed to Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) standard by 2025, and Zero Emission Building (ZEB) standard by 2030 ○ Equivalent of 120,000 dwellings retrofitted to BER B2 or cost optimal equivalent by 2025, and 500,000 dwellings by 2030 • Transport: 50% reduction in emission by 2030, 20% reduction in total vehicle kilometres, a reduction in fuel usage, and significant increases to sustainable transport trips and modal share. • Agriculture: 25% reduction in emissions by 2030. 		
Material Assets			
Floods Directive (2007/60/EC)	<p>Article 1 of this directive states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of this Directive is to establish a framework for the assessment and management of flood risks, 	EPOs and associated environmental considerations related to Material Assets have been taken into account during the preparation	The Environmental Protection Objectives of the Flood Directive and the Flood Risk Management

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
	aiming at the reduction of the adverse consequences for human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity associated with floods in the Community.	of the CDP 2024-2030 through the following measures:	Guidelines outlined opposite are embodied in the Material Assets SEO namely:
The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (DHPCLG, 2009)	<p>The core objectives of the Guidelines are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding; • Avoid new developments increasing flood risk elsewhere, including that which may arise from surface water run-off; • Ensure effective management of residual risks for development permitted in floodplains; • Avoid unnecessary restriction of national, regional or local economic and social growth; • Improve the understanding of flood risk among relevant stakeholders; • Ensure that the requirements of EU and national law in relation to the natural environment and nature conservation are complied with at all stages of flood risk management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of an overall spatial development framework which protects new material assets by avoiding specific forms of developments in Flood Risk Zones in accordance with the Flood Risk Management Guidelines. • Requiring the use of Water Sensitive Urban Design/Nature Based Solutions in surface water management systems within public and private developments and within the public realm (WW-P-10 refers). • Only facilitating development where flood or surface water management issues can be successfully addressed and/or where there is no unacceptable residual flood risk for the development (Policy F-P-1 refers). • Supporting the development of long and short term flood remediation works (F-P-3) • An overall spatial and policy framework which provides for the creation a wide range of new material assets (e.g. housing, retail, commercial, transportation, and green infrastructure) within the plan area. • The identification of Strategic Roads corridors which through an option selection process have sought to minimise impacts on existing material assets (e.g. housing and commercial developments). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To sustainably develop new and efficiently utilise and (where appropriate) protect existing material assets (e.g. residential, energy, transport, water, wastewater, community, telecoms and land) by promoting compact consolidated growth and efficient land use planning.</i> • <i>Promote the circular economy, reduce waste and increase energy efficiency.</i> • <i>Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of current or future flooding and prevent new developments increasing flood risk elsewhere.</i>
Cultural Heritage			
International			
Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe (revised) (Valletta, 1992)	Objective is to protect the archaeological heritage as a source of the European collective memory and as an instrument for historical and scientific study.	EPOs and associated environmental considerations related to Cultural Heritage have been taken into account during the preparation of the CDP 2024-2030 through the following measures:	The Environmental Protection Objectives listed opposite are reflected in the Cultural Heritage SEO namely:

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada, 1985)	<p>The broad objective of this convention is that each party:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take statutory measures to protect the architectural heritage; Within the framework of such measures and by means specific to each State or region, to make provision for the protection of monuments, groups of buildings and sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The provision of an extensive Record of Protected Structures within the development plan. Protecting all Protect all structures and parts of structures on the Record of Protected Structures and to extend the RPS where appropriate (AH-O-3 refers). Preserving the special character of the Ardara, Ballyshannon, Buncrana, Letterkenny, Ramelton, Raphoe, and Moville Architectural Conservation Areas (AH-O-4 refers). Requiring that development of structures on the NIAH including the curtilage, attendant grounds and setting of the structure are appropriate in terms of architectural treatment, character, scale, and form, and is not detrimental to the special character and integrity of the structure and its setting (AH-P-7 refers). Seeking to protect, conserve and preserve vernacular structures and enhance the established character, forms, material features, and settings of vernacular buildings that are considered to be intrinsic elements of the character of a place (AH-P-9). 	<p><i>To protect and preserve cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage</i></p> <p>In this regard for example said consolidated EPO embodies the fundamental objective of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe (revised) (Valletta, 1992) namely to protect archaeological heritage. The Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe namely to protect architectural heritage.
World Heritage Convention United Nations Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (Paris, 1972)	<p>Article 5 states that:</p> <p>To ensure that effective and active measures are taken for the protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage situated on its territory.</p>		
National			
Heritage Ireland 2030 (DoEHLG 2022)	<p>The document sets out the following vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Recognised for its contribution to society and well-being, Ireland's heritage will be valued, nurtured and protected and placed at the very centre of our decision-making around Ireland's future.</i> 		
Framework and Principles for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (1999)	<p>The document sets out the basic principles of national policy regarding the protection of archaeological heritage. The document focuses particularly on the principles which should apply in respect of development and archaeological heritage.</p>		
Architectural heritage protection Guidelines For Planning Authorities 2011	<p>Section 1.5.1 of these guidelines state that under the Planning and Development Act 2000 the Minister is obliged to issue guidelines to planning authorities concerning development objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> for protecting structures, or parts of structures, which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical interest, and for preserving the character of architectural conservation areas. 		
Landscape			
European Union			

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
European Landscape Convention, 2000	<p>Article 3 of this convention states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The aims of this Convention are to promote landscape protection, management and planning, and to organise European co-operation on landscape issues. 	<p>EPOs and associated environmental considerations related to Landscape have been taken into account during the preparation of the CDP 2024-2030 including through the following measures:</p>	<p>The Environmental Protection Objectives listed opposite are reflected in the Landscape SEO namely:</p> <p><i>To protect and manage the landscape (both rural and urban) in a sustainable manner.</i></p>
National			
National Landscape Strategy 2015-2025	<p>The objectives of the National Landscape Strategy are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> implement the European Landscape Convention by integrating landscape into our approach to sustainable development; establish and embed a public process of gathering, sharing and interpreting scientific, technical and cultural information in order to carry out evidence-based identification and description of the character, resources and processes of the landscape; provide a policy framework, which will put in place measures at national, sectoral - including agriculture, tourism, energy, transport and marine - and local level, together with civil society, to protect, manage and properly plan through high quality design for the sustainable stewardship of our landscape; ensure that we take advantage of opportunities to implement policies relating to landscape use that are complementary and mutually reinforcing and that conflicting policy objectives are avoided in as far as possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying Areas of Especially High Scenic Amenity EHSA (sublime natural landscapes of the highest quality that are synonymous with the identity of County Donegal) and protecting these landscapes in accordance with Policy L-P-1. Identifying areas of High Scenic Amenity HAS (landscapes of significant aesthetic, cultural, heritage and environmental quality that are unique to their locality and form a fundamental element of the landscape and identity of County Donegal) and Moderate Scenic Amenity (landscapes outside Area Plan Boundaries and Settlement framework boundaries, that have a unique, rural and generally agricultural quality) and protecting these landscapes in accordance with Policy L-P-2 Safeguarding the scenic context, cultural landscape significance, recreational/tourism amenities, and environmental amenities of the County's coastline from inappropriate development (Policy L-P-3 refers). Otherwise protecting approach roads to Glenveagh National Park, Views to/from St John's point, skylines, Views of Special Amenity Value of Interest, Views between public roads and sea lakes and rivers in accordance with Policies L-P-4 to 8 	<p>In this regard said SEO embodies the fundamental objectives of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> European Landscape Convention namely 'to promote landscape protection' The National Landscape Strategy 2015-2025 including to: '<i>integrating landscape into our approach to sustainable development</i>'
Sustainable Development			
European Union			
Seventh Environmental Action Programme to	The Programme identifies 3 key environmental objectives:	EPOs and associated environmental considerations related to sustainable	Environmental Protection Objectives related to sustainable development

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
<p>2020 of the European Community (Note: The EU Council is currently in negotiations with the European Parliament on the 8th Environmental Action Programme (EAP). The 8th EAP will serve as a guide for environmental and climate policymaking and implementation until 2030)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to protect, conserve and enhance the Union’s natural capital. to turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green, and competitive low-carbon economy to safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing. 	<p>development have been taken in account during the preparation of the CDP 2024-2030 through the implementation of the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not facilitating new development within Natura 2000 sites. Ensuring the at all developments seeks to conserve/protect the qualifying the qualifying interests of Ramsar Sites, Nature Reserves, Natural Heritage Areas (NHA), proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA), and any species protected under the Wildlife Act (BIO-P-2 refers). 	<p>are reflected across a number of SEOs. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The protection of Natural Capital is reflected in the Biodiversity Flora and Fauna SEO The protection of public/human health is reflected in the Population and Human Health SEO. Climate Change mitigation is reflected in the Climate Factors SEO including reducing Greenhouse Gas emission. The protection of Cultural Heritage is embodied in the Cultural Heritage SEO.
<p>A Sustainable Europe for a Better World: A European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development</p>	<p>Section III of said document identified the following key objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit climate change and increase the use of clean energy. Address threats to public health. Improve the transport system and land-use management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The provision of a compact spatial development framework in settlements which minimises physical travel distances to key destinations (e.g. town centre, education, employment centres, local services and recreation facilities), enables sustainable travel modes (e.g. walking, cycling and public transport) and thereby reduces air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. 	
<p>SEA Directive (2001/42/EC)</p>	<p>Article 1 of the directive states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The objective of this 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 and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development, by ensuring that, in accordance with this Directive, an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that the public wastewater system has adequate treatment capacity to serve proposed new developments (WW-P-4 refers) and that independent wastewater treatment systems for single dwellings are compliant with the EPA Code of Practice (WW-P-5 refers). The provision of a provision of an extensive Record of Protected Structures and objectives and policies to protect architectural and archaeological heritage. 	
<p>EIA Directive (85/337/EEC), as amended by Directive 97/11/EC, Directive 2011/92/EU & Directive 2014/52/EU</p>	<p>Article 2 of the directive as amended provides the broad objective of the directive, namely that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member States shall adopt all measures necessary to ensure that, before development consent is given, projects likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue, inter alia, of their nature, size or location are made subject to a requirement for development consent and an assessment with regard to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The identification of areas of Especially High Scenic Amenity (EHSA) and High Scenic Amenity (HAS) and Moderate Scenic Amenity (MSA) and the protection of said areas through appropriate landscape protection policies. 	

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
	their effects on the environment. Those projects are defined in Article 4.		
Environmental Liability Directive (2004/35/EC) as amended by 2005/21/EC, 2009/31/EC and 2013/30/EU) amended by Regulation - (EU) 2019/1010]	<p>Article 1 of the directive states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of this Directive is to establish a framework of environmental liability based on the 'polluter-pays' principle, to prevent and remedy environmental damage 		
National			
Our Sustainable Future: A Framework for Sustainable Development in Ireland (2012)	<p>This framework sets out a number of principles for sustainable development including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction of human needs by the efficient use of resources: Prices should reflect the real costs to society of production and consumption activities and polluters should pay for the damage they cause to human health and the environment. Respect for ecological integrity and biodiversity: The abundance of wildlife and extent of habitats should be maintained, improved and restored where necessary, through sustainable management. Respect for cultural heritage /diversity: The quality of landscapes, the heritage of the man-made environment and historic and cultural resources should be maintained and improved. 		
Planning			
Project Ireland 2040 Our Plan: The National Planning Framework and National Development Plan 2018 – 2027	<p>The National Planning Framework contains the following outcomes and objectives broadly related to Environmental Protection.</p> <p>National Strategic Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compact Growth. Sustainable Mobility. Enhanced Amenities and Heritage. Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society. Sustainable Management of Water, Waste and other Environmental Resources. <p>Natural Heritage</p>	<p>EPOs and environmental considerations within the National Planning Framework are embedded within the plan including in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compact Growth: By the provision of a compact spatial development form which focuses on infill, brownfield and sequential development. Sustainable Mobility: By compact growth, and providing for new walking and cycling infrastructure. 	<p>The Environmental Protection Objectives in the National Planning Framework are reflected across a number of SEOs including for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Material Assets: <i>'by promoting compact consolidated growth and efficient land use planning.</i> Climatic Factors: <i>'Reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions in</i>

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPO 59. Enhance the conservation status and improve the management of protected areas and protected species. <p>Human Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPO 65: Promote the pro-active management of noise where likely to have significant effects on health and quality of life. <p>Sustainable Land Management and Resource Efficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPO 53: Support the circular and bio economy including in particular through greater efficiency in land management. <p>Water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPO 57: Enhance water quality and resource management. NPO 63: Ensure efficient and sustainable, use and development of water resources and water services. <p>Air and climate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPO 54: Reduce carbon footprint by integrating climate action into the planning system. NPO 55: Promote renewable energy use and generation. NPO 64: Improve air quality and help people being exposed to unacceptable levels of pollution in our urban and rural areas. <p>Landscape</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPO 14: Protect and promote the sense of place and culture and the quality, character and distinctiveness of the Irish rural landscape NPO 41a: Ensure that Ireland’s coastal resource is managed to sustain its physical character and environmental quality. <p>Built Heritage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NPO 17: Built Heritage: Enhance, integrate and protect the special physical, social, economic and cultural value of built heritage assets through appropriate and sensitive use now and for future generations. NPO 6: Conserve and enhance the rich qualities of natural and cultural heritage of Ireland in a manner appropriate to their significance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced Amenities and Heritage: By objectives and policies which actively support Urban Regeneration and protect Cultural Heritage assets. Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society: By reducing transport related greenhouse gas emissions via a more compact spatial development framework which enables sustainable mobility and adapts to climate change by avoiding development in Flood Risk Areas. Sustainable Management Water, Waste and other Environmental Resources: By aligning new residential development to the provision of the necessary wastewater infrastructure, and avoiding development in environmentally sensitive areas (e.g. Natura 2000 sites, River Swilly Valley Woods pNHA). 	<p><i>order to help mitigate climate change’.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Flora and Fauna: ‘Conserve, protect, maintain and where appropriate restore biodiversity’. Water: ‘Protect, avoid deterioration of and, as appropriate restore/enhance the quality of surface, ground and marine waters’.

Title	Relevant Environmental Protection Objective	How the EPOs and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during the preparation of the County Development Plan 2024-2030	How the EPOs have informed the development of SEOs
	<p>Environmental Protection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPO 43: Work with relevant Departments in Northern Ireland for environmental protection and management. • NPO 50: Work with relevant Departments in Northern Ireland ensuring effective management of shared landscapes, heritage, water catchments, habitats, species and transboundary issues in relation to environmental policy. • NPO 52: Planning system to ensure that development occurs within environmental limits. • NPO 56: Sustainably manage waste generation. • NPO 58: Integrated planning for green infrastructure and ecosystem services will be incorporated into the preparation of statutory land use plans. 		

Appendix B:
Qualifying Interests/Special Conservation
Interests within Natura 2000 Sites Relevant to
the Plan

Special Areas of Conservation

Site Code	Special Area of Conservation	Qualifying Interests/Special Conservation Interests
002012	North Inishowen Coast SAC	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] Machairs (* in Ireland) [21A0] European dry heaths [4030] Vertigo angustior (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014] Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355]
002287	Lough Swilly SAC	Estuaries [1130] Coastal lagoons [1150] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>) [1330] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355]
001975	Ballyhoorisky Point to Fanad Head SAC	Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or <i>Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</i> [3130] Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp. [3140] Vertigo angustior (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014] <i>Najas flexilis</i> (Slender Naiad) [1833]
002159	Mulroy Bay SAC	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] Reefs [1170] Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355]
000194	Tranarossan and Melmore Lough SAC	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] Decalcified fixed dunes with <i>Empetrum nigrum</i> [2140] Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>) [2170] Humid dune slacks [2190]

Site Code	Special Area of Conservation	Qualifying Interests/Special Conservation Interests
		<p>Machairs (* in Ireland) [21A0] Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of Chara spp. [3140] European dry heaths [4030] Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] Petalophyllum ralfsii (Petalwort) [1395]</p>
001190	Sheephaven SAC	<p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] Humid dune slacks [2190] Machairs (* in Ireland) [21A0] Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0] Euphydrias aurinia (Marsh Fritillary) [1065] Petalophyllum ralfsii (Petalwort) [1395]</p>
000185	Sessiagh Lough SAC	<p>Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea [3130] Najas flexilis (Slender Naiad) [1833]</p>
000147	Horn Head and Ringleavan SAC	<p>Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] Dunes with Salix repens ssp. argentea (Salicion arenariae) [2170] Humid dune slacks [2190] Machairs (* in Ireland) [21A0] Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the Littorelletea uniflorae and/or Isoeto-Nanojuncetea [3130] Vertigo geyeri (Geyer's Whorl Snail) [1013] Halichoerus grypus (Grey Seal) [1364] Petalophyllum ralfsii (Petalwort) [1395] Najas flexilis (Slender Naiad) [1833]</p>
001090	Ballyness Bay SAC	<p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand [1310] Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410]</p>

Site Code	Special Area of Conservation	Qualifying Interests/Special Conservation Interests
		Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] Humid dune slacks [2190] Machairs (* in Ireland) [21A0] Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles [91A0] <i>Euphydryas aurinia</i> (Marsh Fritillary) [1065] <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395]
001179	Muckish Mountain SAC	Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]
002259	Tory Island Coast SAC	Coastal lagoons [1150] Reefs [1170] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] Submerged or partially submerged sea caves [8330]
000140	Fawnboy Bog/Lough Nacung SAC	Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150] <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029]
001141	Gweedore Bays and Islands SAC	Coastal lagoons [1150] Reefs [1170] Perennial vegetation of stony banks [1220] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] Decalcified fixed dunes with <i>Empetrum nigrum</i> [2140] Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (<i>Calluno-Ulicetea</i>) [2150] Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>) [2170] Humid dune slacks [2190] Machairs (* in Ireland) [21A0] Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or <i>Isoetoneanojuncetea</i> [3130] European dry heaths [4030] Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130] <i>Euphydryas aurinia</i> (Marsh Fritillary) [1065] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]

Site Code	Special Area of Conservation	Qualifying Interests/Special Conservation Interests
		Petalophyllum ralfsii (Petalwort) [1395] Najas flexilis (Slender Naiad) [1833]
002283	Rutland Island and Sound SAC	Coastal lagoons [1150] Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] Reefs [1170] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] Humid dune slacks [2190] Phoca vitulina (Harbour Seal) [1365]
002047	Cloghernagore Bog and Glenveagh National Park SAC	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) [3110] Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitriche-Batrachion vegetation [3260] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix [4010] European dry heaths [4030] Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) [6410] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150] Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0] Margaritifera margaritifera (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] Salmo salar (Salmon) [1106] Lutra lutra (Otter) [1355] Trichomanes speciosum (Killarney Fern) [1421]
000142	Gannivegil Bog SAC	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) [3110] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix [4010] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]
000197	West of Ardara/Maas Road SAC	Estuaries [1130] Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] Annual vegetation of drift lines [1210] Atlantic salt meadows (Glaucopuccinellietalia maritima) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (Juncetalia maritimi) [1410] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] Decalcified fixed dunes with Empetrum nigrum [2140] Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (Calluno-Ulicetea) [2150]

Site Code	Special Area of Conservation	Qualifying Interests/Special Conservation Interests
		<p>Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>) [2170] Humid dune slacks [2190] Machairs (* in Ireland) [21A0] Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (<i>Littorelletalia uniflorae</i>) [3110] Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or <i>Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</i> [3130] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> [4010] European dry heaths [4030] Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] Juniperus <i>communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands [5130] Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (<i>Festuco-Brometalia</i>) (* important orchid sites) [6210] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410] Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>, <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>) [6510] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> [7150] Alkaline fens [7230] <i>Vertigo geyeri</i> (Geyer's Whorl Snail) [1013] <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i> (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] <i>Euphydrias aurinia</i> (Marsh Fritillary) [1065] <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355] <i>Phoca vitulina</i> (Harbour Seal) [1365] <i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i> (Petalwort) [1395] <i>Najas flexilis</i> (Slender Naiad) [1833]</p>
000190	Slieve Tooley/Tormore Island/Loughros Beg Bay SAC	<p>Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glaucopuccinellietalia maritima</i>) [1330] Mediterranean salt meadows (<i>Juncetalia maritimi</i>) [1410] Embryonic shifting dunes [2110] Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes) [2120] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] Decalcified fixed dunes with <i>Empetrum nigrum</i> [2140] Atlantic decalcified fixed dunes (<i>Calluno-Ulicetea</i>) [2150] Dunes with <i>Salix repens</i> ssp. <i>argentea</i> (<i>Salicion arenariae</i>) [2170] Humid dune slacks [2190] Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] <i>Vertigo angustior</i> (Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail) [1014] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]</p>

Site Code	Special Area of Conservation	Qualifying Interests/Special Conservation Interests
000189	Slieve League SAC	Halichoerus grypus (Grey Seal) [1364] Reefs [1170] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix [4010] European dry heaths [4030] Alpine and Boreal heaths [4060] Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels [6430] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130] Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (Androsacetalia alpinae and Galeopsietalia ladani) [8110] Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8210] Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation [8220]
000191	St John's Point SAC	Large shallow inlets and bays [1160] Reefs [1170] Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts [1230] Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) [6210] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (Molinion caeruleae) [6410] Alkaline fens [7230] Limestone pavements [8240] Submerged or partially submerged sea caves [8330] Euphydryas aurinia (Marsh Fritillary) [1065]
000133	Donegal Bay (Murvagh) SAC	Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide [1140] Fixed coastal dunes with herbaceous vegetation (grey dunes) [2130] Dunes with Salix repens ssp. argentea (Salicion arenariae) [2170] Humid dune slacks [2190] Phoca vitulina (Harbour Seal) [1365]
000163	Lough Eske and Ardnamona Wood SAC	Oligotrophic waters containing very few minerals of sandy plains (Littorelletalia uniflorae) [3110] Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) [7220] Old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum in the British Isles [91A0] Margaritifera margaritifera (Freshwater Pearl Mussel) [1029] Salmo salar (Salmon) [1106] Trichomanes speciosum (Killarney Fern) [1421]
001125	Dunragh Loughs/Pettigo Plateau SAC	Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix [4010] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]
002135	Lough Nageage SAC	Austropotamobius pallipes (White-clawed Crayfish) [1092]
001992	Tamur Bog SAC	Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix [4010] Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]

Site Code	Special Area of Conservation	Qualifying Interests/Special Conservation Interests
		Depressions on peat substrates of the Rhynchosporion [7150]
002164	Lough Golagh and Bressy Hill SAC	Blanket bogs (* if active bog) [7130]
	Ballintra SAC (000115)	European dry heaths [4030] Limestone pavements [8240]
000138	Durness Lough SAC	Coastal lagoons [1150] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410]
002303	Dunmuckrum Turloughs SAC	Turloughs [3180]
000428	Lough Melvin SAC	Oligotrophic to mesotrophic standing waters with vegetation of the <i>Littorelletea uniflorae</i> and/or <i>Isoeto-Nanojuncetea</i> [3130] Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) [6410] <i>Salmo salar</i> (Salmon) [1106] <i>Lutra lutra</i> (Otter) [1355]

Special Protection Areas

Site Code	Special Protection Area	Key Qualifying Interests which may be affected
	Lough Foyle SPA	Red-throated Diver (<i>Gavia stellata</i>) [A001] Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [A005] Bewick's Swan (<i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>) [A037] Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038] Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043] Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>) [A053] Eider (<i>Somateria mollissima</i>) [A063] Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) [A069] Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>) [A142] Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] Bar-tailed Godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>) [A157] Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162]

Site Code	Special Protection Area	Key Qualifying Interests which may be affected
		Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]
004100	Inishtrahull SPA	Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018] Barnacle Goose (<i>Branta leucopsis</i>) [A045] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182]
004146	Malin Head SPA	Corncrake (<i>Crex crex</i>) [A122]
004034	Trawbreaga Bay SPA	Barnacle Goose (<i>Branta leucopsis</i>) [A045] Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] Chough (<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>) [A346] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]
004075	Lough Swilly SPA	Great Crested Grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>) [A005] Grey Heron (<i>Ardea cinerea</i>) [A028] Whooper Swan (<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>) [A038] Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>) [A043] Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>) [A048] Wigeon (<i>Anas penelope</i>) [A050] Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>) [A052] Mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>) [A053] Shoveler (<i>Anas clypeata</i>) [A056] Scaup (<i>Aythya marila</i>) [A062] Goldeneye (<i>Bucephala clangula</i>) [A067] Red-breasted Merganser (<i>Mergus serrator</i>) [A069] Coot (<i>Fulica atra</i>) [A125] Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>) [A130] Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>) [A143] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i>) [A149] Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>) [A160] Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>) [A162] Greenshank (<i>Tringa nebularia</i>) [A164] Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>) [A191] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]

Site Code	Special Protection Area	Key Qualifying Interests which may be affected
004194	Horn Head to Fanad Head SPA	Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009] Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018] Barnacle Goose (<i>Branta leucopsis</i>) [A045] Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103] Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>) [A199] Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200] Chough (<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>) [A346] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395]
004148	Fanad Head SPA	Corncrake (<i>Crex crex</i>) [A122]
004082	Greer sIsland SPA	Black-headed Gull (<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>) [A179] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] Sandwich Tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>) [A191]
004060	Lough Fern SPA	Pochard (<i>Aythya ferina</i>) [A059] Wetland and Waterbirds [A999]
004039	Derryveagh And Glendowan Mountains SPA	Red-throated Diver (<i>Gavia stellata</i>) [A001] Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) [A098] Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina schinzii</i>) [A466]
004149	Falcarragh to Meenlaragh SPA	Corncrake (<i>Crex crex</i>) [A122]
004083	Inishbofin, Inishdooley and Inishbeg SPA	Barnacle Goose (<i>Branta leucopsis</i>) [A045] Corncrake (<i>Crex crex</i>) [A122] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182] Lesser Black-backed Gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>) [A183] Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194]
004073	Tory Island SPA	Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009] Corncrake (<i>Crex crex</i>) [A122] Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200] Puffin (<i>Fratercula arctica</i>) [A204]
004230	West Donegal Islands SPA	Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018] Barnacle Goose (<i>Branta leucopsis</i>) [A045] Corncrake (<i>Crex crex</i>) [A122] Common Gull (<i>Larus canus</i>) [A182]

Site Code	Special Protection Area	Key Qualifying Interests which may be affected
		Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184]
004150	West Donegal Coast SPA	Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009] Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018] Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103] Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184] Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200] Chough (<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>) [A346]
004132	Illancrone and Inishkeeragh SPA	Barnacle Goose (<i>Branta leucopsis</i>) [A045] Common Tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>) [A193] Arctic Tern (<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>) [A194] Little Tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>) [A195]
004121	Roaninish SPA	Barnacle Goose (<i>Branta leucopsis</i>) [A045] Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184]
004116	Inishkeel SPA	Barnacle Goose (<i>Branta leucopsis</i>) [A045]
004090	Sheskinmore Lough SPA	Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395]
004150	West Donegal Coast SPA	Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>) [A009] Cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>) [A017] Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018] Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>) [A103] Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>) [A184] Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>) [A188] Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>) [A200] Chough (<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>) [A346]
004110	Lough Nillan Bog SPA	Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) [A098] Golden Plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>) [A140] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395] Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina schinzii</i>) [A466]
004120	Rathlin O'Birne Island SPA	Barnacle Goose (<i>Branta leucopsis</i>) [A045]
004115	Inishduff SPA	Shag (<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>) [A018]
004151	Donegal Bay SPA	Great Northern Diver (<i>Gavia immer</i>) [A003] Light-bellied Brent Goose (<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>) [A046] Common Scoter (<i>Melanitta nigra</i>) [A065] Sanderling (<i>Calidris alba</i>) [A144]

Site Code	Special Protection Area	Key Qualifying Interests which may be affected
004099	Pettigo Plateau Natura Reserve SPA	Wetland and Waterbirds [A999] Greenland White-fronted Goose (<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>) [A395]

