



Craigavon Urban Area

Discovering the place

September 2025



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Why Place Shaping?

The Armagh Banbridge and Craigavon Community Planning Strategic Partnership (CPSP) identified 'Revitalised Place' as an outcome in the Connected: Our Community Plan of which place plan developed is a key project. The Partnership has already developed place plans for Armagh, Banbridge and Dromore and building on the success of those will continue to develop plans for the remaining urban centres in the Borough. Council is the lead partner in the place plan process reporting to the Place Board Sub Committee and Partnership (CPSP).

Place Shaping is an important concept for the Craigavon Urban Area (CUA), which encompasses the three towns of Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown. This approach aims to improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the area by harnessing the powers and functions within the Council and from partners.

By focusing on place shaping, we ensure that the aspirations of the community plan are realised at a local level, bringing together other borough-wide plans to life locally, including spatial elements and key messages from the Local Development Plan (LDP) preferred options paper.

This holistic approach not only enhances the physical environment but also creates a sense of community and belonging among residents. It encourages collaboration between various departments and stakeholders, ensuring that the development is sustainable and inclusive. Place shaping helps create vibrant, resilient, and attractive urban areas that meet the needs of current and future generations. Each town within the area is unique and offers future opportunities to improve, grow and connect, enhancing the Craigavon Urban Area as a whole.

From a strategic perspective this stage of discovery is about finding out what is in the places, how they connect and interact. It is however guided by the principals of local and regional plans:

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, 'Connected' – A Community Plan 2017 - 2030

'Everyone has opportunities to engage in community life and shape decisions – we have a strong sense of community belonging and take pride in our area.'

Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) 2015

Identifies five core-planning principles one of which is 'Supporting Good Design and Positive Place Making'.



Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council - Local Development Plan - Preferred Options Paper - 2018

‘Aim to create new positive places, that work well for everyone. Make positive use of heritage and environmental assets where communities flourish’

The CUA discovery report is made up therefore of four sections. A discovery report on Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown Settlement Development Limits and an element which encompasses the CUA area as a whole.

Other strategies considered in this study are detailed in the strategy and policy relevance section of the document.



What is discovery?

This process involves a comprehensive exploration of the place, its context, offerings, strengths, gaps, opportunities, and challenges. The aim is to gather detailed information on the Craigavon Urban Area (CUA); Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown which will inform the development of a Place Plan scheduled to commence in Autumn 2025.

The discovery phase is essentially a fact-finding mission. It involves engaging with various community planning partners, the Place Board, statutory stakeholders and businesses to answer critical questions such as:

- What do we know about the area?
- What is currently happening?
- What is in the pipeline?
- Are there strong needs or evidence bases?
- What trends or threads are emerging across the centres?



Figure 1: Discovery Images during site walks

Additionally, it seeks to identify links and opportunities that connect the CUA to other regional and borough-wide strategies from community planning partners. The discovery process is not just about gathering information, it is about preparing to engage with the community and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive and inclusive Place Plan for each town. A comprehensive understanding of the place enables identification of key strengths to build upon, gaps to address and the opportunities to seize.

This approach ensures that the development of the CUA is sustainable, inclusive and aligned with the aspirations of its communities.



Methodology

During this commission, between March and August 2025, Blu Zebra conducted desktop research, statistical gathering, analysis and targeted engagement. Photo capture, post it exercises, and GIS Interactive mapping were included as part of discovery. The process was guided by a project team consisting of

Community Planning Partners

(Armagh City, Banbridge and

Craigavon Borough Council, NI

Housing Executive, Dept for

Communities and Invest NI). This

discovery report will help support the

next stage of place plan development

for Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown.

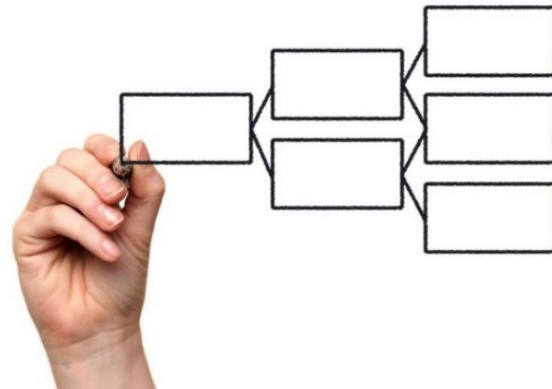


Figure 2: Methodology image

The discovery process included the following tasks:

1. Statistical analysis of the Craigavon Urban Area
2. Initial understanding of Craigavon Urban Area context and offerings
3. Desktop fact-finding and data collection phase
4. Review of strategies
5. Stakeholder engagement preparation
6. Analysis of findings to identify strengths and gaps
7. DEA Elected Member sessions

The targeted engagement enabled the project team, council officers, Community Planning Partners and other strategic representatives to provide constructive opinions, ideas and aspirations for Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown.

108 people got involved in the discovery phase through:

- 12 meetings/workshops with statutory organisations, community and voluntary sector, council staff, business representatives
- 4 Project team meetings, made up of representatives from ABC Council, DfC, Invest NI, and NIHE
- 14 Conversations or interviews with various representatives from tourist attractions, education providers, local business owners and community facility staff
- 6 discovery site walks and observational assessments in town centres and surroundings
- 3 drive throughs of industrial area and key locations
- 6 DEA Elected Member sessions arranged



The Craigavon Urban Area (CUA) - Geography

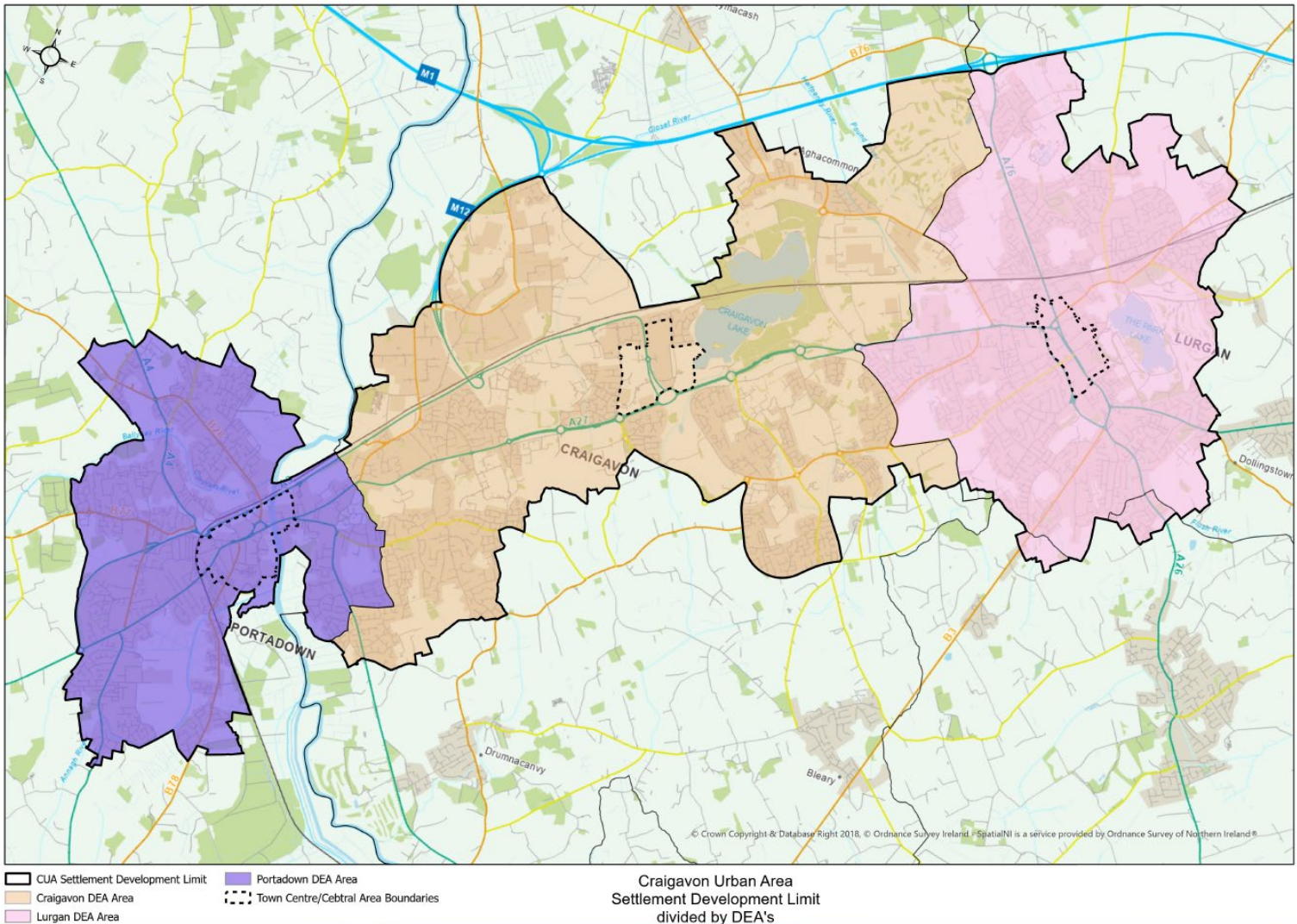


Figure 3: CUA Map- Settlement Development Limits divided by DEAs

The boundary for the Place Plan study will be indicatively determined by the Settlement Development Limit (SDL) with the town centre boundary at the core of the study. While information on settlements is very limited, with most data at this level only available from the Census, the introduction of data zones in Census 2021 allows for a more detailed breakdown of the larger settlements which enables information to be extracted on data zones within a settlement area.

As a result, a breakdown of data can be obtained for the **three sectors** within the Craigavon Urban Area – Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown with the boundary of each sector determined by the DEA boundaries.

The town centres are defined by the black dotted lines on the map for government funding criteria. The outline of the area is displayed in the above map with clarity brought by the difference in colours around Craigavon centrally (orange), Portadown (purple) and Lurgan (pink).



Craigavon Urban Area (CUA)



The Story of The Craigavon Urban Area (CUA)

The Craigavon Urban Area (CUA) is a definitive Planning term for this place and may not be known amongst the local community.

Today, the Craigavon Urban Area is a **polycentric urban region**, characterised by regional hospitals, retail and leisure services, and robust transport connections between east and west. It boasts a hybrid identity, part planned town and part organically grown conurbation, continuing to develop through infrastructure investment and community development rather than an idealistic planning vision.

Figure 4: Tim Proctor/Flickr CC BY-NC 2.0



Within this polycentric structure which was developed around the original Craigavon plan in 1965, it incorporated a series of purpose-built urban centres at Drumgor, Legahory, Tullygally, Moyraverty, Monbrief, and Knockmenagh (this area is known as Brownlow). Designed in the 1960s and 1970s to serve surrounding neighbourhoods, these centres provided local shops, schools, community facilities, and health services within walking distance. Although their role has evolved, they remain an important layer of the polycentric planning approach, ensuring



Figure 5: Craigavon Museum Collection-
<https://blackpaths.org/bp/history>



that services are distributed across the wider urban area and supporting the daily life of residents beyond the main town centres of Lurgan, Portadown and Central Craigavon.

Connected by central Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown have developed their own unique character and function on which to shape the CUA as a whole in the future:

Lurgan is defined by its wealth of heritage assets, its Conservation Area designation, independent services, retail and café scene. These elements offer a historic and cultural contrast to the more modern developments within the CUA. The town's character is further enhanced by landmarks such as Brownlow Castle and Lurgan Park, which serves as a significant regional visitor attractions.



Figure 6: Lurgan Ancestry Image- lurganancestry.com

Portadown, traditionally a market and industrial town, plays a strong role as a centre of employment, logistics, and transport interchange, drawing on its strategic rail and road connections. It has a destination of **Townscape Character** and future flood alleviation works offers its town potential to maximise the river frontage. Portadown, anchors the area with a growing evening and night time economy, professional services in town and greenway connections to the Newry Canal from the River Bann and its Bann Boulevard.



Figure 7: Portadown Image- Market Street and High Street

Central Craigavon, by contrast, embodies the legacy of the New Town project, offering planned infrastructure, regional-scale retail in Rushmere Shopping Centre, leisure facilities, and Craigavon Area Hospital, making it the functional core of health and commerce.

These **three centres** are not isolated but are connected by a wider framework of **open spaces, black paths and greenways** that stitch the urban fabric together. The extensive black path network provides sustainable walking and cycling routes linking neighbourhoods, parks, and town centres, while also connecting outward to **Lough Neagh**. As the largest freshwater lake in the British Isles, Lough Neagh has untapped potential as a **tourism hub**, offering opportunities for water-based recreation, eco-tourism, birdwatching, and heritage



Figure 8: Craigavon Museum Collection- <https://blackpaths.org/bp/history>



interpretation. Its shoreline trails and natural assets could anchor a stronger visitor economy that draws people across the Craigavon Urban Area and beyond.

Equally significant is the **Newry Canal**, which historically linked Lough Neagh to Carlingford Lough. With plans under discussion for restoration and enhanced recreational use, the canal has the potential to become a **cross-border green and blue corridor**, connecting Craigavon to Newry, Carlingford, and the wider island of



Figure 9: Newry Canal Image

Ireland. Developing the Newry Canal as a linear park and active travel spine would not only enhance Craigavon’s connectivity but would also integrate it into a **wider tourism network** stretching across council boundaries. This could create synergies with Armagh City’s cultural heritage, Down’s coastal assets, and Carlingford’s strong outdoor and adventure tourism offer, and further potential to connect into Ireland’s Ancient East.

Economically, collaboration between Portadown, Lurgan, and Central Craigavon strengthens their collective identity, making the CUA more competitive for funding and investment. Acting as a unified cluster enhances their capacity to deliver large-scale infrastructure and regeneration projects. This joint approach attracts investors seeking regional scale, integrated planning, and shared economic potential.

By embracing the principle of the **Power of 10+**, the CUA could be promoted and marketed as a network of distinct yet connected destinations — each offering more than ten reasons to visit, whether heritage, shopping, leisure, tourism, employment or for events.

Coordinated placemaking, joint marketing campaigns, and shared investment strategies can help attract and retain both local people and visitors, creating a stronger regional identity. Improved transport integration, wayfinding, and branding across the three centres will be critical in enabling residents and visitors to experience the CUA as a connected urban area and in doing so, the Craigavon Urban Area can position itself not simply as a legacy of a partially realised planning vision, but as a dynamic, collaborative urban region — one that harnesses the collective strengths of Lurgan, Portadown and Central Craigavon to deliver a vibrant economy, a diverse visitor offering, and an enhanced quality of life for its communities.



Mapping the development of the area

The maps show a period from 1919-1963 pre the new town development with Lurgan and Portadown distinctly established. Subsequently from 1956-1986 the map shows the linear expansion of the CUA as it becomes more connected through spatial development.

1919-1963

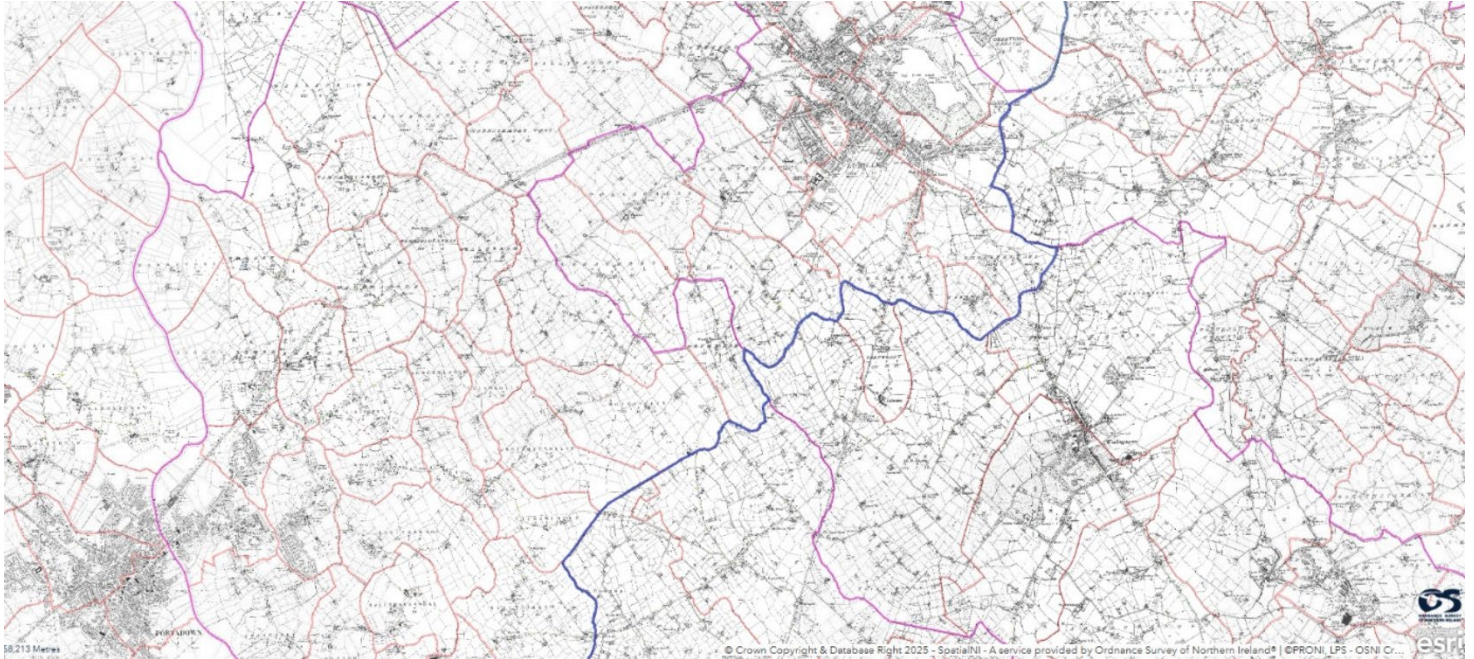


Figure 11: 1919-1963 Map -pre the new town development

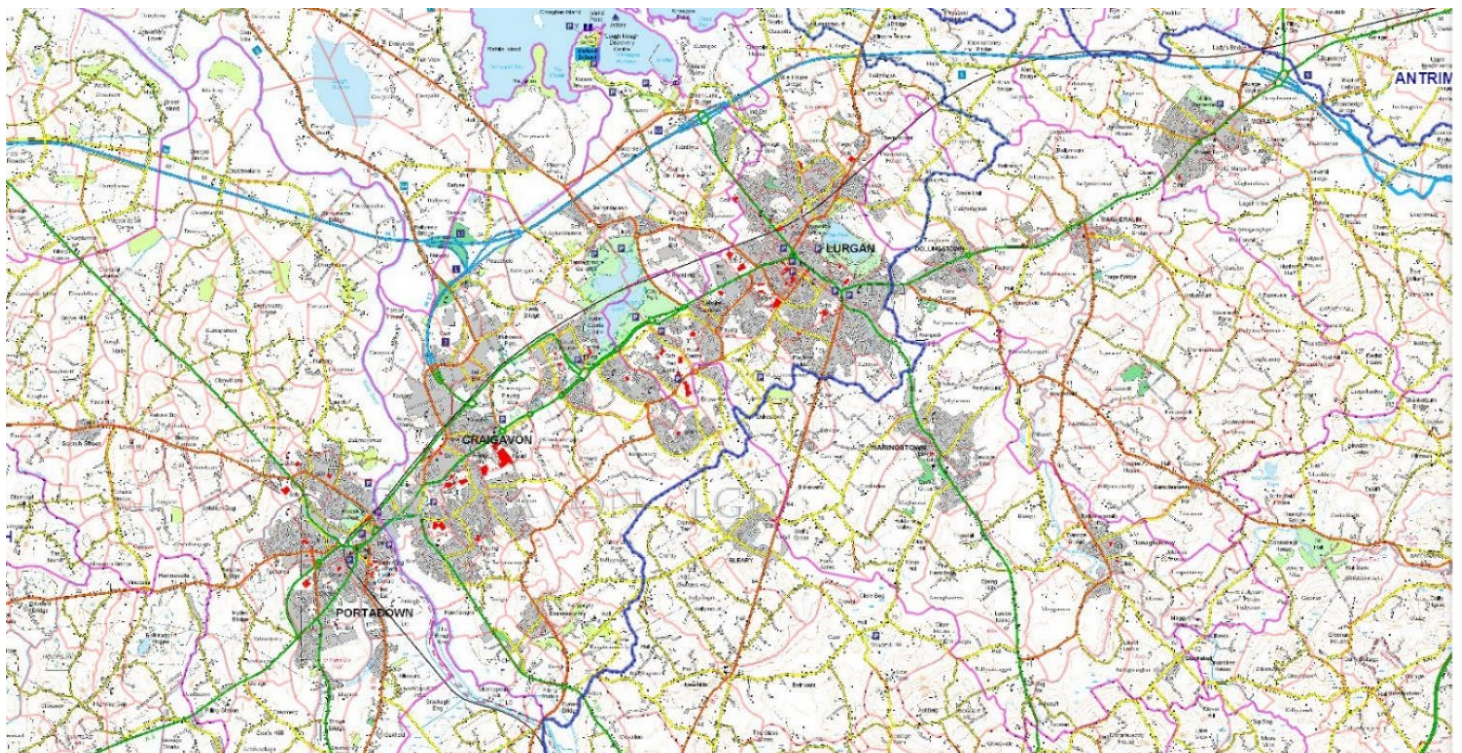


Figure 10: 1956-1986 Map -the new town development



Statistical profile of Craigavon Urban Area

Craigavon Urban Area	Statistical Dashboard			Source
Population of Craigavon Urban Area	72301			Census 2021, NISRA
Designations	New Town Development	Area of Townscape Heritage	Area of Townscape Character	Last updated 12th August 2025
Demographics	Craigavon	Lurgan	Portadown	Source
Population	22518	28,631	21091	Census 2021, Population by Data Zones, NISRA
Deprivation Area- Neighbourhood Renewal	1	1	1	Brownlow, Lurgan and Northwest Portadown Neighbourhood Renewal Areas- Area Profile Reports 2022
Households	8546	11,869	8738	Last updated 28th April 2025
No of Units - projected 5 year Social Housing Need	124	406	340	Northern Ireland Housing Executive Commissioning Prospectus data 2024/25-2026/27 - Note: Craigavon = Central Craigavon; Lurgan = North Lurgan (316) + South Lurgan (90); Portadown = Portadown 1 (100) + Portadown 2 (229) + Portadown Rural (11) https://www.nihe.gov.uk/working-with-us/partners/commissioning-
Qualification of school leavers 5+ GCSE (FSME)	46%	47%	48%	2022/2023 - NI School Leavers Survey Dept of Education, NISRA 25% did not
Qualification of school leavers 5+ GCSE (or Equiv) (all levels)	83%	83%	88%	2022/2023 - NI School Leavers Survey Dept of Education, NISRA
Enroled at FE College (SRC)	815 (79%)	810 (71%)	970 (83%)	2022/2023 - NI School Leavers Survey Dept of Education, NISRA
Total Economically Active 16+	10656	12449	9716	Census 2021
Total Economically Inactive 16+	6019	9074	6854	Census 2021
No of VAT and/or PAYE Registered Businesses in DEA	785 (8.4% of Borough)	995 (10.6% of Borough)	1,365 (14.6% of Borough)	Per DEA (total in borough 9330) Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA 2023.
Town Centre Data	Craigavon	Lurgan	Portadown	Source
Vacancy Rate - town centre	7.8%	18.8%	20.6%	NI Average (23%) Land and Property Services via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities xxxx. (30/5/25 data)
No of Businesses in town centre	80	270	365	Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities 2023.
Employee jobs	1898	1937	3283	Business Register and Employment Survey, NISRA Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch via Town Centre Database, DfC 2022.
Crimes recorded - town centre	174 (2% of SDL)	580 (8% of SDL)	858 (12% of SDL)	Police Service of Northern Ireland Statistics, via Town Centre Database, DfC 2022.
ASB - town centre	61 (2% of SDL)	198 (8% of SDL)	270 (11% of SDL)	Police Service of Northern Ireland Statistics, via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities 2022.
Foot Fall	6774	17412	14650	Source Springboard : w/c 17feb25 Note: (Craigavon (*Footbridge counter)
Listed Buildings and Monuments - SDL	20	87	57	Historic Environment Division, Department for Communities 2024.

Table 1: Statistical profile of Craigavon Urban Area

Note: Whilst a statistical profile has been developed for the entire project area and will remain under review as new statistics are released, the below dashboard gives a snapshot of the key statistics for Craigavon Urban Area.



Population

As of Census Day 2021, the Craigavon Urban Area had a population of 72,301, accounting for approximately 33% of the population of the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough. The population distribution shows that 49.5% of residents are male and 50.5% are female. The age structure reveals that 22.4% of the population is under 15 years old, 62.9% are between 16 and 64 years old, and 14.7% are 65 years and older. The data also indicates a diverse ethnic composition, with 6.4% of the population belonging to ethnic groups other than white. Additionally, 79.4% of residents were born in Northern Ireland, while 15.6% were born in other EU countries. The main language for 87.0% of the population is English, with Polish, Lithuanian, and Portuguese being the next most common languages.

Households

As of Census Day 2021, there were a total of 29,151 households in the Craigavon Urban Area, representing an increase of 3,412 households (13.3%) since the 2011 Census. This accounts for 34% of all households in the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough. The distribution of household sizes in the CUA is as follows:

- One-person households: 30.7%
- Two-person households: 28.5%
- Three-person households: 17.5%
- Four-person households: 14.2%
- Five-person households: 6.4%
- Six or more person households: 2.6%

Lurgan has the highest number of households within the CUA, accounting for almost 41% of the total. Portadown has the highest percentage of one-person households, while Craigavon has the lowest percentage of one-person households and the highest percentage of households with four or more persons.

Religion

As of Census Day 2021, the majority of the Craigavon Urban Area's population belonged to or were brought up in the Catholic religion, accounting for 52% of the population. This is a slight increase from 51% in 2011. In contrast, 36% of the population belonged to or were brought up in the Protestant religion, a decrease from 43% in 2011. Additionally, the percentage of the population with no religion increased from 5% in 2011 to 10% in 2021.

Within the Craigavon Urban Area, the Lurgan and Craigavon sectors have a majority of residents who belonged to or were brought up in the Catholic religion, with 64.6% and 48.7% respectively. On the other hand, the Portadown sector has a majority of residents who belonged to or were brought up in the Protestant religion, accounting for 46.7% of the population. Portadown also has the highest percentage of residents with no religion at 12.1%.

Main Language

As of Census Day 2021, approximately 87% of the population in the Craigavon Urban Area reported English as their main language. This is a decrease from 91.9% in 2011. The most common languages



spoken after English are Polish, Portuguese, and Lithuanian. Specifically, Polish is the main language for 3.6% of the population, Portuguese for 2.3%, and Lithuanian for 2.1%.

Within the sectors of the Craigavon Urban Area:

- In Craigavon, 88.4% of residents reported English as their main language, followed by Polish (3.4%), Lithuanian (2.6%), and Portuguese (1.5%).
- In Lurgan, 90.4% of residents reported English as their main language, followed by Polish (3.8%), Bulgarian (1.2%), and Lithuanian (1%).
- In Portadown, 80.8% of residents reported English as their main language, followed by Portuguese (5.7%), Polish (3.5%), and Lithuanian (3.1%).

Overall, 13% of residents in the Craigavon Urban Area do not have English as their first language. Portadown has the highest percentage of residents with a main language other than English, at almost 20%.

Health

As of Census Day 2021, almost 78% of residents in the Craigavon Urban Area reported being in good or very good health, which is an increase of 0.5 percentage points since 2011. However, 8.5% of residents reported being in bad or very bad health, which is higher than the borough average of 7% and the Northern Ireland average of 7.7%.

In terms of **long-term health** conditions, approximately one-third of the population in the Craigavon Urban Area had at least one long-term health condition. The most common conditions reported were long-term pain or discomfort (36%), mobility or dexterity difficulties (33%), and shortness of breath or difficulty breathing (32%). Additionally, 27% of those with long-term health conditions reported having an emotional, psychological, or mental health condition.

Life expectancy at birth in the Craigavon Urban Area varies by gender and location. **Male life expectancy** at birth in the borough is estimated at 78.8 years, slightly above the Northern Ireland average of 78.4 years. However, in deprived areas of the borough, male life expectancy is lower at 75.9 years. Among the DEAs within the Craigavon Urban Area, Portadown has the lowest male life expectancy at 77 years, while Lurgan has seen the greatest decrease in male life expectancy, falling by 1.9 years to 77.6 years.

Female life expectancy at birth in the borough is higher than that for males, estimated at 82.8 years, which is above the Northern Ireland average of 82.3 years. However, in deprived areas, female life expectancy has decreased to 81.6 years. Within the Craigavon Urban Area, Lurgan has the lowest female life expectancy at 82.1 years, while Craigavon DEA has the highest at 83.1 years.

The **standardised death rate** for preventable deaths in the borough is 163 per 100,000, which is below the Northern Ireland average of 179 per 100,000. However, in deprived areas, the rate is significantly higher at 263 per 100,000. Within the Craigavon Urban Area, Craigavon DEA has the lowest rate at 164 per 100,000, while Lurgan and Portadown both have higher rates at 197 per 100,000.



Education Levels

As of Census Day 2021, the percentage of residents aged 16 and over in the Craigavon Urban Area with higher-level qualifications (Level 4 and above) was approximately 26%, which is an increase of 7.7 percentage points since 2011. This figure is slightly lower than the 30.4% for the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough overall. The percentage of the population gaining apprenticeship, Level 3, and Level 4 and above qualifications has increased in the Craigavon Urban Area, while the percentage with Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications has fallen.

In 2021, just under 30% of the population aged 16 and over in the Craigavon Urban Area had no qualifications, compared to 25.2% in the Borough overall. This represents a decrease of approximately 3.5 percentage points since 2011.

Further and Higher Education

Level 3 qualification (38%), with just 16% studying for a qualification at Level 4 and above. The proportions are broadly similar to those in Northern Ireland overall, although the Borough has a greater proportion studying Entry and Level 1 qualifications.

Within the CUA, the data for the three District Electoral Areas (DEAs) that fall within the Craigavon Urban Area are as follows:

- **Craigavon DEA:** 16% of students were studying at Level 4 and above, which is equal to the average for the Borough overall.
- **Lurgan DEA:** 14% of students were studying at Level 4 and above.
- **Portadown DEA:** 12% of students were studying at Level 4 and above.

Level 2 and Level 3 are the most popular levels of study in these DEAs, with Craigavon and Portadown DEA both having a higher proportion of students studying at Level 3 than at Level 2.

Higher Education: Higher education is the education or training undertaken after you leave school and is usually undertaken at a university. Although other qualifications can be awarded at higher education, it most commonly involves undergraduate and postgraduate study.

In 2021/22, there were a total of 7,140 individuals from the Borough enrolled in Higher Education Institutions. Over three-quarters (78%) of these students were studying in Northern Ireland, with over 40% aged 20 and under. Within the CUA, the data for the three DEAs are as follows:

- **Lurgan DEA:** Lurgan has the highest number of enrolments in Higher Education Institutions at 1,235, with the majority aged 20 and under. Lurgan also has the highest proportion of students aged 25 and over, accounting for 31% of all enrolments.
- **Craigavon DEA:** The proportion of students aged 25 and over is above the average for the Borough overall.
- **Portadown DEA:** A higher proportion of students from Portadown are studying outside of Northern Ireland compared to Lurgan and Craigavon.

Employment

As of Census Day 2021, the Craigavon Urban Area had a total of 72,301 residents aged 16 and over. Of these, 57.5% were in employment, while almost one quarter (24.9%) were long-term



unemployed, having not worked at all in the last 12 months. Additionally, more than 13% of residents aged 16 and over in the Craigavon Urban Area had never worked.

In comparison, the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough overall had approximately 170,413 residents aged 16 and over, with 59.4% in employment and almost one quarter being long-term unemployed.

Areas of Multiple Deprivation

The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) 2017 provides a mechanism for ranking areas within Northern Ireland in the order of the most deprived to the least deprived. The NIMDM is constructed from 38 different indicators relating to seven domains of deprivation, including income, employment, health, education, access to services, living environment, and crime and disorder.

In the Craigavon Urban Area, there are a total of 31 Super Output Areas (SOAs) included in the proxy area. Of these, seven SOAs are in the top 10% most deprived SOAs in Northern Ireland, and a further three are in the top 10-20% most deprived. The most deprived SOAs are located in the Lurgan sector, with four SOAs in the top 10% most deprived overall in Northern Ireland. Two SOAs are in Craigavon, and one is in Portadown.

In terms of the Health Deprivation and Disability Domain, four SOAs are in the top 10% most deprived SOAs in Northern Ireland, and a further four are in the top 10-20% most deprived. The most deprived SOAs in this domain are located in Lurgan and on the intersect between Lurgan and Craigavon sectors.

Within the Craigavon Urban Area, the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council identifies three Neighbourhood Renewal Areas (NRAs):

- Brownlow
- Lurgan
- North West Portadown

Brownlow Neighbourhood renewal area statistics demonstrate a 9,939 population in the area

- Burglary- 86% decrease between 2003 and 2021
- Anti-Social Behaviour- 42% increase between 2008 and 2021
- Theft- 66% decrease between 2003 and 2021
- Recorded Crime- 56% decrease between 2003 and 2021
- Criminal Damage- 81% increase between 2003 and 2021 Drug Offences- 41% of drug decrease between 2003 and 2021
- Violence, sexual offences and Robbery- remain similar between 2003 and 2021
- Domestic Abuse- 46% increase between 2005 and 2021

Lurgan Neighbourhood renewal area statistics demonstrate 9,194 population in the area

- Burglary- 83% decrease between 2003 and 2021
- Anti-Social Behaviour- 42% increase between 2008 and 2021
- Theft- 49% decrease between 2003 and 2021



- Recorded Crime- 26% decrease between 2003 and 2021
- Criminal Damage- 7% increase between 2003 and 2021 Drug Offences- % of drug offences increased by more than 10 times between 2003 and 2021
- Violence, sexual offences and Robbery- more than doubled between 2003 and 2021
- Domestic Abuse- 42% increase between 2005 and 2021

North West Portadown Neighbourhood renewal area statistics demonstrate 3,105 population in the area

- Burglary- 80% decrease between 2003 and 2021
- Anti-Social Behaviour- 8% decrease between 2008 and 2021
- Theft- 63% decrease between 2003 and 2021
- Recorded Crime- 22% decrease between 2003 and 2021
- Criminal Damage- 43% decrease between 2003 and 2021 Drug Offences- % of drug offences increased by more than 5 times between 2003 and 2021
- Violence, sexual offences and Robbery- 11% increase between 2003 and 2021
- Domestic Abuse- 79% increase between 2005 and 2021

These **three areas** benefit from various neighbourhood renewal initiatives such as:

- Health and Wellbeing Services (via Verve Healthy Living Network)
- Health Trainer Programme
- Craigavon Health Improvement Project

Southern Health & Social Care Trust (SHSCT)

- Responsible for delivering health and wellbeing programmes across the Craigavon, Newry, and Coalisland/Dungannon NRAs, funded by the Department for Communities. These programmes are developed with local groups to improve residents' quality of life.

ABC Community Food Hub - Craigavon

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council work in partnership with the ABC Community Food Hub in Craigavon to provide help to those in food insecurity living across the borough.

The ABC Community Food Hub model was co-designed to provide a centralised location for food donations and distributes food to Food Banks and Social Supermarkets within the ABC area. Surplus food is supplied by Fareshare, engagement with local food providers and other businesses within the ABC Council area.

The ABC Community Food Hub is based in Carn Business Park in Craigavon. The food hub provides essential items such as food and toiletries, which enables people in financial crisis to put money towards other necessities such as heat and electric.

In 2024/25 there were 5413 families benefitted directly from the food bank in Craigavon which is supported by the Food Hub. This was an increase from 2023/24 when 4022 families benefitted.



Business Demography

Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing is by far the largest industry group in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough accounting for 26.7% of all VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses. The second largest industry group is Construction (14.3%), followed by Retail Trades (8.1%).

The business profile for each of the DEA's within the Borough is presented in the table below. Portadown has a similar profile to the Borough with Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing accounting for the largest share of businesses at 22%. Like the Borough, this is followed by Construction and Retail Trades at 10.3% respectively. For all other business types, except Information and Communication and Education, Portadown has a higher percentage share than the Borough overall.

In 2023 there were a total of 715 businesses between the three town centres in the Craigavon Urban Area.

	Armagh	Banbridge	Craigavon	Cusher	Lagan River	Lurgan	Portadown	ABC Borough
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	30.2%	27.7%	11.5%	41.3%	30.6%	10.1%	22.0%	26.7%
Production	6.4%	5.3%	12.1%	8.1%	7.2%	9.0%	7.0%	7.4%
Construction	14.9%	15.1%	17.8%	12.9%	15.3%	16.1%	10.3%	14.3%
Motor Trades	4.6%	4.1%	4.5%	4.2%	5.0%	3.5%	4.8%	4.4%
Wholesale Trades	4.1%	4.1%	4.5%	3.9%	5.9%	4.5%	5.5%	4.6%
Retail Trades	8.2%	8.5%	7.6%	5.5%	5.9%	11.6%	10.3%	8.1%
Transport and storage	4.9%	5.0%	5.7%	5.2%	3.6%	5.0%	7.7%	5.4%
Accommodation and food service activities	3.6%	4.4%	4.5%	2.6%	2.7%	8.0%	5.5%	4.3%
Information and communication	1.3%	1.9%	3.2%	1.3%	1.8%	2.5%	1.5%	1.8%
Financial and insurance activities	0.8%	0.9%	1.9%	1.0%	1.4%	1.0%	2.2%	1.2%
Property	2.8%	3.5%	4.5%	1.6%	2.3%	2.0%	3.3%	2.8%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	6.2%	7.5%	6.4%	4.8%	7.7%	8.0%	7.0%	6.7%
Business administration and support services	3.1%	3.1%	5.1%	2.3%	4.1%	5.0%	4.0%	3.6%
Education	0.8%	0.6%	1.3%	0.3%	0.5%	1.0%	0.7%	0.8%
Human health and social work activities	2.6%	2.5%	2.5%	1.9%	2.3%	4.5%	2.9%	2.7%
Arts, entertainment, recreation and other services	4.9%	6.0%	6.4%	3.2%	3.6%	8.5%	5.9%	5.3%
Total Number of VAT and/or PAYE Registered Businesses	1,940	1,590	785	1,550	1,110	995	1,365	9,330

Table 2: Broad industry group of VAT and / or PAYE registered businesses in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough, March 2024. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA.



Business Turnover and Size

Information on business turnover is available from the IDBR by DEA. In 2024, in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough overall, just 12% of businesses had a turnover exceeding £1m. However, in Craigavon DEA, more than one in every 5 businesses (20.4%) had a turnover of £1m or more. Furthermore, almost 9% of all businesses had a turnover of £5m or more in Craigavon DEA which is well above the average for the Borough of just 3.1%. In Portadown DEA, the proportion of businesses with a turnover of £1m or more (13.2%) is also above the average for the Borough.

Of the three DEA's that fall within the Craigavon Urban Area, Portadown has the highest proportion of businesses with a turnover less than £50,000, however, at 20.9% this is below the average for the Borough of 23.3%.

With regards the number of employees, in all DEAs in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon, the vast majority of businesses are micro-businesses (employing fewer than 10 people). Craigavon has the least number of micro-businesses at 81.5% compared to Lagan River which has the largest amount at 94.1%. With Craigavon having the lowest proportion of micro-businesses, it is unsurprising that it has the highest percentage of businesses employing between 10-49 staff at 12.1% compared to the Borough average of 7.7%. Craigavon also has a much greater share of larger businesses with 5.7% of all businesses employing 50 or more staff. This is well above the average for the Borough at 1.8%.

Portadown and Lurgan both have a higher percentage share of businesses employing between 10 and 49 staff when compared the Borough average of 7.7%.

The Town Centre Database provides data on business turnover in the town centres, and this is presented in the table below for Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown town centre for 2021 which is the most recent year available. As can be seen in this table, a lot of the data is considered disclosive and so cannot be presented.

- In 2021 in Craigavon, Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles accounted for 63% of all businesses in Craigavon town centre but these businesses accounted for 87% of all business turnover. In Lurgan, Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles accounted for 34% of all businesses and 67% of all business turnover and in Portadown the corresponding figures are 31% of businesses and 61% of turnover.
- With regards accommodation and food service activities, in 2021 in Craigavon, these accounted for 11% of all businesses but just 4% of total turnover. In contrast, in Portadown, accommodation and food service activities accounted for 12% of all businesses and 19% of total turnover.



Another important point to note is that Portadown had the largest number of total businesses in 2021 with a total of 390 businesses in the town centre (Lurgan had 295 while Craigavon had 95). Despite this, the total turnover for Portadown town centre is lower than that of Craigavon and Lurgan with a total turnover of £129.01m recorded in Portadown town centre compared to £215.91 in Lurgan and £154.43 in Craigavon.

Industry Section	Craigavon		Lurgan		Portadown	
	Turnover (£million)	% of Total Turnover	Turnover (£million)	% of Total Turnover	Turnover (£million)	% of Total Turnover
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	d	d	d	d	d	d
Mining and Quarrying	d	d	d	d	d	d
Manufacturing	d	d	d	d	d	d
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply	d	d	d	d	d	d
Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	d	d	d	d	d	d
Construction	d	d	d	d	d	d
Wholesale And Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles And Motorcycles	£134.52	87%	£145.30	67%	£79.02	61%
Transportation and Storage	d	d	d	d	d	d
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	£6.61	4%	d	d	£23.95	19%
Information and Communication	d	d	d	d	d	d
Financial and Insurance Activities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Real Estate Activities	d	d	d	d	d	d
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	d	d	d	d	£2.06	2%
Administrative and Support Service Activities	£2.70	2%	£3.04	1%	£10.43	8%
Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Education	d	d	d	d	d	d
Human Health and Social Work Activities	d	d	d	d	d	d
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	d	d	d	d	d	d
Other Service Activities	d	d	£2.47	1%	£0.87	1%
	£154.43		£215.91		£129.01	
Disclosive Total	£10.60	7%	£65.09	30%	£12.67	10%

Table 3: Business turnover in Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown Town Centre, 2021. Source: Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry, NISRA Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities.

Employee Jobs

Information on employee jobs from the Town Centre Database is presented in the Table below. Unsurprising, as Portadown had the most businesses in the town centre, it also has the most employee jobs with an estimated 3,283 persons employed in Portadown town centre. The proportion of employees is much the same as the proportion of businesses for most industry sections except other service activities and professional, scientific and



technical activities where the number of employees accounts for a lower proportion than the number of businesses and in human health and social work activities where the number of employees accounts for a greater proportion than the number of businesses.

Industry Section	Craigavon		Lurgan		Portadown	
	Employee Jobs	% of Total Employees	Employee Jobs	% of Total Employees	Employee Jobs	% of Total Employees
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mining and Quarrying	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Manufacturing	N/A	N/A	148	8%	*	*
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*	*
Construction	*	*	N/A	N/A	*	*
Wholesale And Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	1,184	62%	743	38%	1,001	30%
Transportation And Storage	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*	*
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	258	14%	193	10%	375	11%
Information and Communication	N/A	N/A	*	*	*	*
Financial and Insurance Activities	*	*	115	6%	203	6%
Real Estate Activities	*	*	*	*	89	3%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	*	*	124	6%	173	5%
Administrative and Support Service Activities	46	2%	57	3%	*	*
Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	*	*	*	*	*	*
Education	N/A	N/A	*	*	90	3%
Human Health and Social Work Activities	*	*	170	9%	407	12%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	N/A	N/A	44	2%	78	2%
Other Service Activities	*	*	117	6%	125	4%
	1,898		1,937		3,283	

Table 4: Employee Jobs in Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown Town Centre, 2022. Source: Business Register and Employment Survey, NISRA Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities.

In Lurgan, the wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles industry accounts for 38% of all employees compared to 35% of all businesses. Once again, the biggest divergence is with other service activities and professional, scientific and technical activities where the number of employees accounts for a lower proportion than the number of businesses which would imply that these are generally smaller businesses. Much of the data for Craigavon town centre has been suppressed to prevent disclosure, however, we know that in 2022 there were an estimated 1,898 jobs in Craigavon town centre and of those, 62% were employed in the wholesale and retail trade: repair of motor vehicles and



motorcycles industry with a further 14% employed in accommodation and food service activities.

The industrial business base in Lurgan, Portadown, and Craigavon is a dynamic and evolving landscape, marked by strategic development, strong local partnerships, and support for enterprise. The Craigavon Urban Area is an excellent location for businesses due to the strong infrastructure, as well as skilled, available workforce and is home to some of Northern Ireland's largest employers. Businesses within this area export across the globe.

The Carn, Seagoe, Charlestown Road areas are home to a varied mix of businesses including advanced pharmaceutical and biotech, food, logistic and transport, advanced manufacturing. The Silverwood and Halfpenny industrial estates contain a mix of manufacturing, logistics, engineering and service-based companies. The area is strategically located with access to the rail network and M1 supporting trade across Northern Ireland and into Republic of Ireland and to ferry ports to access other countries. Portadown has a diverse business landscape and hosts several long-established companies and new multinational organisations, with industry located at the Mahon Road Industrial Estate and James Park.

Enterprise Centres such as Craigavon Industrial Development Organisation (CIDO), which also has a presence in Lurgan, Mayfair Business Centre and Brownlow Limited offer a range of unit sizes suitable for commercial, industrial, and retail use, alongside essential amenities and support services designed to foster business growth there are other privately business parks dotted across the area.

The Business Partnership Alliance (BPA) also a Community Planning Partner plays a pivotal role in representing businesses in rural and urban locations across the borough to aid the objective of establishing productive working relationships with businesses and business leaders, across key sectors along with their associated support bodies. Both Lurgan and Portadown have established town centre business networks, namely Portadown Chamber of Commerce and Lurgan Working Group, however Craigavon does not have one.

The CUA contains zoned economic lands that require development to support growth, business scale up options and attract other investors to the area. With improvement to the infrastructure and connectivity in the area this would strengthen employability and skills development.

Tourism

The number of overnight trips to the Borough have varied over the last decade. 2014 saw the highest number of estimated overnight trips to Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough (231,852). The estimated number of overnight trips to the Borough in 2023 had fallen to 189,248.



The number of nights spent in the Borough in 2023 was 650,098. Expenditure associated with these trips was estimated at £33,817,781 which accounts for just 3% of the total expenditure on overnight trips in Northern Ireland overall.

	Overnight Trips		Nights		Expenditure	
	Number	% of NI	Number	% of NI	£	% of NI
2013	201,161	5%	817,881	6%	21,894,975	3%
2014	231,852	5%	769,693	5%	28,120,012	4%
2015	149,782	3%	563,238	4%	22,539,092	3%
2016	144,952	3%	726,296	5%	25,548,339	3%
2017	228,595	5%	780,583	5%	32,384,669	3%
2018	188,551	4%	704,130	4%	26,404,319	3%
2019	189,456	4%	646,945	4%	31,835,207	3%
2023	189,248	3%	650,098	4%	33,817,781	3%

Table 5: Estimated overnight trips, nights and expenditure in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough 2013 to 2023. Source: Tourism Statistics, NISRA. Note: No data collected from 2020-2022 due to COVID restrictions in surveys.

The towns of Lurgan, Portadown and Craigavon are based in North County Armagh, on the southern shore of Lough Neagh and offer a wide range of exciting activities and attractions. There are two hotels within this area, the Ashburn Hotel (13 rooms plus 2 apartments) and the Seagoe Hotel (34 rooms), both venues can accommodate conferencing.

Lurgan town has a wealth of history and is home to the 19th century Brownlow Castle which boasts stunning architecture and offers visitors a captivating glimpse into the past¹. The town is also home to Ireland’s second largest urban park – Lurgan Park where you will also find a 59-acre man-made lake².

Craigavon is situated a few miles west of Lurgan and was established as a ‘new city’ in 1965 however while the city did not materialise, the name remains for what is mainly a residential area between Lurgan and Portadown³. Craigavon is also home to the popular Tannaghmore Gardens which is home to an animal farm with many rare breeds. The farm has RBST accreditation. There is also a play park, picnic areas and BBQ facilities, indoor halls, football pitches and a cricket square. The park also features a large maze from gabion baskets and evergreen trees and at its centre is interpretive material telling the story of Master McGrath, the famous greyhound⁴.

Portadown is situated in the West of Craigavon Urban Area and is a town steeped in a rich and cultural history. The Millenium Court Arts Centre has two galleries, a tourism information point and year-round creative and cultural events. Portadown Town Hall offers

¹ [10 Fun Things to Do in Lurgan – Discovering Employment Paths and Travel Experiences](#)

² [Portadown, Craigavon and Lurgan | Northern Ireland Highlights & Hidden Gems | Belfast & Northern Ireland](#)

³ [Portadown, Craigavon and Lurgan | Northern Ireland Highlights & Hidden Gems | Belfast & Northern Ireland](#)

⁴ [Tannaghmore Gardens and Animal Farm - Get Active ABC](#)



a staged space and traditionally used by speech and drama groups. The town also offers plenty of opportunities for shopping and hospitality venues.

Oxford Island (just outside the project boundary) is a designated National Nature Reserve situated on the peninsula in the southern shores of Lough Neagh. The area offers all-access walking trails, bird watching hides, a new state-of-the-art play park, Loughside Café and Lough Neagh Discovery Centre which runs a wide-ranging environmental education and events programme. Kinnego Marina and Kinnego Bushcraft Centre, are also onsite making Oxford Island an idyllic retreat for all the family⁵.

Below shows a number of key leisure, tourism, arts and cultural attractions in the CUA

Craigavon

- City Park walking and cycling including Sustrans routes
- Craigavon Lakes
- Craigavon Golf and Ski Centre
- Marlborough Retail Park (M&S, O'Neill's, Artistic etc)
- Omni Park (Cinema and restaurants)
- Rushmere Shopping Centre
- South Lakes Water Sports

Lurgan

- Ashburn Hotel
- Brownlow Castle
- Kinnego Bushcraft Centre (abutting project area)
- Kinnego Marina (abutting project area)
- Lough Neagh Discovery Centre (abutting project area)
- Lurgan Golf Club
- Lurgan Park
- Lurgan Town Trail
- Oxford Island Nature Reserve, trails and walks (abutting project area)
- Tannaghmore Gardens and Rare Breeds Animal Farm

Portadown

- Bann Boulevard
- Edenvilla Park and Secret Garden
- Millennium Court Arts Centre
- Newry – Portadown Towpath
- Peoples Park
- Portadown Golf Club (abutting project area)
- Seagoe Hotel

⁵ [Oxford Island - Get Active ABC](#)



Education

The map below shows the schools across the CUA area. The education system in the CUA is well-structured and diverse, catering to the needs of its residents through a range of primary and secondary schools, as well as further education and apprenticeship opportunities.

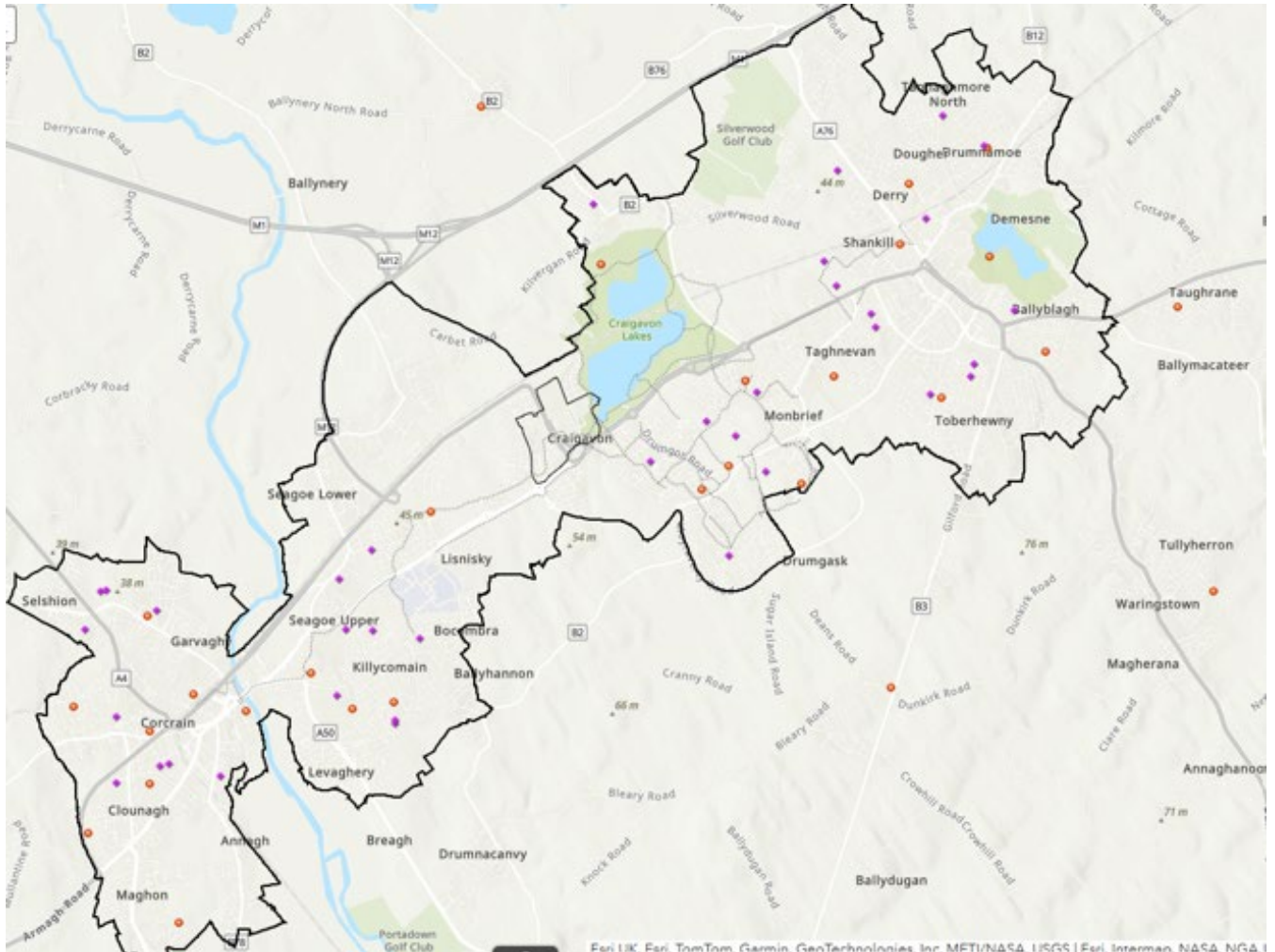


Figure 12: Schools across the CUA area

Schools and Investment

There are 21 primary schools in the CUA, providing foundational education to young children and preparing them for secondary education. The CUA is home to 10 secondary schools, offering a variety of educational programs to cater to different interests and academic needs.

- In Craiggavon, there are two secondary schools: Craiggavon Integrated School and Lismore College.
- In Lurgan there are three secondary schools, including, Lurgan College, Lurgan Junior High School (JHS), and St Ronan's College. *(More recently the Craiggavon Senior High in Lurgan closed, and St Ronan's Junior and High School have amalgamated)*



- Portadown has five secondary schools: Clounagh Junior High School, Craigavon Senior High School, Killicomaine Junior High School, Portadown College, and St John the Baptist College.

The Dickson Plan

The Dickson Plan is a distinctive two-tier post-primary education system implemented in the Craigavon area, encompassing towns such as Lurgan and Portadown. Developed in 1969 the plan was designed to offer a more inclusive and flexible approach to secondary education. Unlike the rest of Northern Ireland, where grammar school selection occurs at age 11 via the Transfer Test, the Dickson Plan defers selection until age 14.

Under this system, pupils transition from primary school to a non-selective Junior High School where they follow the Key Stage 3 curriculum for three years. At the end of this stage, students are given the opportunity to choose between academic and vocational routes, with clear progression paths and collaboration between schools to support transitions.

The CUA is seeing significant investment in its educational infrastructure. The average cost of new builds is estimated at £10-20 million for primary schools, £30-40 million for post-primary schools, £40-50 million for special educational needs (SEN) schools, and up to £4.5 million for the School Enhancement Programme (SEP). Approximately £150 million is being invested into the area under current plans. New schools being developed include Portadown College, Kings Park Primary School, Lismore Comprehensive, St Mary's Primary School, Portadown Integrated Primary School (PIPS) and the recently opened St Ronan's College campus.

The Special School Enhancement (SEP) includes enhancements to five schools in the CUA.

RAISE Programme

The RAISE Programme (Raising Aspirations for Inclusive and Sustainable Education) is currently being delivered in Brownlow, Lurgan, and Portadown as part of a strategic initiative by the Department of Education in Northern Ireland. It aims to raise educational achievement for children and young people, reduce educational disadvantage, especially in areas facing socio-economic challenges and raise aspirations by involving the entire community in supporting education.

Further Education and Investment

The Southern Regional College (SRC) provides further education and training opportunities for students in the CUA, offering a wide range of courses and programs to help students advance their education and career prospects. Currently, SRC has 5,500 students across its Lurgan and Portadown campuses. The college continues to explore site opportunities within the area for new facilities to establish a state-of-the-art campus for over 1,000 full-time students. This new campus will feature modern learning spaces and facilities, and



sustainability features, along with new digital and advanced manufacturing facilities. The SRC also contributes to the circular economy in the CUA through its wider regional student reach and potential employers.

The CUA also offers apprenticeship programs linked to prestigious institutions such as Queens University Belfast (QUB) and Ulster University (UU) through partnerships with local industries like Almac and others. These apprenticeships provide valuable hands-on experience and training in various fields, helping students to gain practical skills and enhance their employability.

Public Library Service

Libraries NI is a regional body responsible for the provision and delivery of a public library service in Northern Ireland offering free access to books, Wi-Fi, events, IT equipment, study areas learning and more.

There are three libraries in the project area,

- Brownlow Library, 3 Brownlow Road, Craigavon
- Lurgan Library, 1 Carnegie Street, Lurgan
- Portadown Library, 24-26 Church Street, Portadown

These libraries provide people with the opportunity to meet, learn, engage and socialise, events and programmes on offer include Rhythm and rhyme, Tea and newspapers, Mindful colouring, Storytime, Knit and natter, Lego club, Craft sessions and more.



Health and Wellbeing

Today the CUA, is recognised as one of Northern Ireland’s key urban centres, with a wide range of health, wellbeing, and recreational facilities designed to support its diverse population. The area benefits from a strong network of statutory services, community-led initiatives, and primary care provision that collectively promote physical health, mental wellbeing, and social inclusion. The map below shows the health facilities, including hospitals and GP surgeries across the CUA.

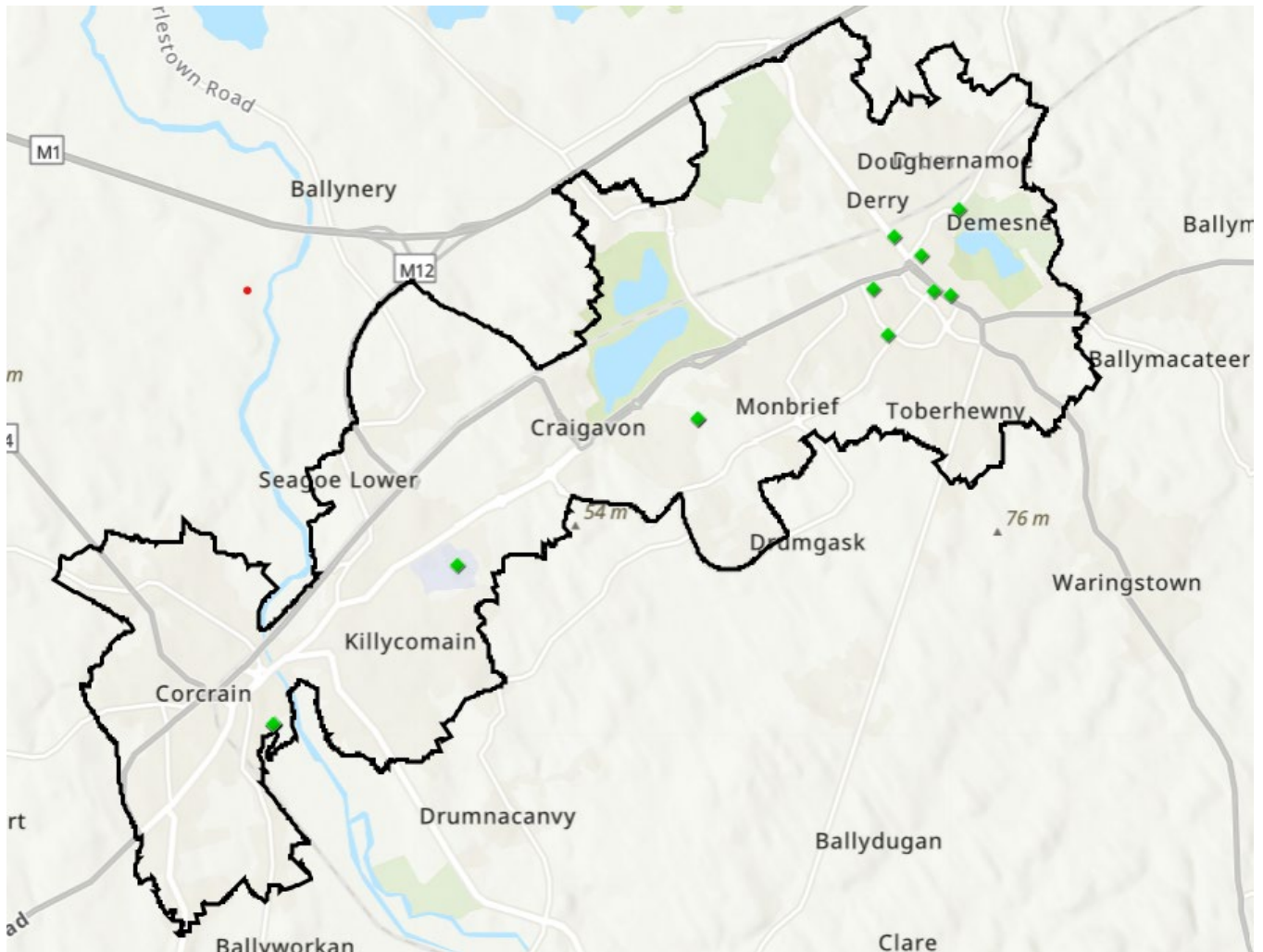


Figure 13: Map- Health facilities, including hospitals and GP surgeries across the CUA

In terms of broader healthcare infrastructure, the CUA benefits from the presence of two significant hospitals, which are key employers in the region and have made substantial investments in their facilities. **Lurgan Hospital** continues to provide a range of in-patient and community-based services, while **Craigavon Area Hospital (CAH)** functions as a major acute teaching hospital and trauma centre for the region. Craigavon Area Hospital delivers emergency services and specialist care and supporting medical education in partnership with Queen’s University in Belfast. Together with the network of local GP surgeries, these hospitals form a comprehensive **care pathway that balances accessible local provision with specialist regional services.**



The CUA is also well served by **primary care facilities**, with numerous GP surgeries and health centres located across Lurgan, Portadown, and central Craigavon. These practices provide frontline medical services, routine health checks, chronic disease management, and referral pathways into specialist hospital care. GP surgeries often work in close partnership with community pharmacists, district nurses, and allied health professionals, ensuring continuity of care and accessible local health support for residents. The distribution of surgeries across the urban area means that most communities have direct access to primary healthcare within their locality.

At the heart of community health provision is the **Verve Healthy Living Network**, which operates across the Neighbourhood Renewal Areas of Lurgan, North West Portadown, and Brownlow. Acting as a “virtual healthy living centre,” Verve provides doorstep-level support through a wide range of health promotion programmes. This includes the Health Trainer Programme, where locally trained individuals work directly with residents to encourage positive lifestyle changes, improve wellbeing, and connect people with relevant services. Complementing this, the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council Health and Wellbeing Team delivers a diverse programme of initiatives in partnership with the Public Health Agency and the Southern Health and Social Care Trust. These initiatives cover areas such as stress management, healthy eating, weight management, substance misuse awareness, heart health, diabetes prevention, and interventions to reduce social isolation. Additional council-led schemes include free home safety checks for vulnerable households and energy support through the Keep Cosy scheme or the Affordable Warmth Scheme.

A strong emphasis is also placed on **mental health and recovery services**. Action Mental Health’s New Horizons Centre in Craigavon provides tailored programmes to support adults living with mental ill-health. These programmes combine personal development, vocational training, employability support, and recreational activities to build resilience and confidence. Similarly, the Portadown Wellness Centre operates as a community hub, offering creative and therapeutic activities such as arts, crafts, cookery, gardening, yoga, meditation, and professional counselling services, all aimed at improving mental health and fostering community connection.

Recreational and active living opportunities are also central to the area’s health and wellbeing strategy. The South Lake Leisure Centre, located beside Craigavon’s balancing lakes, offers one of the largest gyms in Ireland, a 50-metre competition pool, and fully accessible facilities endorsed by Disability Sport NI. Its location provides seamless access to lakeside walking and cycling routes, encouraging **active lifestyles** for all age groups. In addition, initiatives such as the Highway to Health walking routes—including a 3.5 miles tarmac circuit around Craigavon Lake—promote regular outdoor exercise and community engagement. This **integrated network of facilities** ensures that residents have access to a wide range of opportunities to maintain and improve their health across all stages of life.



Housing

Housing stocks NIHE and current planning

As of April 2024, there were a total of 31,130 dwellings in the Craigavon Urban Area proxy area. Terrace houses account for more than 38% of these dwellings (26.7% in the Borough overall) while detached houses account for just 23.3% which is well below the average for the Borough overall at 42.6%.

Social Housing

The levels of social housing need are assessed and monitored by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). Social Housing is housing that is provided at an affordable rent by the Housing Executive and registered housing associations; that is, housing associations that are registered and regulated by the Department for Communities (DfC) as a social housing provider.

With an additional 1,498 units required in the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough between 2023-28, figure 39 shows this need by 'settlement' area within the Borough. North Lurgan and Portadown 2 exhibit the highest levels of social housing need in the Borough with 316 and 229 units required respectively. Of the top seven settlement areas in terms of housing need, areas within Craigavon (Central Craigavon), Lurgan (North and South Lurgan) and Portadown (Portadown 1 and 2) account for five of those with a total need of 859 units accounting for 57.3% of the total need for the Borough overall for the period 2023-2028. Those settlements with a need less than 10 have been grouped together and have a total need of 66.

The Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Housing Investment Plan 2024 Update provides details of schemes recently completed, currently on-site and schemes programmed as part of the Social Housing Development Programme.

Throughout the Borough there were a total of 4 schemes completed between April 2023 and March 2024 which resulted in 94 new units, of which only 1 was in William Street, Lurgan. Work is ongoing at seven different sites within the Borough which, when complete will provide another 164 units of which 79 (48%) are in the Craigavon Urban Area. There are a further eight schemes programmed between 2024 and 2027 which have the potential to add another 180 units to the available stock. Seven of these schemes are in the Craigavon Urban Area and will add a total of 140 units to the available stock.

Scheme		Number of Units
Schemes Completed April 2023– March 2024	William Street, Lurgan	1
	Peggy's Loaning, Banbridge	37
	18-52 Ogle Street, Armagh	42
	Derrytrasna Road, Derrytrasna	14
	Total	94
Schemes on site at	North Street, Lurgan	42



March 2024	Victoria Street Phase 1, Lurgan	16
	Commercial Road, Banbridge	59
	Ballyoran Manor, Portadown	21
	Parknasilla, Aghagallon	5
	Granemore Road, Keady	13
	The Slopes, Rathfriland	8
	Total	164
Schemes Programmed 2024-27	Lurgan Rehabs Phase 1	5
	Lurgan Rehabs Phase 2	5
	Victoria Street Phase 2, Lurgan	10
	The Coach, Banbridge	40
	Rushmere Glen, Craigavon	38
	Westacres, Craigavon	29
	Church Street, Portadown	14
	Ballyoran Hill, Portadown	39
	Total	180

Table 6: Social Housing Development Programme, Schemes Completed, Schemes on site and Schemes Programmed in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough. Source: Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Housing Investment Plan 2024 Update, Northern Ireland

Transport

The CUA, which includes the towns of Craigavon, Lurgan, and Portadown, is strategically positioned with robust transport connections that facilitate movement within and beyond the area. The region benefits from its location along the M1 motorway, which provides a direct route between Belfast to Dungannon (running East -West), enabling connections with other main towns, enhancing its connectivity and accessibility. There are three junctions (J10, J11 and J12) from the M1 accessing this area.

The transport infrastructure in the CUA is designed to support both local and regional travel. The area is well-served by a network of roads, including the A3 and A27, which connect the three towns and provide access to surrounding areas. This road network is complemented by a series of black paths and greenways that offer sustainable walking and cycling routes, linking neighbourhoods, parks, and town centres. These black paths not only promote active travel but also connect the urban area to the natural surroundings, including Lough Neagh.

The map below shows the M1, A3, M12, A4 and includes **red dots** showing Translink Platforms in Portadown and Lurgan, a **blue square** for the Bus Station in Craigavon and **black dots** showing the NI bus stops across the region.

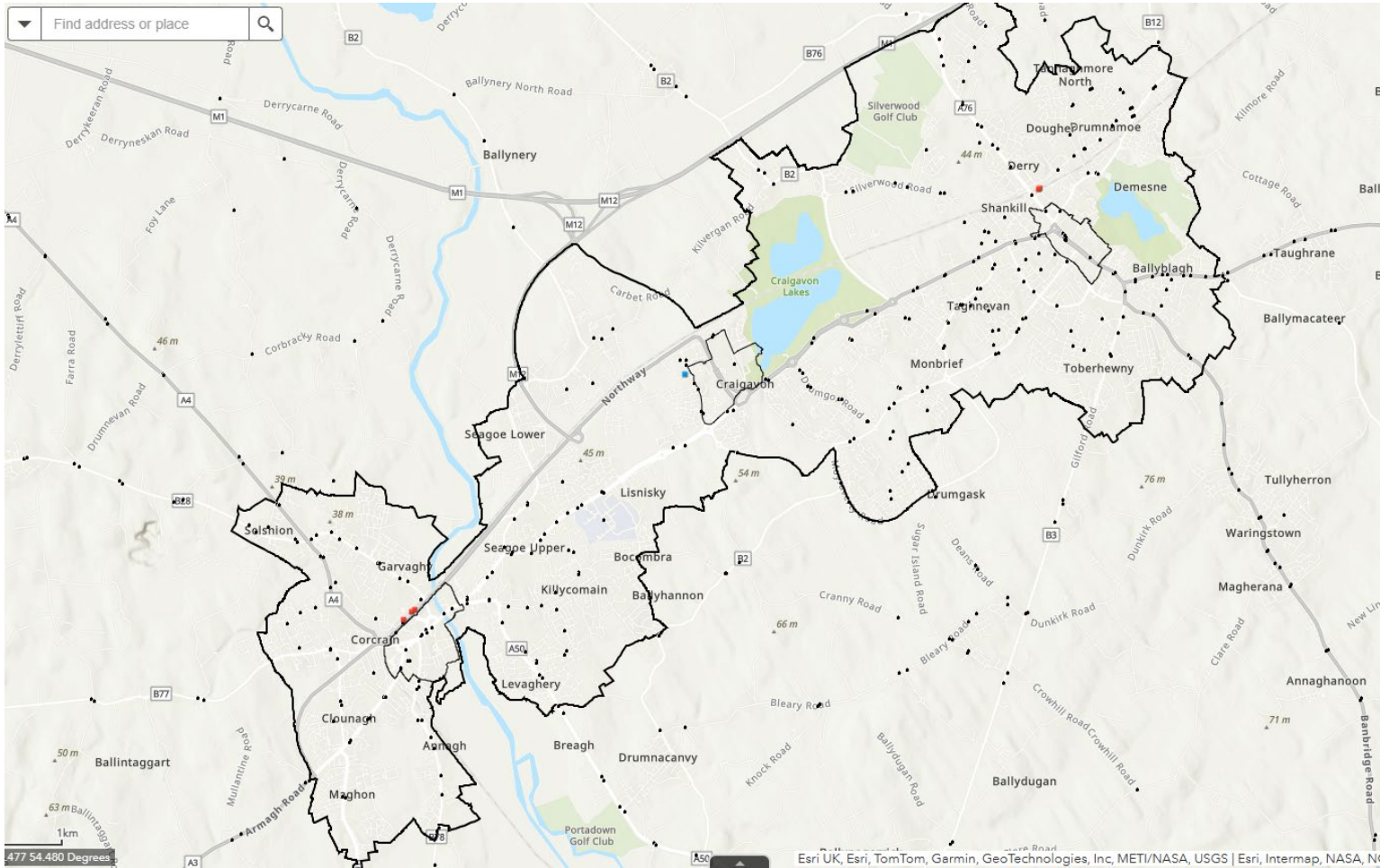


Figure 14: Translink Platforms, Bus Stops and Bus Station

Public transport in the CUA is facilitated by a comprehensive Translink bus and rail network. The towns of Lurgan and Portadown have railway stations that provide regular local services to Belfast, and other local destinations. Portadown station is the only station which the Enterprise Belfast- Dublin cross border service stops at (connecting with Newry, Dundalk and Drogheda) This rail connectivity is crucial for commuting and supports the local economy by facilitating the movement of people and goods.

Despite the strengths of the transport network, there are challenges and opportunities for improvement. Bottlenecks and congestion points have been identified, particularly during peak travel times. Addressing these issues through infrastructure enhancements and better traffic management is essential for improving the overall efficiency of the transport system.

Future development plans for the CUA include investments in transport infrastructure to support growth and enhance connectivity. These plans aim to create a more integrated and sustainable transport network that meets the needs of residents and businesses. The focus is on improving road and rail connections, expanding active travel routes, and enhancing public transport services.



The All-Island Strategic Rail Review, sets out 32 strategic recommendations to enhance and expand the rail system in Ireland and Northern Ireland up to 2050, aligning with net carbon zero commitments in both jurisdictions. The review signals transformative intentions for the Portadown–Lurgan–Craigavon region, aiming for:

- Enhanced regional rail connectivity (through Derry and Armagh links),
- Local infrastructure modernization (station redevelopment in Lurgan), and
- Expanded regional access (a new station in Craigavon).



Built & Natural Heritage

Built Heritage

The Craigavon Urban Area (CUA) contains a rich mix of built and natural heritage assets, supported by an extensive framework of statutory designations and development plan zonings. In terms of the built environment, there are approximately 120 listed buildings

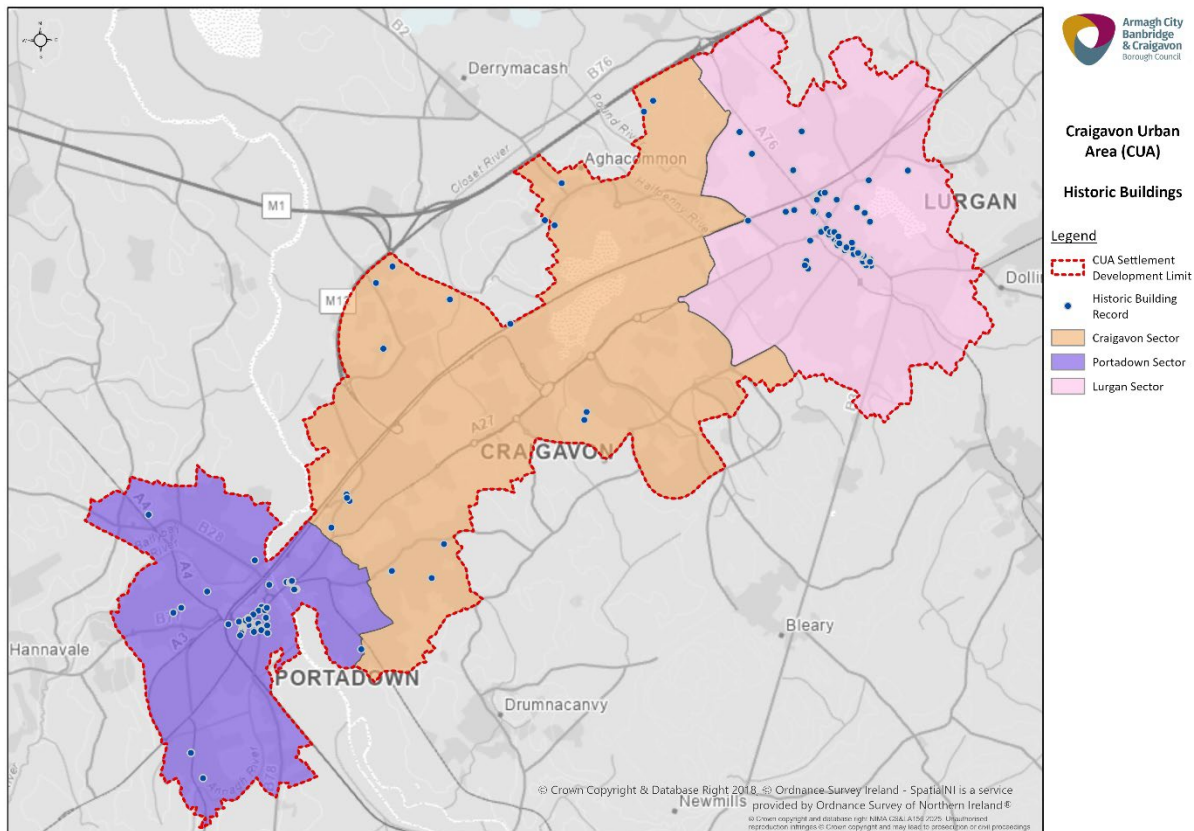


Figure 15: Listed buildings within the CUA

within the CUA, contributing to the architectural character of towns such as Lurgan and Portadown. The area also contains around 40 scheduled and unscheduled monuments, including the Newry Canal Scheduled Monument at the edge of the urban boundary. Designed landscapes of note include Brownlow House, Lurgan (Grade A) on the Register of Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes, as well as two supplementary Grade B sites, Eden Villa in Portadown and Fairview House at Tannaghmore Gardens.

However, the borough also records the highest number of entries on the Heritage at Risk Register in Northern Ireland, with 22 sites located within the CUA, underlining ongoing challenges around conservation and reuse.

The area also retains an important legacy of defence and industrial heritage, with 17 defence-related sites and numerous industrial assets identified. In terms of planning policy designations, there are two Areas of Townscape Character (ATCs) at Bachelor's Walk in



Portadown and College Walk in Lurgan, while the Lurgan Conservation Area, designated in 2004, continues to benefit from regeneration through the Lurgan Townscape Heritage Partnership. These built heritage designations collectively reinforce the cultural, architectural, and historic significance of the CUA, while shaping conservation and regeneration efforts.

Listed Buildings

As of 12th February 2025, there are 164 listed buildings within the Craigavon Urban Area. The table below presents the number of buildings in each sector of the Craigavon Urban Area by their current use. Lurgan has the highest number of listed buildings accounting for 53% of the total in the Craigavon Urban Area, followed by Portadown (35%) and Craigavon (12%). In each sector, the majority of the buildings are currently used as houses with these accounting for almost 43% of the total in the Craigavon Urban Area. There are also 15 Church's, 11 Banks and 10 shops listed as the current use for these buildings.

	Craigavon	Lurgan	Portadown	Craigavon Urban Area
Bank/former banks		4	7	11
Church	2	7	6	15
Court House		1		1
Demolished	7	1		8
Entertainment Building		2		2
Factory		2	1	3
Fountain		1		1
Gates / Screens / Lodges	1	2		3
Hall	1	2	4	7
Hotel		1		1
Hospital Building			1	1
House	8	19	20	47
House - Terrace		23		23
Library		1	1	2
Memorial		3	2	5
Office		4	5	9
Post Box		1		1
Public House		1	2	3
Recreational Club		1		1
School		4	1	5
Shop		6	4	10
Store	1		1	2
Town Hall		1	1	2
Warehouse			1	1
	20	87	57	164

Table 7: Listed buildings within Craigavon Urban Area by Sector by current use.



Heritage at Risk

The Heritage at Risk register for Northern Ireland highlights properties of architectural or historic merit that are considered to be at risk or under threat and aims to act as a catalyst for their restoration and reuse. The register is funded and managed by the Historic Environment Division of Department for Communities in partnership with Ulster Architectural Heritage.

At the 31 March 2024, there were 197 properties in the Borough on the Heritage at Risk register, this is currently the highest of all the council areas and accounts for 18% of the total in Northern Ireland. A total of 30 ‘at risk’ buildings in the Borough have been saved while 5 were demolished.

	Heritage at Risk	Saved Buildings at Risk	Demolished Buildings at Risk
Antrim and Newtownabbey	35	13	2
Ards North Down	47	28	1
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	197	30	5
Belfast	117	74	5
Causeway Coast and Glens	97	31	1
Derry and Strabane	80	25	5
Fermanagh and Omagh	130	24	4
Lisburn and Castlereagh	53	17	1
Mid and East Antrim	64	11	1
Mid Ulster	118	38	2
Newry, Mourne and Down	175	53	1
Total	1,113	344	28

Table 8: Heritage at Risk NI (2023-24). Source: Heritage at Risk Register, Ulster Architectural Heritage and Department for Communities. *Figures are as accurate as possible at this time, and changes may occur due to the ongoing reviews, Second Listed Building

Data from the Heritage at Risk Register shows that 20 of the 197 properties (10.2%) on the Heritage at Risk Register in the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough are based in the Craigavon Urban Area and these have been mapped across the three sectors overleaf.

As was the case with the listed buildings, Lurgan has the highest proportion of heritage at risk accounting for 60% (12 properties) of the total in the Craigavon Urban Area. Craigavon has the next highest total accounting for 25% (5 properties) with Portadown accounting for 15% (3 properties) on the register within the Craigavon Urban Area.



Legend

- CUA Settlement Development Limit
- Heritage At Risk
- Craigavon Sector
- Portadown Sector
- Lurgan Sector

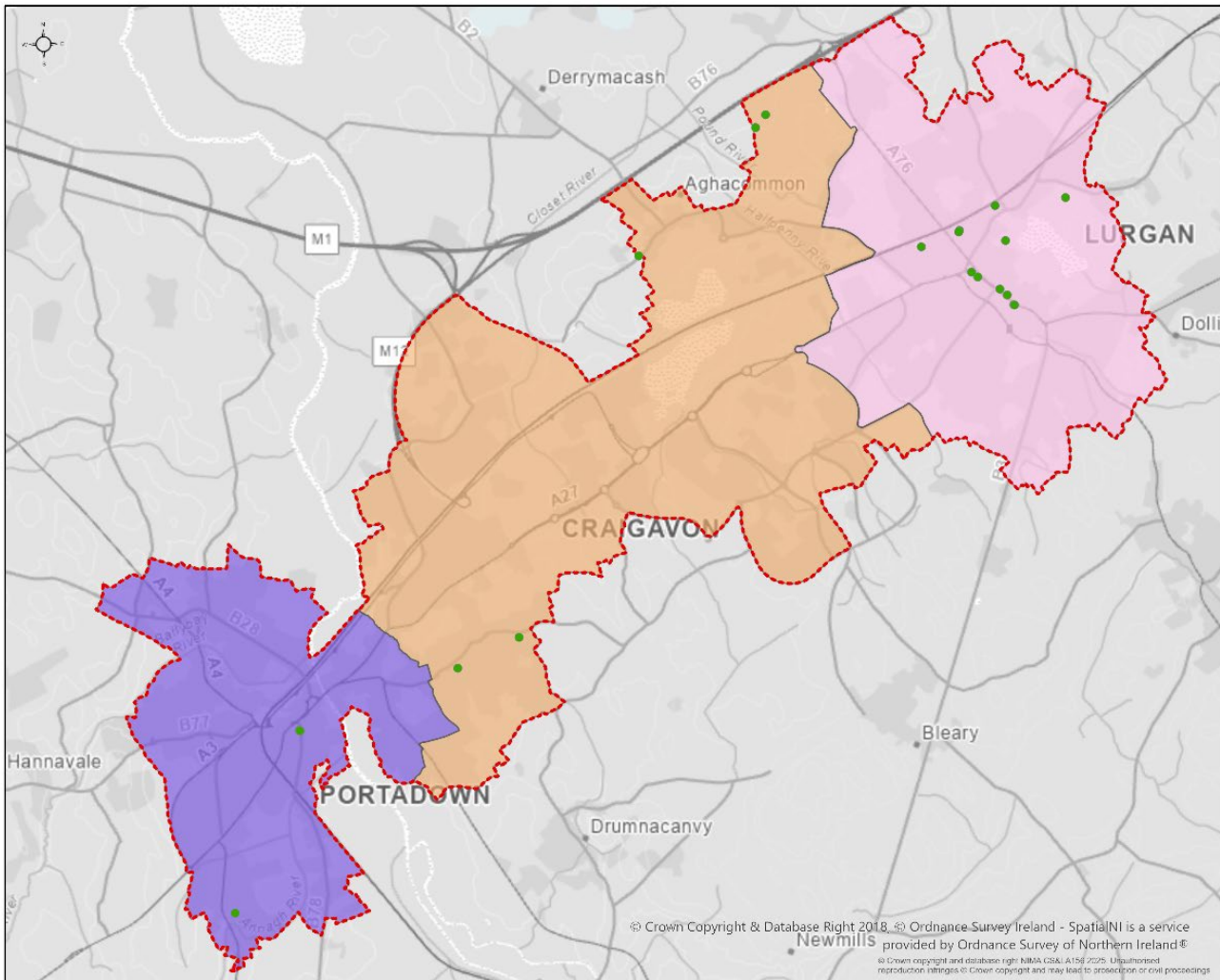


Figure 16: Heritage at Risk NI (2023-24) within the Craigavon Urban Area. Source: Heritage at Risk Register, Ulster Architectural Heritage and Department for Communities. *Figures are as accurate as possible at this time and changes may occur due to the ongoing

Natural Heritage

The natural heritage of the CUA is equally significant, encompassing a range of habitats and landscapes protected through statutory and local designations. Key sites include Brackagh Bog Nature Reserve, along with three Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) at Brackagh Bog, Derryvore Fen, and Selshion Bog, which safeguard valuable wetland and bogland habitats.

The internationally important Lough Neagh and Lough Beg RAMSAR site lies immediately north of the CUA, emphasising the global ecological value of the wider area. Locally, biodiversity is further supported through Local Wildlife Sites at Lurgan Park, Craigavon North Lake, and the Craigavon Rail Buffer (notable for the Marsh Fritillary butterfly), as well as Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCIs) at Lurgan Park and Craigavon Park.

Development plan policy also provides an important layer of protection, with 12 Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs) identified across Lurgan, Craigavon, and Portadown, covering sites of built and natural heritage importance such as Lurgan Park, the River Bann, and People’s Park. Approximately 30 hectares of open space are zoned within the CUA, creating



opportunities for habitat creation and biodiversity enhancement, for example through wildflower meadows. In addition, a Community Woodland Zoning at Taghnevan between Lurgan and Craigavon (10.37 hectares) provides both recreational and ecological value. Natural heritage is further safeguarded by 15 Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) within the CUA and 14 Long-Established Woodlands in Lurgan, recorded on the Northern Ireland Ancient Woodland Inventory.

Taken together, these built and natural heritage designations highlight the exceptional cultural, historic, and environmental value of the Craigavon Urban Area. They provide a framework for both conservation and regeneration, while offering opportunities to enhance biodiversity, protect sensitive landscapes, and integrate green infrastructure into the fabric of the urban environment. This comprehensive approach ensures that the CUA's heritage is not only protected but actively contributes to the sustainability, character, and quality of life within the region.

Town Centres

The Craigavon Town Centre Boundaries and Retail Designations Plan 2010: defines town centre boundaries for each of the three main centres. The town centres provide a broad range of retail, service and other facilities, and are the focus for community and public transport. Within these centres, retail development and other uses that generate significant numbers of people will be encouraged and promoted as the most sustainable locations with optimum accessibility by a range of means of travel. The town centres provide the main opportunity for further commercial expansion.

Lurgan and Portadown town centres each have a number of banks, building societies and other financial services operating from ground floor premises. Each also has a number of other offices operating from smaller premises, often above existing shops.

Craigavon has an important role as an administrative centre, accommodating Craigavon Civic and Conference Centre, Craigavon Courthouse and Marlborough House, as well as Rushmere Shopping Centre and Marlborough Retail Park.

These town centres have evolved since 2010, due to changing economic environments and external factors. The shift towards online shopping and online financial services has had a negative impact in the town centres. However, banking facilities are available through the Post Office network and there are a number of post offices within the CUA.

The associated adopted boundary maps are included in the following chapters for each town.



Strategy & Policy Relevance

The Craigavon Urban Area (CUA), comprising the interconnected town centres of **Lurgan, Craigavon and Portadown**, is positioned at a pivotal point in its social, economic, and environmental evolution. Discovery and place shaping in this region are framed by a wide range of international, national, regional, and local policies which provide the foundation for sustainable regeneration, inclusive growth, and community-led development.

Global and UK-Wide Ambitions

The CUA region aligns with the principles of the **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** and the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, embedding objectives such as reduced inequalities (Goal 10), sustainable cities and communities (Goal 11), and climate action (Goal 13) into place-shaping efforts.

Emerging frameworks like the **Developing Irish Sea Cooperation (DISC)** and the **All-Island Strategic Rail Review** position the CUA within a broader cross-border connectivity and economic context. These reinforce the importance of regional resilience, mobility, and competitiveness along the **Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor**, within which the CUA sits strategically.

Northern Ireland and Regional Policy Alignment

The region's transformation is underpinned by Northern Ireland's economic and spatial frameworks, notably **Delivering the Economic Vision – a three-year look and Action Plan**, which champions innovation, green growth, and advanced skills. CUA's economic regeneration strategies, including initiative like the **Green Energy District (GED) project** is aligned with this vision.

Place shaping efforts must also embed climate resilience through strategies such as the **DAERA Green Growth Strategy, Energy Strategy – Path to Net Zero**, and **DAERA's Plan to 2050**, reinforcing the Council's commitment to net-zero and circular economy principles.

The **DfC Urban Regeneration and Community Development Framework**, alongside the **Living Places Urban Design Guide**, provides a placemaking lens that prioritises design quality, community engagement, and town centre revitalisation, while frameworks like **Vital and Viable** and the **High Street Task Force Report** articulate best practices for reimagining 21st-century town centres.

The **Regional Development Strategy 2035** further supports integrated spatial planning, sustainable transport, and balanced regional growth—critical in ensuring connectivity between Lurgan, Craigavon, and Portadown.



Council and Local-Level Frameworks

At a local level, the **ABC Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2023–2027, Connected Community Plan (2017–2030)** and **Recovery and Growth Framework (2020)** provide strong strategic anchors for people-centred development. The **ABC Local Development Plan – Preferred Options Paper** outlines spatial priorities and land use policies that underpin future development and regeneration across the borough.

Targeted town centre interventions such as the **Lurgan Townscape Heritage Scheme**, **Craigavon Integrated Development Framework**, and emerging strategic priorities in Portadown contribute to a comprehensive place-based regeneration vision. The **ABC Town Centre Vacancy Study**, **Evening Economy Strategy**, and **Arts, Culture and Heritage Framework** help inform how these spaces can be reimaged to enhance vibrancy, economic activity, and cultural engagement.

The Council's focus on inclusivity—evidenced through the **Age-Friendly Strategy**, **Disability Sport Strategy**, and **Play Strategy**—supports a place-shaping model that champions accessibility, participation, and well-being for all age groups and backgrounds.

The Craigavon Integrated Development Framework (CIDF) provides a strategic plan to guide sustainable regeneration, infrastructure, and spatial planning across the Craigavon Urban Area (CUA). It aligns housing, transport, and economic development to create a more connected, vibrant, and inclusive urban region. The CIDF supports regional growth by linking the CUA with wider investment, environmental, and community wellbeing goals. This framework will be taken into consideration during the development of the CUA place plan(s) to ensure that relevant elements are identified and carried forward.

Spatial and Economic Transformation

Situated within the **Mid-South West Regional Economic Strategy**, the CUA is primed for investment and innovation. Projects, such as the **Green Energy District** reflect a growing pipeline of initiatives that blend economic growth with sustainability, and knowledge-economy drivers.

Efforts in discovery—understood as deep engagement, data analysis, and community dialogue—must shape how place-based challenges and opportunities are understood. These processes are fundamental to co-producing strategies that reflect the unique identity of each of the CUA's towns while promoting a shared vision of **connectivity, resilience, and innovation**.



CUA SWOT Analysis

The table below shows a collective SWOT analysis of the CUA following engagement with key stakeholders across the town and site walks through the place. The following is indicative of what has been raised to date but it is not an exhaustive list.

Strengths	Gaps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active travel (Black Paths) • Active Craigavon Area Learning Community (CALC) • Built and Natural Heritage • Community Group activities • Connectivity infrastructure and how three areas interlink • Education facilities and current investment • Growing industry and business sectors • Healthcare centres and hospital • Large local home-grown international businesses with strong industrial base • Natural beauty and surroundings close to Lough Neagh, recreational parks, green space and outdoor activities • Ongoing housing, retail and industrial development • Range of sports clubs and facilities • Strategic location and access to M1 • Three unique towns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities and events • Cleanliness of black paths • Communications and promotion could be better • Connecting community and creating sense of place • Dereliction in traditional town centres • Frequency of transport services • Funding for maintenance • General upkeep along pavements, bridges, black paths, underpasses outside of designated town centres but across the place. • Gateways and arrival points at each town within the area • Hinterland public transport for rural communities • Lack of Hotels • Lack of conference space and commercial offices • Looking after the basics • New housing developments not designed for busy bus links • Newcomers' inclusion and celebration of their culture • Quality of digital marketing footprint for businesses • Signage • Tourism and visitor numbers



Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60th Anniversary of Craigavon (2025/26) • Connection/Collaboration/Partnership working across the area • Eco Schools and Forest Schools • Greenways and Blueway’s projects • Improved signage in town centres • Local tourism and the wider promotion thereof • Longer term annual calendar of events which bring the community together attract visitors • Making key assets more accessible through lighting, signage, security with less reliance on car travel • Micro business and slow tourism • Promote the black paths network • Promotion and communication for activities and events-leisure and recreational • Review current condition of open spaces and parks and identify opportunities • Ski, golf and equestrian improvement opportunities- unique elements • Tannaghmore Rare Breeds Animal Farm is a unique offering and opportunities • Town centre regeneration- accommodation demand, above shop units etc • Understand community assets – sports facilities, religion/faith assets and open spaces • Younger generation moving to housing which is affordable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating vibrancy and sense of belonging in town centre • Encouraging rail commuters to shop in town centres and support the local circular economy • Environmental care- water quality, evasive species • Environmental challenges- weeds, algae and invasive species • Funding and investment into the right places • Graffiti • Homelessness • Infrastructure investment required from – NI Water (sewage/waste), NIE (grid capabilities) and broadband • Invest NI lands remain undeveloped • Large elderly population and growing population of children and young people • Library footfall reducing • Mindsets of where you are from and to what you belong “division” • No women’s refuge in ABC • Overgrown sections of the black paths • Parking in town centres • People and Place review and new programme for Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships • Pockets of poverty • Private landowners reluctance to improving properties or use – possibly creating dereliction and devaluing the properties nearby • Retail attraction and experiences outside of traditional town centres taking business away • Rubbish, broken glass and fly tipping – lack of respect for own environment • Skills gap and level of educations attained • Social housing need for 752 houses in next 5 years • Varying levels of local ASB

Table 9: SWOT analysis of the CUA



Discovery walk – walkability and cleanliness findings.

During this discovery, the project team were accompanied by the town centre managers on each walk. Initial observations of each town area as follows:

Craigavon

Starting at South Lake Leisure Centre, there is a hype of activity and following along the back paths under the tunnel, it was positive to see the ongoing works to upgrade the black path provision at Enniskeen led by DfI. However, there is still much room for improvement as the volumes of rubbish, graffiti and unattended vegetation maintenance by the landowners, throughout the entire walk, diminished and overshadowed the positive improvements being made. Furthermore, the similar feedback around the entirety of the lakes with overgrown vegetation, damaged street furniture and signage continued to detract from the overall walk experience.

Returning to the town centre of Central Craigavon, it is unclear where the formal town centre boundary begins. While the two bridges have been upgraded to stainless steel in recent years, the lack of wayfinding signage presents a challenge particularly to those unfamiliar with the black paths, as confirmed by two users who stopped and asked for directions. Graffiti across the area is a notable challenge.

The area beyond the courthouse, leading towards the Cinema and the evening economy would benefit from improved management and upgrades. At present dark underpasses, overgrown trees and grassed areas, and even fallen trees along the path detract from the overall accessibility and appeal of the paths.

Lurgan

Firstly, starting at Lurgan Park, a fine and impressive valued green space, there is potential for enhancement, particularly at the park entrances, park furniture and indeed the public toilets. Improved street lighting would be welcome along the Grand Avenue and there are plans to upgrade the tennis courts. The adjacent former Waves site presents significant potential for redevelopment whether as new community use or as an extended leisure of some form.

Walking along Castle Lane, lined with planters which unfortunately are now overgrown accompanied by noticeable weed growth in the car park which gives an impression of neglect. The former Tesco site remains vacant and has fallen into a state of disrepair, as such it would benefit from revitalisation. With thoughtful development on both sides, this street has the potential to become a more vibrant and attractive part of the town.

Accompanied by the Townscape Heritage Manager key heritage buildings were identified. Vacancy is more visible and evident in Lurgan. However, there are great success stories from



the Townscape Heritage project, in terms of rebuilding gap sites and creating town centre living. This project is making a positive difference on the street scape.

Market Street and High Street walkability is good, however some of the way finders have faded.

Portadown

The town centre was pleasant to walk through, with shoppers out and about. The town centre was clean, and vacant buildings were most visible along the adjoining streets. There are opportunity sites, notably unfinished developments, and derelict heritage buildings dotted around the town centre. The approach to the train station is tired with overgrown vegetation and paths leading to the underpass. Several aspects of the public realm in this area would require targeted improvement.

Walking along the Bann Boulevard, it was heartening to see people enjoying the area, though it's clear that parts of it could benefit from revitalisation. The towpath features outdated signage and tired street furniture, which detracts from its charm. At the old pump house, visitors were relaxing with coffee, and a few individuals were preparing to fish at Old Town Quay

The walk continued along Water Street, offering views across the banks to Hoys Meadow, an area that has only recently become accessible. Water Street shows strong potential for regeneration, with new property owners already submitting proposals to bring the buildings back into use. On the return journey, it was noted that the former Calvins Mill is currently up for sale.



The Power of 10+

The Power of 10+ is a place-making and place-shaping principle developed by the Project for Public Spaces (PPS). It suggests that great places thrive when there are at least 10 or more things to do or reasons to be there, and that this logic should scale at multiple geographic levels. The core idea is simple: “If you can’t count at least 10 reasons to be in a place, people probably won’t stay long or come back.” From a place-shaping perspective, the Power of 10+ is used as a tool for designing vibrant, inclusive, and resilient public spaces, encouraging local identity and community ownership, and structuring investment into areas that create social, cultural, and economic value.

Our discovery of the CUA		
Lurgan	Craigavon	Portadown
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brownlow Castle 2. Lurgan Park 3. Lurgan Golf Club 4. Walking tours- Heritage 5. Lough Neagh Discovery Centre 6. Kinnego Marina 7. Junior/Senior Parkrun 8. Weekly Town Plaza Market 9. Ashburn Hotel 10. Local cafes & restaurants 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rushmere Shopping Centre & Marlborough Retail Park 2. South Lakes Leisure Centre 3. Craigavon Watersports Centre 4. Craigavon Golf & Ski Centre 5. Cycle trails & black paths 6. Airtastic Entertainment Centre 7. Omniplex Cinema 8. The Parkrun 9. Tannaghmore Farm & Gardens 10. Mountain Bike Trail 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mandeville Quarter –weekend night life 2. Edenvilla Park & Secret Garden 3. Millennium Court Arts Centre 4. River Bann walks, canoeing, cycling & tours 5. Peoples Park 6. Bann Boulevard 7. Portadown Golf Club 8. Seagoe Hotel 9. Peter Pan’s Neverland 10. Meadows Shopping Centre

Table 10: Power of 10+ Our discovery of the CUA

An exercise was carried out to demonstrate the difference between what is online and a go to marketing tool for locals and tourists versus what we found during the discovery exercise.

The value of improving marketing and attracting greater support to retain and develop the circular economy is vital for future prosperity. This exercise highlighted the need for helping businesses which exist better promote themselves online. It also demonstrated where the potential exists to strengthen the current offerings. UrbanABC is a live online resource which could be used to support this.



The AI version on Tripadvisor when you search for ‘things to do’ in each place, shows attractions/venues which no longer exist and places outside the area which are not part of the CUA.

AI comparisons - Tripadvisor AI (30/05/2025)

What Trip Advisor suggests		
Lurgan- Trip Advisor	Craigavon	Portadown
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tannaghmore Farm & Gardens 2. Brownlow House 3. Craigavon Golf & Ski Centre 4. Lurgan Park 5. Lurgan Library 6. Unleashed Dog Adventure Park 7. Lord Lurgan Park 8. Scallywags Party & Play Centre 9. Danann Crafts 10. Waves Leisure Complex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Airtastic Entertainment Centre 2. Oxford Island Nature Reserve 3. Craigavon Watersports Centre 4. Rushmere Shopping Centre 5. Lough Neagh Discovery Centre 6. Brownlow House (Lurgan) 7. Peatlands Park (Derrylee, near Craigavon) 8. Maghery Country Park & Coney Island 9. Bedlam Indoor Paintball (Portadown) 10. C &J’s Animal Park (Portadown) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. C & J’s Animal Park 2. Newry Canal Towpath 3. Moneypenny’s Lock 4. Address House & Farm 5. Edenvilla Park & Secret Garden 6. Portadown Library 7. Millennium Court Arts Centre 8. Portadown Railway Station 9. Shamrock Park 10. Portadown Town Walking Tour

Table 11: Power of 10+ AI comparisons - Tripadvisor AI

The importance of local businesses recognising digital marketing and the impact it can create on developing and attracting visitors and local residents is vital to future economic success and sustainable growth. Potential strategies and approaches to support programmes for local business should be invested into for the future focus.



Opportunities to build on & shape the future of the CUA

The Craigavon Urban Area (CUA) has significant potential to build on its strengths and shape a sustainable, inclusive future by capitalising on opportunities across six interlinked areas.

1. Central to this vision is the ability to maximise the CUA's position within a **polycentric urban region model**, where the area acts as a strategic hub between Belfast, Newry, and Derry/Londonderry, while also reinforcing its role as a connector between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. By leveraging its central location and planned urban form, the CUA can strengthen its identity as a balanced, multi-nodal urban region with complementary roles for Lurgan, Portadown, and central Craigavon.
2. In terms of **economic growth**, the opportunity exists to ensure a balance between different types of businesses and industries. The area can grow its manufacturing and logistics base while also fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and the digital and green economy. Strengthening town centre vitality in Lurgan and Portadown, alongside investment in Craigavon's retail and service core, will create a diverse and resilient economic base that supports local employment and attracts inward investment.
3. The provision of **affordable housing** represents another key opportunity. The CUA can address housing need by delivering good-quality, sustainable, and accessible homes that meet the requirements of families, young people, and older residents alike. Through thoughtful planning and regeneration, new housing can be integrated into existing communities, supporting balanced growth while avoiding over-reliance on any single housing type.
4. **Educational institutions**, particularly the Southern Regional College (SRC) and local post-primary schools (PPSs), are well placed to align more strategically with business sectors. By strengthening partnerships with local employers and industry clusters, the CUA can ensure that training and skills development are tailored to meet future workforce needs. This will help retain young people in the area, provide clear pathways into employment, and support economic competitiveness.
5. The CUA's **transport connections** are another asset that can be further developed. Its strategic location on the M1 corridor, along with strong rail links, positions it as a well-connected urban hub. Continued investment in sustainable transport modes—including enhanced bus and rail services, active travel routes such as cycleways and greenways, and integrated park-and-ride facilities—will improve accessibility, reduce reliance on the car, and support more sustainable patterns of movement across the region.



6. Finally, there is considerable scope to enhance the **quality of life** for residents. Facilities such as the **South Lake Leisure Centre**, the wider **Lakes scheme**, **Lurgan Park**, and a network of other parks and open spaces provide a strong foundation for promoting health, wellbeing, and social inclusion. Opportunities exist to expand use of the **Black Paths** and other green corridors to encourage active lifestyles, connect communities, and create a more attractive urban environment. Applying the “**Power of 10+” principle**, the CUA can focus on creating places that offer a wide variety of uses and experiences—ten or more reasons for people to visit, engage, and stay in a space. By clustering activities, amenities, and destinations, the CUA can strengthen its parks, town centres, and public spaces as vibrant community hubs, enhancing both social life and economic vitality.

Together, these six areas provide a clear framework for shaping the future of the Craigavon Urban Area, enabling it to fulfil its role as a balanced, connected, and thriving polycentric region at the heart of Northern Ireland.



Going to Town

Going to Town demonstrates the exploration of Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown areas in more detail. It places a focus on their statistical profiles; demographics of the area and a health check is carried out to present ideas around how each area can be shaped for the future. Some key findings and recommendations for each area are provided at end of each chapter.

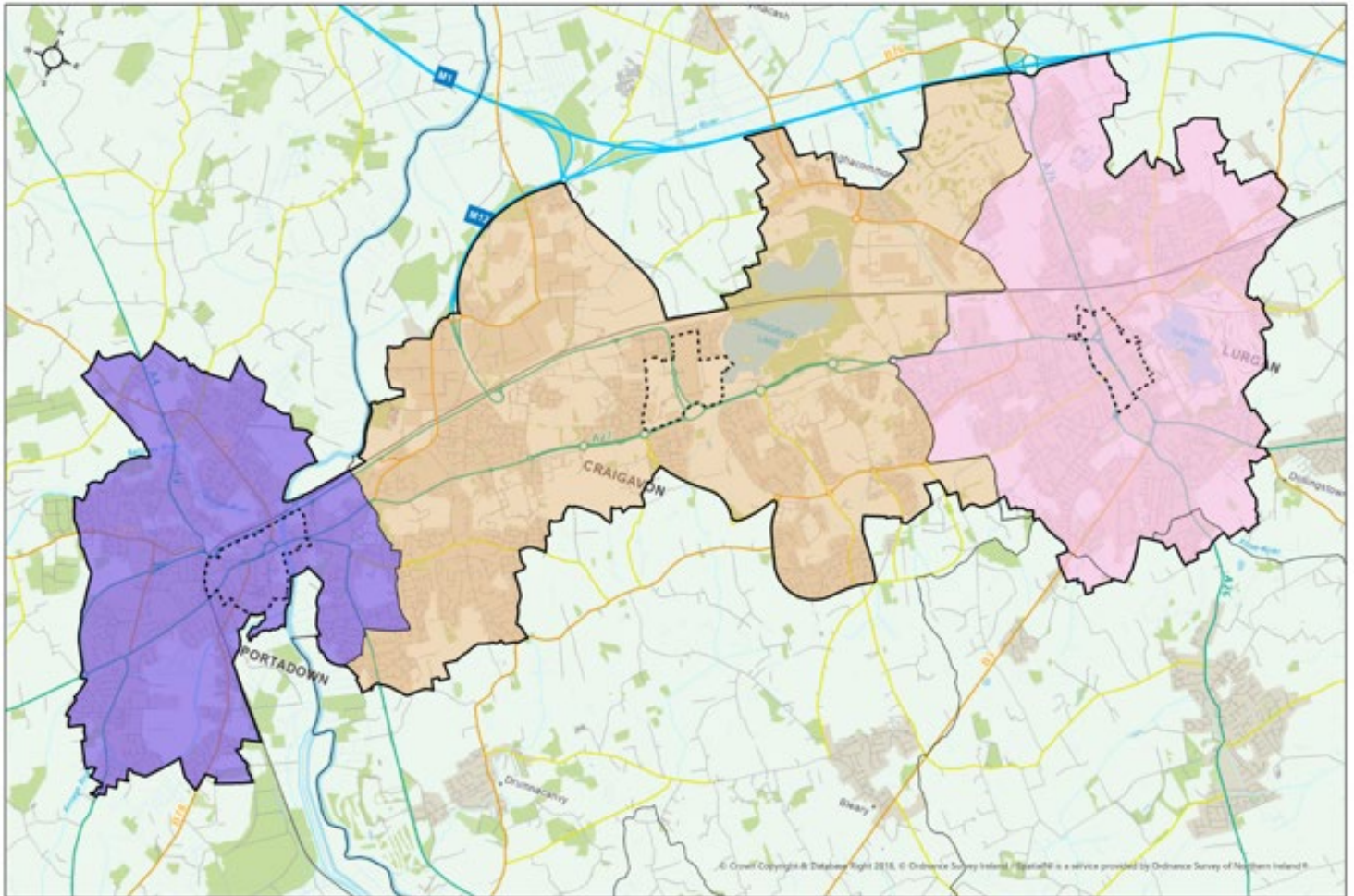


Figure 17: Map of CUA



Craigavon Sector



Craigavon in focus

Craigavon, Northern Ireland's first designated New Town, was conceived in the 1960s as part of a broader strategy to modernise and decentralise urban development away from Belfast. Its creation was influenced by post-war planning ideals, particularly the Garden City and New Town movements, which aimed to combine the benefits of urban and rural living.

The idea for Craigavon emerged from the 1962 regional plan for Greater Belfast, which identified the need for a new urban centre to relieve housing and traffic pressures in the capital. The chosen site lay between the existing towns of Lurgan and Portadown, and the plan envisioned a linear city that would integrate these towns with a newly built central area called Brownlow and a more industrial focussed area, Mandeville.

Craigavon was officially designated as a New Town on 26 July 1965 under the New Towns Act (Northern Ireland). The development aimed to:

- Create a major industrial base.
- Provide modern housing and infrastructure.
- Serve as a regional service centre for the south and west of Northern Ireland.

The planning incorporated modernist principles, including traffic segregation, neighbourhood units, and green spaces.

Craigavon with a population of circa 22,518 has a unique town centre with a built form that dates back 60 years. Craigavon contains 6 neighbourhoods, of which one of them Legahory is classed as a 'district centre', and the most vibrant of all outside of the town centre boundary. In the early 1990s, the major investment into Legahory retail, offices and road network was aimed at creating a 'High Street' for Brownlow. The lack of a town centre was a major criticism of the 'new town' during the 1980s when the Goodyear Factory closed and people felt isolated and forgotten with limited access to the basic services accessible in other towns.

Craigavon has a diverse retail landscape within its town centre boundary, featuring key destinations such as Rushmere Shopping Centre, Marlborough Retail Park, and Tesco Extra, all home to multinational brands. A new Lidl supermarket is also scheduled to open in 2026. In addition, other facilities abutting the town centre boundary, include the Omniplex Cinema and a variety of restaurants which add to the night time economy.

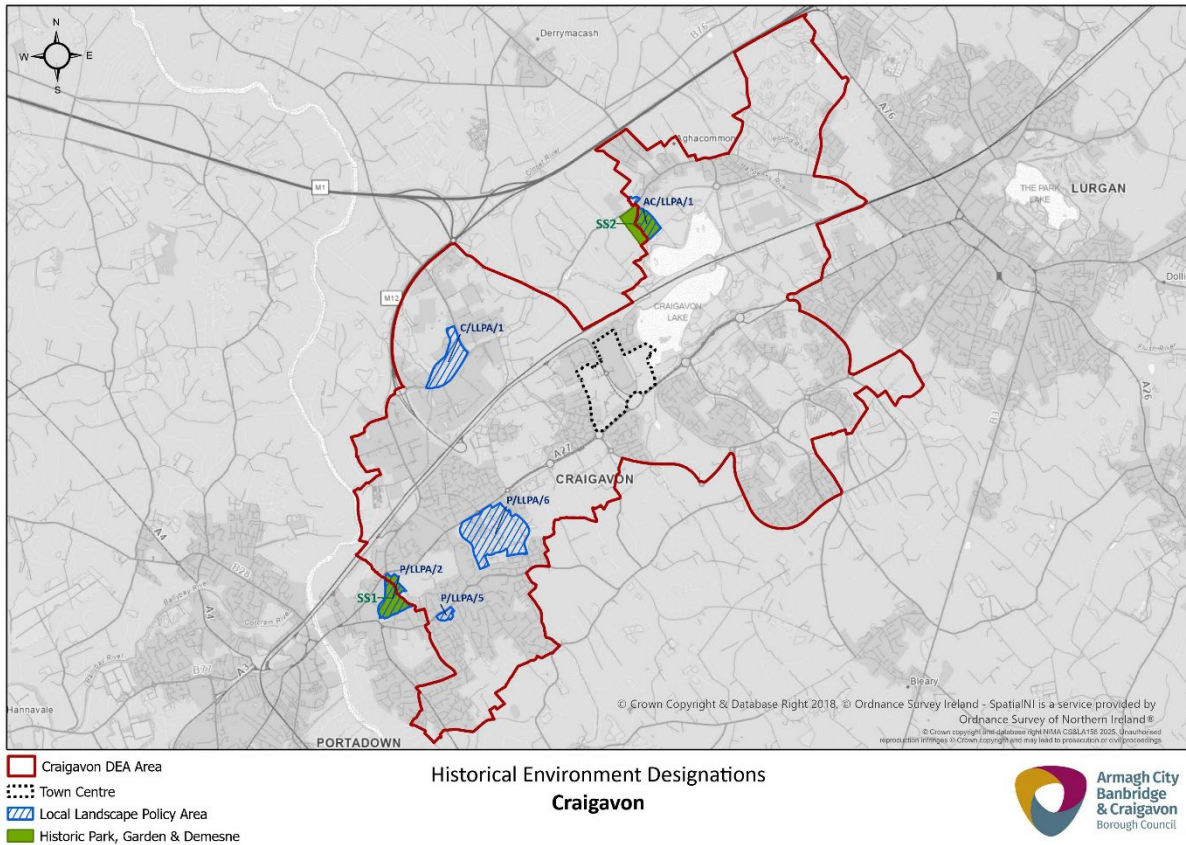


Figure 18: Historical Environmental Designation

Together, the town centre and its surrounding area draw in both shoppers and leisure seekers, offering a vibrant mix of retail and recreational experiences. Craigavon traditionally has had low vacancy rates, today it is 7.8% which is the lowest in the borough, this is due to the concentration of retail within a complex with dedicated management of the site, quite different to the other towns.

Craigavon is predominately an industrial area, traditionally including the areas of Carn, and Charlestown Road, for the purpose of this study it also considers Seagoe, Halfpenny Valley Industrial Estate and Silverwood. All of which are home to leading growth sectors in our borough such as Agri Food, Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing and Life Sciences. Home to some of NI, most successful companies and largest employers such as Pilgrims Europe and Almac Group. There is a concentration of ‘Food Heartland’ businesses located in Carn.



The South Lake Leisure Centre has also been a significant investment in the area. Located at the south side of Craigavon's 'balancing lake' and enjoying fantastic views of Craigavon City Park, the state-of-the-art facility is a landmark for the area and situated in a pre-existing network of walking and cycling paths covering around three miles, providing opportunities for people to enjoy health and wellbeing activities.



Figure 19: Image of South Lake Leisure Centre

The neighbouring Tannaghmore Gardens and Rare Breeds Animal Farm is accessible via the network of paths.

The original development of Craigavon in the sixties, was quite innovative, with a network of wide roads, roundabouts, pedestrian routes and bridges to accommodate a large population. Having this infrastructure in place, particularly the 'black paths' is a great asset for Craigavon in this modern era of sustainable travel. Although it would benefit from enhancement and investment.

It should be noted that the Craigavon Town Centre fabric is very different to traditional towns, with a view that the bridges and the black paths are in effect 'the streets' of Craigavon.



Figure 20: Image of Tannaghmore Play Ground

People are unclear where the town centre boundary is, in this modern new town. There is a lack of sense of arrival to Craigavon and unclear where the heart of the town really rests, people just 'see the shopping centre not their town'. The visibility of the town centre boundary is not as clear as traditional town centres and lacks signage within its limits. Craigavon Town Centre has gaps in the provision of outdoor play, evening economy and general services.

There is a good educational offering in the Craigavon area which includes two nursery Schools controlled by Education Authority (EA), 8 primary schools and 4 high schools. There has also been recent investment in a new school for Lismore College and planning permission has been approved for the development of a new school for Portadown Integrated Primary School (PIPS). Southern Regional College has a campus in Portadown and Lurgan which works closely with Craigavon businesses and enterprises to develop much needed skills and advance career paths.



In the Craigavon Urban Area, there are a total of 31 Super Output Areas (SOAs) included in the proxy area. Of these, seven SOAs are in the top 10% most deprived SOAs in Northern Ireland, and a further three are in the top 10-20% most deprived. The most deprived SOAs are located in the Lurgan sector, with four SOAs in the top 10% most deprived overall in Northern Ireland. Two SOAs are in Craigavon, and one is in Portadown. Brownlow Neighbourhood renewal area benefits from health and wellbeing services and health initiatives and programmes aimed to address health inequalities and help residents take more responsibility for their personal wellbeing, with sustainable outcomes in mind.

Brownlow

The original Craigavon plan also incorporated six purpose-built neighbourhood centres collectively known as Brownlow. The six local communities being Drumgor, Legahory, Tullygally, Moyraverty, Monbrief, and Knockmenagh as illustrated above. Designed in the 1960s and 1970s to serve surrounding neighbourhoods, these centres provided local shops, schools, community facilities, and health services within walking distance.

Mandeville

The Mandeville area within the planned new city of Craigavon was not fully developed due to Goodyear tyre plant closure. The original plan intended to create jobs to attract skilled workers, but the closure of this major employer impacted investment in the 'new city', leading to a scaled back plan. Consequently, much of what was originally planned for Mandeville area was never built, leaving some existing buildings empty and infrastructure disconnected.

1. Drumgor
2. Legahory
3. Tullygally
4. Moyraverty
5. Monbrief
6. Knockmenagh



Figure 21: Image of Brownlow Village



Craigavon was intended to be the heart of a new linear city incorporating Lurgan and Portadown with the estates, Brownlow and Mandeville, at the centre as shown in the illustration below.

Today, Mandeville remains underdeveloped with over 90 acres of industrial lands in the ownership of Invest NI.

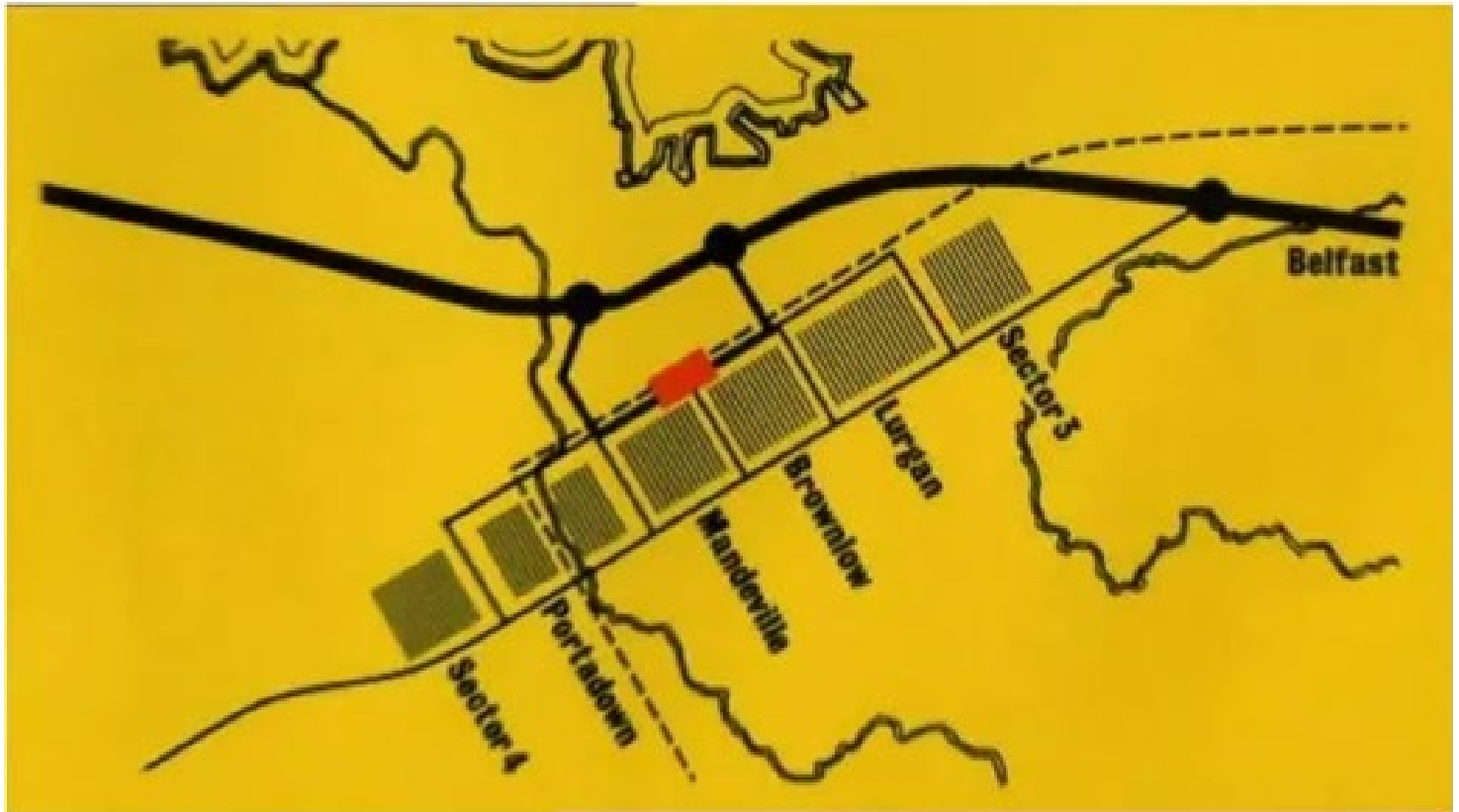


Figure 22: Image of Mandeville Industrial lands



Craigavon Statistical Profile

Whilst a statistical profile has been developed for the entire project area and will remain under review as new statistics are released, the below dashboard gives a snapshot of the key statistics for Craigavon.

Craigavon Statistical Dashboard	Craigavon	Source
Population	22,518	Census 2021, Population by Data Zones, NISRA
Households	8,546	(29,153 in CUA, Last updates 28th April 2025)
No of Units - projected 5 year Social Housing Need	124	Northern Ireland Housing Executive Commissioning Prospectus data 2024/25-2026/27 - Note: Craigavon = Central Craigavon; Lurgan = North Lurgan (316) + South Lurgan (90); Portadown = Portadown 1 (100) + Portadown 2 (229) + Portadown Rural (11) https://www.nihe.gov.uk/working-with-us/partners/commissioning-prospectus
Qualification of school leavers 5+ GCSE (FSME)	46%	2022/2023 - NI School Leavers Survey Dept of Education, NISRA
Qualification of school leavers 5+ GCSE (or Equiv) (all levels)	83%	2022/2023 - NI School Leavers Survey Dept of Education, NISRA
Enroled at FE College (SRC)	815 (79%)	2022/2023 - NI School Leavers Survey Dept of Education, NISRA
Total Economically Active 16+	10656	Census 2021
Total Economically Inactive 16+	6019	Census 2021
No of VAT and/or PAYE Registered Businesses in DEA	785 (8.4% of Borough)	Per DEA (total in borough 9330) Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA 2023.
Town Centre Pulled Data		
Vacancy Rate - town centre	7.8%	NI Average (23%) Land and Property Services via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities (30/4/25 data)
No of Businesses in town centre	80	Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities 2023.
Employee jobs	1898	Business Register and Employment Survey, NISRA Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities 2022.
Crimes recorded - town centre	174 (2% of SDL)	Police Service of Northern Ireland Statistics, via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities 2022.
ASB - town centre	61 (2% of SDL)	Police Service of Northern Ireland Statistics, via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities 2022.
Foot Fall	8683 (*Footbridge counter)	Source Springboard : w/c 23June 2025
Listed Buildings and Monuments - SDL	20	Historic Environment Division, Department for Communities 2024.

Table 12: Key statistics for Craigavon



Population demographics in summary

As of Census Day 2021, Craigavon had a population of 22,518, accounting for 31.2% of the Craigavon Urban Area. The population distribution shows that 49% of residents are male and 51.2% are female. The age structure reveals that 24.5% of the population is under 15 years old, 62.4% are between 16 and 64 years old, and 13.1% are 65 years and older. The data also indicates a diverse ethnic composition, with 6.8% of the population belonging to ethnic groups other than white. Additionally, 79.8% of residents were born in Northern Ireland, while 10.1% were born in other EU countries. The main language for 88.4% of the population is English, with Polish, Lithuanian, and Portuguese being the next most common languages.

Craigavon history & evolution

Craigavon's story reflects the complexity of post-war town planning, especially when social, political, and cultural contexts intervene. While it did not achieve its original vision of becoming a new city between Lurgan and Portadown, Craigavon has evolved into an important urban node with regional hospitals, retail and leisure services, and transport connections. Today, it is more accurately described as a polycentric urban region, continuing to evolve through infrastructure investment and community development. The timeline

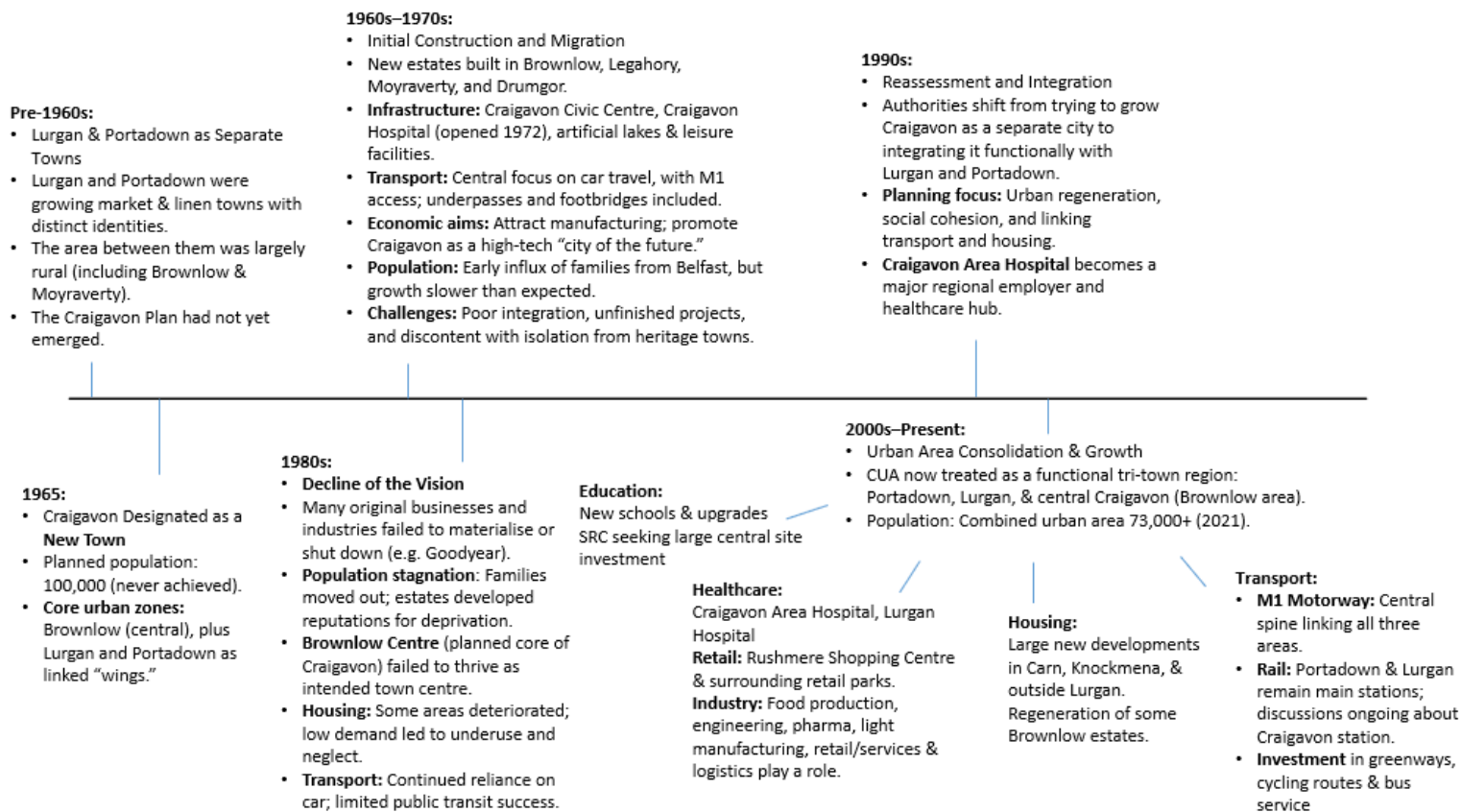


Figure 23: Craigavon Timeline 1960's to Today

below shows its journey from establishment until today.



Craigavon within the CUA

The Craigavon Urban Area settlement development limits are shown below with Craigavon in orange and the dotted line outlining the town centre.

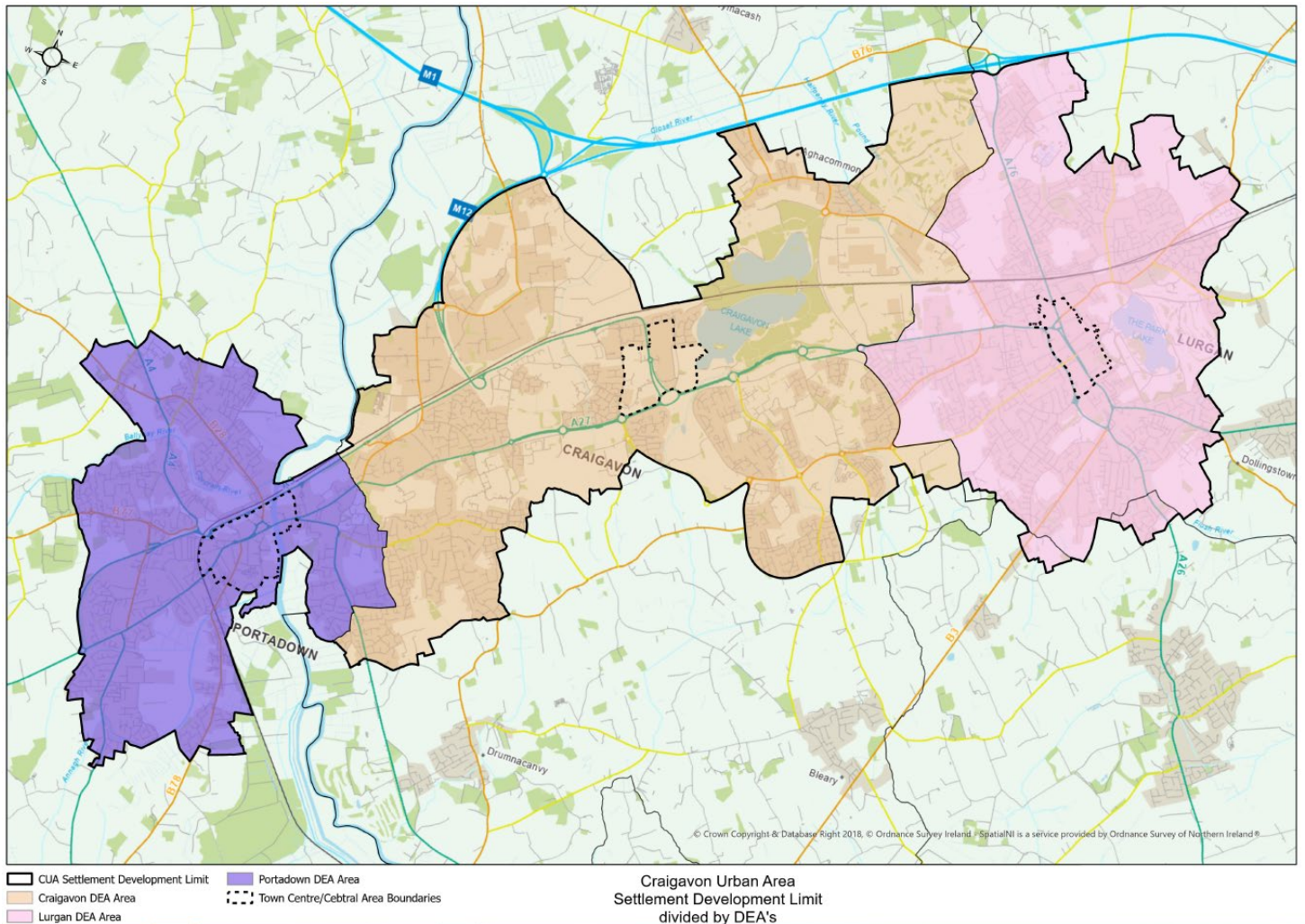


Figure 24: Map- Craigavon in Orange of settlement development limits

The Craigavon Area Plan 2010 defines town centre boundaries for each of the three main centres. The town centres provide a broad range of retail, service and other facilities, and are the focus for community and public transport. Within these centres, retail development and other uses that generate significant numbers of people will be encouraged and promoted as the most sustainable locations with optimum accessibility by a range of means of travel. The town centre provides the main opportunity for further commercial expansion.



Primary Retail Cores (PRCs) normally contain the traditional concentration of retailing and other town centre functions. The purpose in identifying a PRC is to control the location, scale and nature of new development in each core and to provide conformity with the retail uses. This is to ensure the continuance of a compact, lively and attractive shopping environment, offering both choice and convenience, and to control the intrusion of non-retail uses in prime shopping areas. Proposals for retail development in town centres will, therefore, be directed towards the PRC in the first instance, in accordance with regional policy.

As you can see from the map below the town centre boundary is concentrated around the primary retail core of Rushmere Shopping Centre, across Central Way is Marlborough Retail Park with large multinationals.

Central Craigavon has an important role as an administrative centre, accommodating Craigavon Civic and Conference Centre, Craigavon Courthouse and Marlborough House. The Cinema just abuts the boundary on the left hand side of the map, as does the South Lakes Leisure Centre on the right hand side of the map. Three key bridges provide the pedestrian linkage of the three parcels of land.

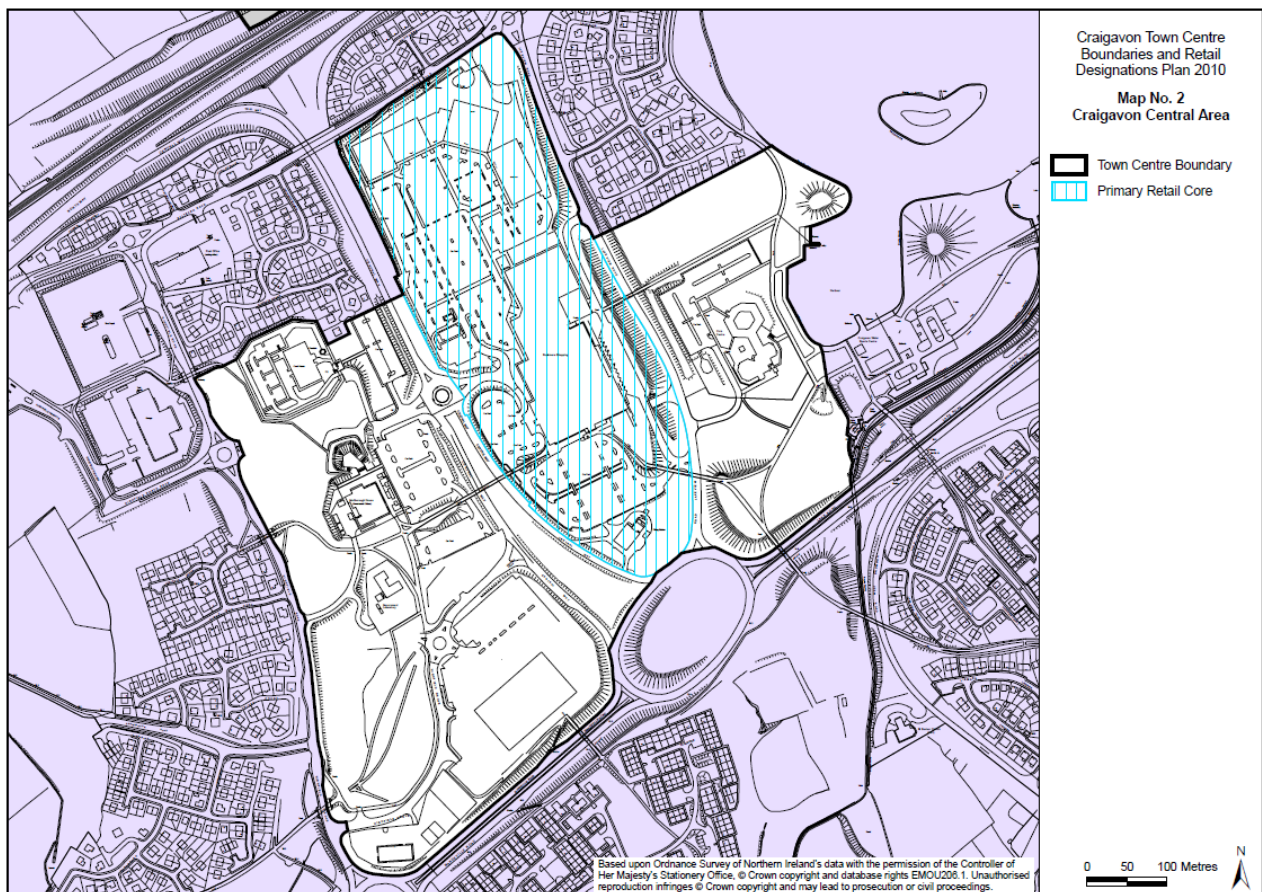


Figure 25: Craigavon Town Centre Boundaries and Retail Designation



Legahory District Centre

Plan Policy C/DC Legahory District Centre

The existing Legahory Centre accommodates a number of local shops/businesses, a church, primary school, health centre, leisure facilities and a car parking area. The area is centrally located and well connected to the surrounding estates by way of pedestrian and vehicular links.

The former police station site is derelict and under new ownership. A planning application LA08/2024/1345/F has been submitted which outlines the following proposal 'Change of use of existing derelict Police Station, to ground floor retail and first floor office space with extensions to include additional retail units and new access point for first floor office, demolition of existing walls surrounding current building, and all associated site works'

Historic Environment in Craigavon

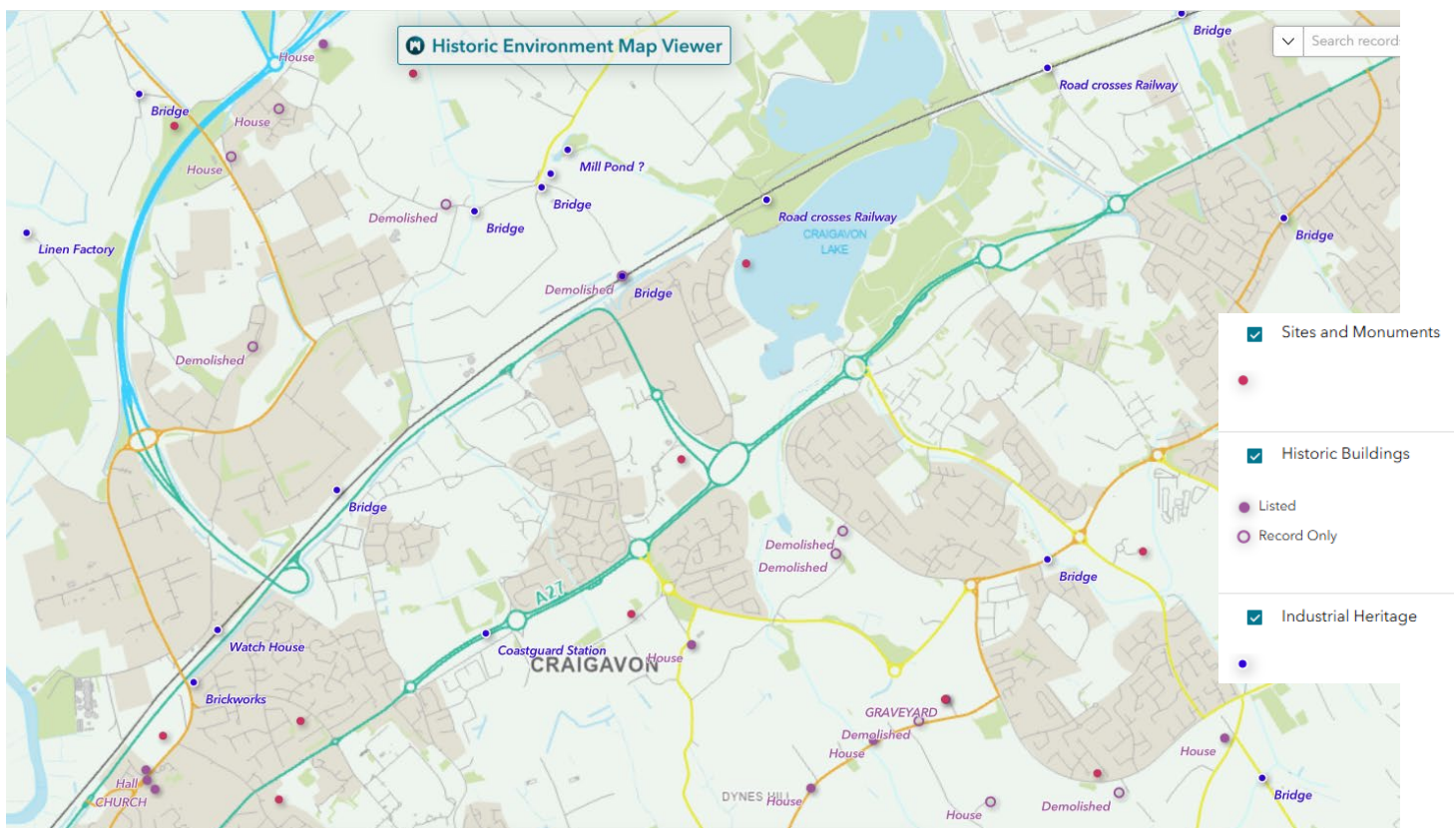


Figure 26: Craigavon Sites and Monuments and Historic Buildings (Listed and recorded only) and Industrial Heritage

The map above generated on the HED Map Viewer shows Sites and Monuments and Historic Buildings (Listed and recorded only) and Industrial Heritage. There is no concentration of historic building but rather a scattering across the area because the designation of creating a new town between Lurgan and Portadown means building in the area only commenced in the 1960's. Craigavon is designated as a new town.

As of 12th February 2025, there are 164 listed buildings within the Craigavon Urban Area. Craigavon has the least number of listed buildings with 20 (12%) in total. There are 3 of



these listed buildings which have been classed as ‘at risk’. These include Westlawn 38 Killycomaine Road, and Flatfield Hall, 70 Sugar Island Road, Craigavon and 9 Old Lurgan Road, Bocombra has been demolished.

Listed Buildings in the Craigavon Area

Listed Buildings	Craigavon	Craigavon Urban Area
Bank		11
Church	2	15
Court House		1
Demolished	7	8
Entertainment Building		2
Factory		3
Fountain		1
Gates / Screens / Lodges	1	3
Hall	1	7
Hotel		1
Hospital Building		1
House	8	47
House - Terrace		23
Library		2
Memorial		5
Office		9
Post Box		1
Public House		3
Recreational Club		1
School		5
Shop		10
Store	1	2
Town Hall		2
Warehouse		1
	20	164

Table 13: Listed buildings within Craigavon Urban Area and Craigavon



Craigavon City Park

Craigavon City Park stands as both a symbol of mid-20th-century urban planning and a deeply cherished green space with ongoing relevance. It embodies the spirit of the “new city” vision with its lakes, trail networks, and separation of pedestrians from vehicles.

Craigavon was conceived as a “new city,” envisioned to unite Lurgan and Portadown

into a linear urban centre. Key to this vision was ample green space, including a major park featuring two artificial lakes. These were not merely aesthetic—rather they were integral parts of a plan combining leisure facilities with innovative urban design, such as pedestrian-cyclist pathways separated from traffic and roundabout-based road systems. Craigavon City Park spans approximately 332 hectares and includes two man-made lakes (the North and South Lakes) that were designed for recreation and community access from the beginning, it incorporated a wide range of activities: walking, boating, fishery, wildlife nurturing, and more, providing a multifunctional public space.

The park’s importance was underscored when it was voted Northern Ireland’s Favourite Park in 2022 in a public vote led by Fields in Trust, a recognition that highlighted its role as a vital, well-loved open space.

Craigavon City Park remains a rich hub for outdoor activity. It offers everything from paddle sports and a pump track to mountain biking trails, a café, and nature trails—including connections to nearby Tannaghmore Gardens and Rare Breeds Animal Farm.

Furthermore, its lakes continue to support both game and coarse fishing. Craigavon Watersports Centre offers water sports such as canoeing, kayaking & paddleboarding, rowing and sailing. It offers the lakeside path loops for cycling and walking which also connect directly to the centre.

An extensive network of walking and cycling paths are set within the Parkland around the Craigavon Lakes and are suitable for disabled users and families and incorporate the National Cycle Network Route. (routes 9 and 94

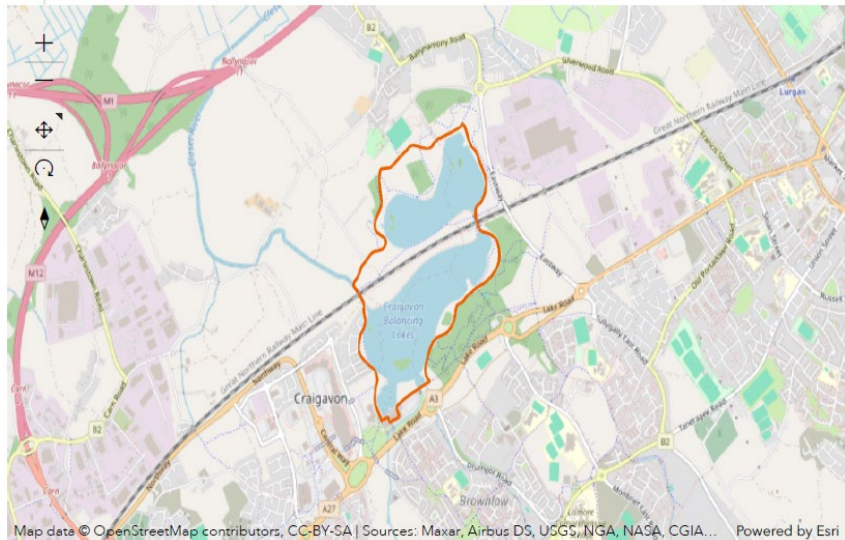


Figure 27: Map of Craigavon City Park



Figure 28: Map of CUA Parks



utilise the site and connects to the Loughshore Trails). In Craigavon, the Loughshore Trail runs for approximately 30 miles/48km taking in Montiaghs Moss Area of Special Scientific Interest, the Lagan Canal, Oxford Island National Nature Reserve, Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Kinnego Marina, Craigavon Lakes, Tannaghmore Gardens and Animal Farm, Craigavon Water Sports Centre, the South Lough Neagh Wetlands, Maghery Country Park and the River Bann and River Blackwater.

There is also mountain bike trails and a pump track nearby which extends the cycling offer. The Saturday Parkrun is very popular attracting locals and visitors alike.

The recent development of the South Lake Leisure Centre is now the anchor facility of Craigavon City Park, and it plays a major role in shaping how people use the lakes and surrounding green space. The leisure centre is one of the biggest leisure facilities in Northern Ireland, attracting both locals and visitors. South Lake Leisure Centre acts as a hub point linking into Craigavon's historic off-road pedestrian/cycle routes via the black paths. The centre offers a social enterprise Café Incredibles supporting day time economy as well as a Health and Wellbeing suite and spa.



Figure 29: South Lakes Leisure Centre

The Black Paths

An outstanding feature of Craigavon's urban planning in the 1960s as part of the Craigavon New Town project, was the early implementation of a dedicated cycling and pedestrian network, locally referred to as the "Black Paths". Inspired by Dutch urban design principles, the network was considered innovative at the time.

Designed on the principle of separating "man and motor," the network extends for approximately forty kilometres, with the vast majority of the route fully segregated from road traffic. Through underpasses, overpasses, and purpose-built alignments, the system connects residential areas, schools, shopping centres, leisure spaces, and industrial zones, creating one of the most ambitious cycling and walking networks in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

In 2021, Arup was commissioned by Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council to prepare an Active Travel Masterplan focusing on two key themes: the Portadown to Lurgan Greenway (which incorporates the Black Paths) and the provision of bicycle parking across the borough. The study concentrated particularly on the disconnection between the Black Paths and the Carn and Seagoe industrial areas, identifying opportunities to strengthen links to employment hubs and to enhance accessibility between Portadown and Lurgan railway stations.



The Black Paths Greenway benefitted from a programme of investment in 2015 that upgraded surfacing and underpasses. These improvements were associated with increased user numbers and a reduction in anti-social behaviour. The Greenway typically offers shared footways or segregated cycleways with good-quality tarmac surfacing, average path widths, clear



Figure 30: Craigavon Black Paths

markings, effective lighting, and relatively direct routes. However, issues were identified in certain locations. The northern end of the Craigavon Lakes section was considered of lower quality due to potholes, missing markings, inadequate signage, and the absence of lighting. This stretch was perceived as more rural and less safe than other parts of the network, in part because of lower pedestrian and cyclist flows. More broadly, the study recognised that the Northway and the railway line act as major barriers preventing effective connection between the industrial areas and the Black Paths.

The feasibility analysis explored a number of specific interventions that could strengthen these connections. Along Church Road, a reduction in carriageway width and a widening of the western footway to three metres was proposed to establish a safe shared surface between Lurgan Road and Seagoe Road. At Seagoe Road itself, the report noted the existing cycle facilities on wide verges but observed that crossing industrial access points lacked clarity on user priority. Improvements were recommended in the form of raised tables and bent-out crossings designed in line with national guidance.



In order to connect Seagoe to the Carn area across the M12, the report identified an existing underpass that was in a poor condition. Measures to revitalise this link would include resurfacing, improved lighting, widening of paths, and the prevention of parking at key access points. Within Carn Industrial Estate, a series of further enhancements were suggested. These included the designation of Breagh Drive either as a shared surface with physical measures to prevent obstructive parking, or as a “cyclable street” subject to traffic volume assessment. Overgrown informal tracks connecting Breagh Drive to Carn Drive and beyond to Esky Drive were recognised as important desire lines that could be upgraded with formal surfacing, vegetation clearance, and consistent lighting. Footways along Diviny Drive and Carn Road were considered suitable for widening to create shared surfaces, with further raised tables recommended at access points to improve safety.

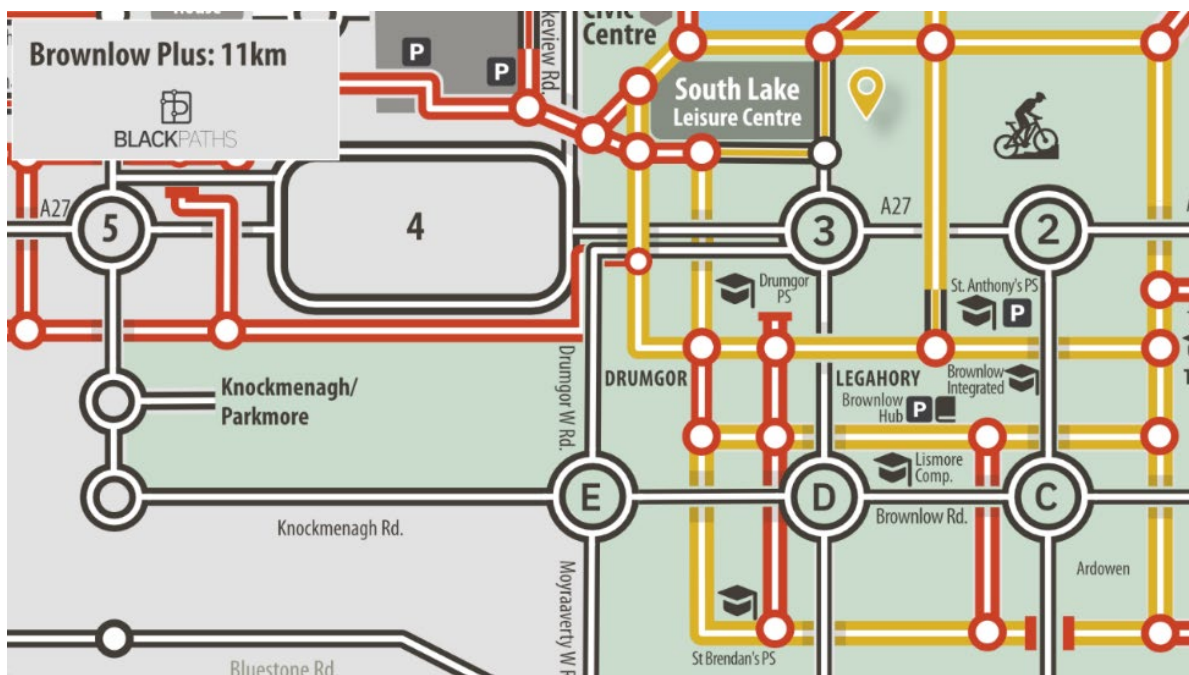


Figure 31: Map of Craigavon Area Black Paths

A critical missing link was identified between the Carn estate and the Drumnagoon underpass. Two possible options were developed. The first proposed a narrow path between Irwin’s Bakery buildings, which would provide a direct connection but would require negotiation with landowners. The second, and preferred, option suggested creating a new off-road route skirting the boundary of Kestrel Foods, taking advantage of available green space. This would be more visible, potentially easier to deliver in terms of land agreements, and more attractive to users.

The Drumnagoon underpass itself was found to require significant improvement, particularly in relation to surfacing, lighting, and visibility. Upgrades to Drumnagoon Road, including conversion of wide footways into three-metre shared paths, would create a strong corridor feeding into the Carnreagh residential development. The residential streets in Carnreagh, already traffic calmed and suited to shared use, could then act as natural “cyclable streets,” completing a continuous connection to the Black Paths.



The combined effect of these interventions would be to create a comprehensive and resilient cycle and walking network that binds together the Carn and Seagoe industrial estates with the main Black Paths route, as well as with both Lurgan and Portadown railway stations. Much of the proposed work could be delivered within the existing public realm, requiring only limited engagement with third party landowners, except in relation to the link around Drumnagoon where private lands are unavoidable.

The strategic value of the Black Paths lies in their ability to deliver a safe, accessible, and coherent active travel corridor across the Craigavon area. The proposed enhancements would support wider policy objectives relating to health, sustainability, and carbon reduction, while also providing significant everyday benefits for residents, commuters, schoolchildren, and businesses. The Craigavon Black Paths remain a visionary piece of urban planning and, with targeted investment and connectivity improvements, have the potential to become a national exemplar of integrated greenway infrastructure.

However, many of these paths have since fallen into disrepair and now require maintenance to restore their usability. This would involve clearing overgrown vegetation and removing accumulated litter to ensure the routes are accessible and safe for both walking and cycling.



Figure 32: Craigavon site walk images



Craigavon Active Travel Network Project Proposal

The Craigavon Community Greenway (Portadown to Lurgan) has benefited from investment in 2015, which provided upgrades to its surfacing and underpasses. The value of the investment was recognised through increased user numbers on the Greenway and a reduction of anti-social behaviour at the underpass locations. However, the Carn and Seagoe Industrial areas remain segregated from these facilities, with the limited links a detractor to the businesses in the area that wish to reduce their carbon footprint through promoting active travel for staff. Central Craigavon has seen the development of leisure, retail and residential offerings this highlights the need for better active travel routes to service these areas of growth.

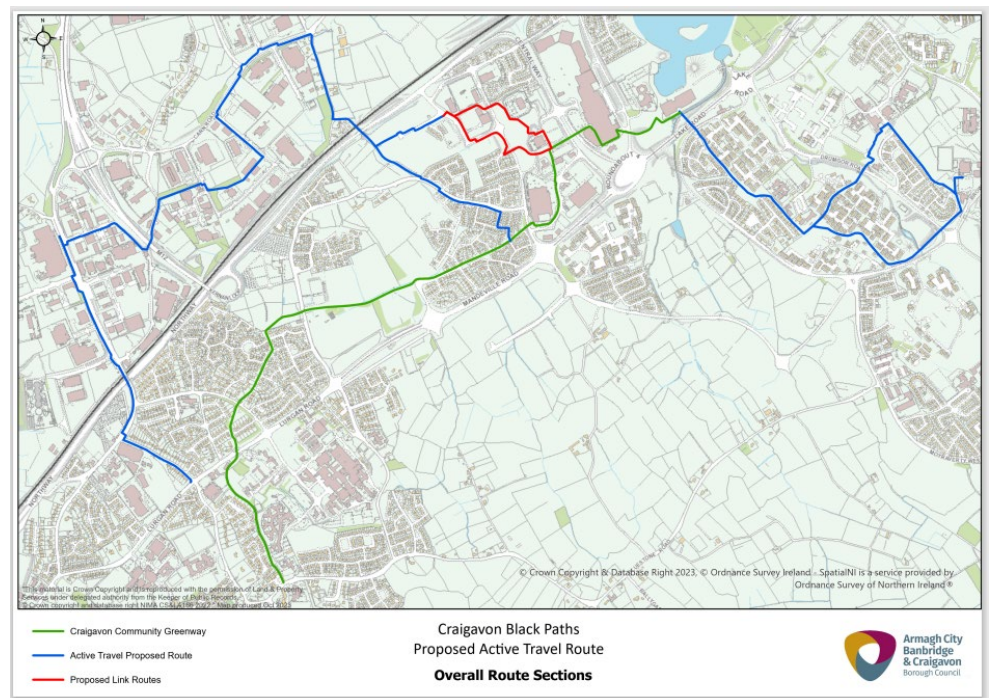


Figure 33: Craigavon Black Paths Active Travel Routes

Given the growth of leisure and retail, and both the existing and planned residential offering in the area, improvements to the active travel networks (created to service the area and provide a means to travel through without the need for vehicles) now needs investment to ensure that the initial intention of the routes is fulfilled.

Improvement of active travel routes within Craigavon town centre to include connecting routes around Marlborough House to further future proof central Craigavon for investment

- Increased community and economic benefits for the area.
- Positive health, social, economic and environmental outcomes
- Improving the width and surfacing of the existing pathways in the areas highlighted
- Improvement of underpasses in terms of servicing, lighting and visibility
- Providing additional street lighting along the connection.
- Formalising the connections to footways
- Creating more recognisable active travel routes
- Creating safe and accessible routes
- Installation of wayfinding and directional signage.

To support future investment and improve connectivity between the Town Centre and Craigavon area, the following improvements could make a difference: -



- Enhancement of active travel links, particularly around Marlborough House, to future-proof the town centre for investment.
- Delivery of increased community and economic benefits for the wider area.
- Promotion of positive health, social, economic, and environmental outcomes.
- Upgrading the width and surface quality of existing pathways in key areas.
- Refurbishment of underpasses to improve lighting, visibility, and overall safety.
- Installation of additional street lighting along key connecting routes.
- Formalisation of pedestrian connections to existing footways.
- Development of clearly identifiable and coherent active travel routes.
- Creation of safe, inclusive, and accessible pathways for all users.
- Implementation of wayfinding and directional signage to improve navigation.

The strategic need for Active Travel Network Project

In addition, the project also aims to improve the image and sense of place of Craigavon, protect and conserve the active travel network and ensure connectivity and accessibility for all. These strategic needs contribute to a range of outcomes and strategies from the Regional Programme for Government to the local Community Plan. Examples of key outcomes from strategies are highlighted below:

- Improve the health and well-being by creating a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest. (Draft Programme for Government)
- Promote sustainable economic growth. (Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs)
- Increasing opportunities and improved areas access and infrastructure. (Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland /Action Plan)
- Achieve better health and wellbeing for everyone and reduce inequalities in health - Making Life Better Strategic Framework. (Department of Health)
- Empower the population of Northern Ireland to make healthy choices, reduce the risk of overweight and obesity related diseases and improve health and wellbeing, by creating an environment that supports and promotes a physically active lifestyle. Framework for Preventing and Addressing Overweight and Obesity in NI. (Department of Health)
- Create an enhanced place where rich and varied built heritage and natural assets are protected, enhanced and expanded for current and future generations to enjoy. (Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council Community Plan)
- Create a revitalised place where the distinctive and vibrant urban and rural areas are at the heart of community and economic life. (Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council Community Plan)



- Maintain and expand upon wider infrastructure of open spaces, cycle routes, walk routes to the highest standards (Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council Corporate Plan)
- Increase community understanding and enjoyment of the natural and built environment (Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council Corporate Plan)
- Revitalised Place - Ensure our neighbourhoods are more attractive, healthier, safer and cleaner and also secure investment in infrastructure (Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council Corporate Plan)

Active Travel Proposal to date

The Craigavon to Aghalee Greenway Proposal, which will create a 15km greenway running from central Craigavon to Aghalee. Initiating and facilitating the linkage of Aghalee to Lisburn to Belfast route. This will enhance the areas already established 'Craigavon Community Greenway' running from Lurgan to Portadown train stations, the proposal will not only facilitate ease of access to the urban centres of Lurgan, Craigavon and Portadown but also to Newry, via the Newry Canal Way creating an extensive off-road network of new and existing walking and cycling routes.

The proposed route provides an upgrade and extension to the existing greenway (NCN 9) at Craigavon Lakes towards Oxford Island and then eastward to Aghalee using a section of existing pathway alongside a disused canal to Aghalee.

Car Parks and Government Owned Lands

Car Parks

Whilst there are no public car parks similar to traditional town centres, there is parking available at the following owned Council Sites.

- Civic Centre parking
- City Parks and Lakes
- South Lakes Leisure Centre parking
- Tannaghmore Gardens and Rare Breeds Animal Farm parking

Government Owned (property was sourced from Open Data NI August 2025)

Within The Town Centre There Is A Number Of Government Owned Piece Of Land These Include:

- Car Park 2, Marlborough House, Central Way, Craigavon
- Former Roads Service Mobile/Store, Marlborough House, Central Way, Craigavon
- Highfield Heights Land
- Central Way Land
- Parkmore Land



Government Owned Outside The Settlement Limit Boundary

- College Land - Plot 4, Southern Regional College - Portadown Campus, 44b Lurgan Road, Portadown
- DfC Lands Service Site @ Bocombra C39, Lurgan Road, Portadown
- Car Park 2, Marlborough House, Central Way, Craigavon
- Former Roads Service Mobile/Store, Marlborough House, Central Way, Craigavon
- Highfield Heights Land
- Central Way Land
- Parkmore Land
- Outside Town Centre
- Site 1, DfC Lands Service Site @ Craigavon Newtown, Drumgor Road, Craigavon
- Site 1, DfC Lands Service Site @ Moyraverty C14, Monbrief East Road, Craigavon
- Site 3, DfC Lands Service Site @ Craigavon Newtown, Drumgor Road, Craigavon
- Site 8, DfC Lands Service Site @ Ballynamoney Lane, Ballynamoney Lane, Lurgan
- Site 14, Oxford Island Nature Reserve, Annaloist Road, Lurgan
- Site 20, Oxford Island Nature Reserve, Annaloist Road, Lurgan
- Site 25, DfC Lands Service Site @ Craigavon Newtown, Seagoe Industrial Area, Portadown
- Site 19, DfC Lands Service Site @ Craigavon Newtown, Seagoe Industrial Area, Portadown
- DfC Lands Service Site @ Craigavon Newtown C54, Brownlow Road, Craigavon
- DfC Lands Service Site @ Craigavon Newtown, Parkmore, Craigavon
- DfC Lands Service Site @ Craigavon Newtown, Tullygally East Road, Craigavon
- Invest Ni - Site 16, Craigavon Food Park, Diviny Drive, Portadown
- Invest Ni Land - Site 18, Charlestown Road Industrial Estate, Charlestown Drive, Craigavon
- Invest Ni - Site 14, Silverwood Industrial Estate, Lurgan
- Invest Ni Land - Site 5, Halfpenny Valley Industrial Estate, Lurgan
- Tannaghmore Gardens Inc North Lake
- Car Park 1, Marlborough House, Central Way, Craigavon
- Courthouse Grounds, Craigavon Courthouse, Central Way, Craigavon
- Carbet Manor
- Turmoyra Meadows
- Bluestone Hall
- Kernan Gardens
- Gilpins Mews Land
- Riverglade Court Land
- Carrigart Manor Land
- Seagoe Industrial Area
- Silverwood Road Land
- Agro Merchants Group, DAERA Veterinary Services Office, 68 Silverwood Industrial Area, Lurgantullygally East Road



- Portadown Road Land
- Tullygalley East Road
- Gordon Pavillion And Playing Fields
- Civic Centre
- Civic Centre - Lands Adjacent
- Golf Ski Centre
- Silverwood Equestrian Centre
- Former Seagoe Refuse Dump
- Carn Depot
- Seagoe Cemetery
- Central Sports Area
- Charlestown Road
- Ardowen Land
- Ardowen Community Centre
- Drumgor Community Centre
- Brownlow Resource Centre, 1 Brownlow Road, Craigavon
- Southern Regional College Facilities, Brownlow Youth Centre, 2b Brownlow Road, Craigavon
- Lynastown Burial Ground
- Ballyhannon Play Area
- Watson Centre, Portadown



Craigavon Open Spaces

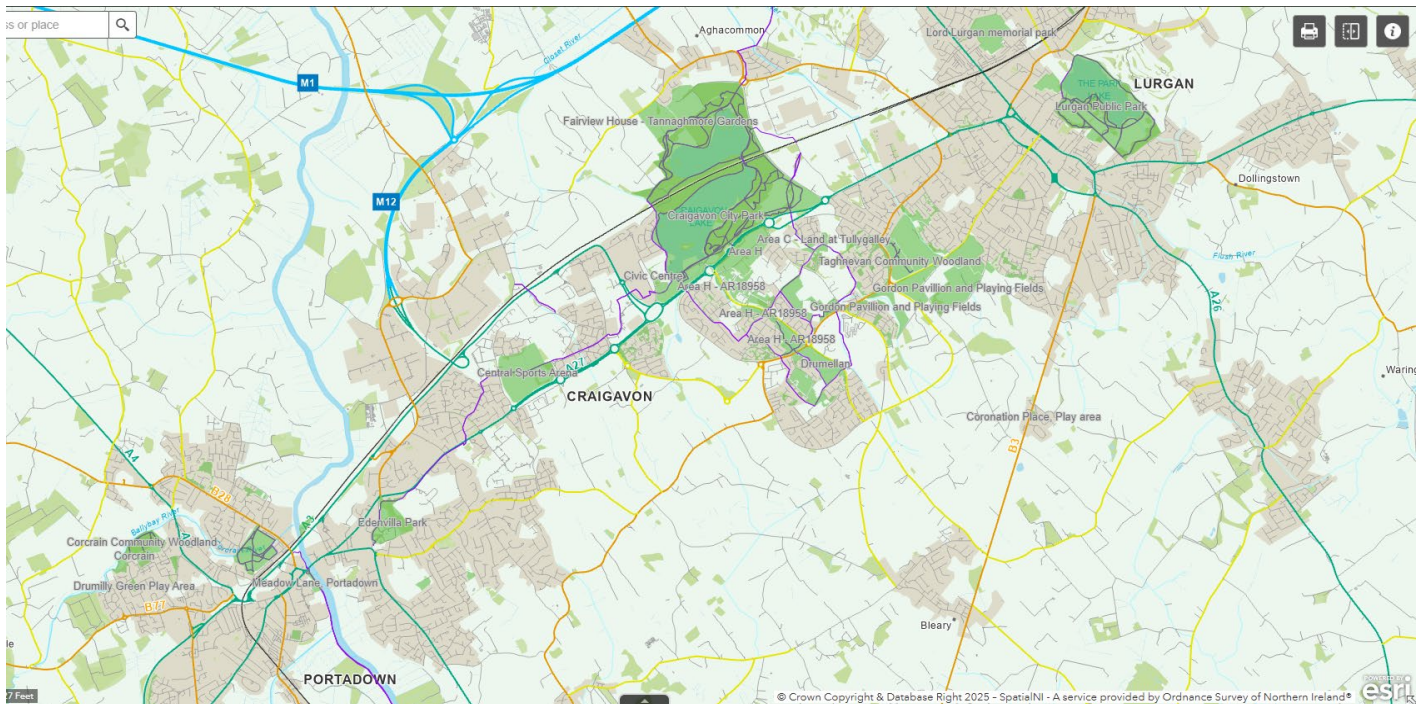


Figure 34: Craigavon Open Spaces- source-
<https://outdoorrecni.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d1b8e59f7842408cb869648fcc28eac8>

The range of open space within Central Craigavon includes Tannaghmore Gardens, which is of historic importance, various playing field complexes and green wedges designed as part of the urban fabric to function as buffers between the residential areas. These open spaces and recreational areas form part of the urban structure of Central Craigavon in that they contribute to the environmental quality of the area, as well as providing for the recreational needs of residents. They will be protected through the provisions of Planning Policy Statement 8 (PPS 8): Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation.

Existing Open Space

The following areas of existing open space are identified in Craigavon and are protected as stated in the Craigavon Area Plan 2010.

- City Park and Tannaghmore Gardens (55.15 ha)
- Central Sports Area (28.78ha)
- Brownlow Linear Park (15.57 ha)
- Craigavon Leisure Centre complex (10.14ha)
- Legahory Playing Fields (10.1 ha)
- Drumgask Playing fields (10.66 ha)
- Tullygally Playing Fields (6.55 ha)
- Parkmore Open Space (5.2ha)
- Ardowen Open Space (4.51ha)
- Any other areas of existing open space and recreation are, however, also covered by the same safeguarding provisions of prevailing regional planning policy.



Tannaghmore Rare Breeds Animal Farm (RBST Approved)

The farm is owned by Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council and offers close encounters with many rare breeds of farm animals. These animals form part of our rural heritage and history and include traditional breeds of cattle, sheep, pigs, goats and poultry. Many of these breeds were carefully selected and bred over time to develop traits that made them well-adapted to their local environment, and they thrived under farming practices and conditions that are very different from those found in modern agriculture. Native rare breeds retain essential attributes for survival and self-sufficiency – fertility, foraging ability, longevity, maternal instincts and resistance to diseases and parasites. The Farm uses the rare breeds to help the Councils Conservation Department establish and maintain species rich grass lands to help increase local biodiversity on Council owned and maintained lands including Oxford Island National Nature Reserve.

The farm is Irelands only Rare Breeds Survival Trust (RBST) Approved Conservation Farm Park and are currently working on active conservation breeding programs locally, nationally and internationally to help preserve these breeds for future generations.

Visitors to the farm can often see examples of rare and endangered breeds of British and Irish farm animals.



Ski, Golf & Equestrian leisure opportunities in the area



Figure 35: Craigavon Golf & Ski- Silverwood Golf Course

Craigavon Golf and Ski Centre is set in beautiful, wooded surroundings close to the shores of Lough Neagh. As a well-established leisure destination, it offers a variety of long-standing recreational activities including ski slopes, two golf courses, and footgolf, appealing to both local residents and visitors alike.

In March 2024, Northern Ireland proudly hosted the Special Olympics Ireland Winter Games for the first time. The event took place across two venues: Craigavon Golf and Ski Centre, which hosted Alpine Skiing, and South Lake Leisure Centre, the venue for Floorball.

Both the ski slope and Golf are perceived as tired and in need of modernisation, with facilities that no longer reflect contemporary visitor expectations. The golf facilities and course while benefitting from an attractive landscape setting, faces increasing competition from more modernised golf facilities elsewhere in Northern Ireland.

Historically, the equestrian centre provided a further offering, but its closure has reduced both the diversity and vibrancy of this leisure destination and has created a visible sign of underinvestment in the site.

Leisure markets are shifting toward multi-use, family-oriented, and flexible experiences, including shorter formats (e.g., pitch-and-putt, adventure golf) and health and wellbeing activities. Competing leisure destinations in neighbouring council areas have refreshed their offer, raising consumer expectations and putting the facilities at a competitive disadvantage. A private equestrian centre is making considerable ground close by which demonstrates there is a need and space for all to expand. The cluster enjoys strong regional connectivity by road and rail and benefits from its location adjacent to South Lake and the CUA green assets. There is clear potential to position golf offering, the ski slope, and the wider leisure zone as



part of a Craigavon “Destination South Lake” brand, combining sport, outdoor activity, and cultural programming.

Craigavon Area Hospital

Craigavon Area Hospital is teaching hospital and a large employer for the area. It is the main hospital in the South of Northern Ireland and serves an estimated 241,000 people from the boroughs/districts of Craigavon, Banbridge, Armagh and Dungannon–South Tyrone. It is managed by the Southern Health and Social Care Trust.

In February 2003 the hospital was designated as one of the nine acute hospitals in the acute hospital network of Northern Ireland on which healthcare would be focused under the government health policy 'Developing Better Services'.

It was granted University Teaching Hospital status by Queen's University Belfast in June 2011 and a new paediatric ward, built at a cost of £7 million, opened in October 2017. The Southern Division of the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service is headquartered within the hospital grounds.

Craigavon Area Hospital provides a wide range of acute inpatient and outpatient services, including:

- Audiology and Hearing Aid Services
- Chaplaincy and Social Work Services
- Emergency Department (open 24/7)
- Fracture Liaison and Laboratory Services
- Macmillan Health and Wellbeing
- Mental Health Services
- Orthoptics
- Physiotherapy
- Renal and Respiratory Investigations
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Stroke and Palliative Care

Housing

A total of 139.60 hectares of land is zoned for housing in Central Craigavon, in a range of locations. 106.9 hectares are zoned for phase 1 release, and a further 32.64 hectares are zoned in Phase 2.

Phase Housing Zonings (pg75)

- C/H 1 Land north of Mandeville Road (54.36 hectares)
- C/H 2 Land at Lakeview Park, Brownlow (1.12 hectares)
- C/H 3 Land at Ridgeway, Brownlow (6.45 hectares)
- C/H 4 Land at Moylin, Brownlow (6.3 hectares)
- C/H 5 Land at Rathmore, Brownlow (9.06 hectares)



- C/H 6 Land west of Moyraverty Road, Brownlow (7.21 hectares)
- C/H 7 Land east of Moyraverty West Road, Brownlow (8.2 hectares)
- C/H 8 Land at Drumellan, Brownlow (1.4 hectares)
- C/H 9 Land at Rosmoyle, Brownlow (7.22 hectares)
- C/H 10 Land north of Knockmenagh Road (5.82 hectares)

Phase 2 Housing Zonings

- **32.6 hectares of land between Drumgor West Road and Knockmenagh Road are zoned for Phase 2 housing.**(pg83)

Industry and Business

Craigavon traditionally has two main industrial estates - Carn and new Charlestown Road, for the purposes of this project the Craigavon Sector also includes Seagoe, Silverwood and Halfpenny Valley Industrial Estates.

These industrial estates are home to some of the largest employers and award-winning businesses in the Borough. The location, scale and distribution of this existing industry is important to the continued economic prosperity of Central Craigavon and the Borough as a whole.

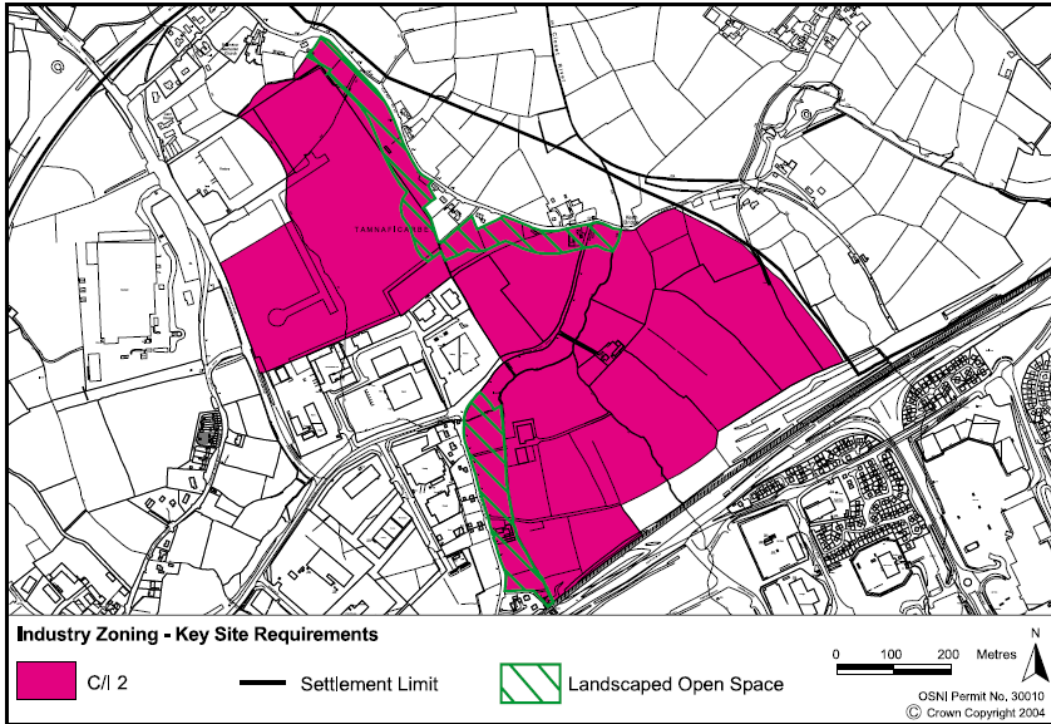
In addition, there are light industrial and business enterprise units at the Brownlow Ltd Enterprise centre, who offer business support and mentoring, with meeting facilities on site.

- **The following areas are identified in the Craigavon Area Plan 2010 as existing industrial lands for Craigavon are Carn (62.07ha); and Charlestown Road (35.05ha).**

Industrial Zonings

A total of 127.88 hectares of land is zoned for industry, storage and distribution in Central Craigavon.

- **C/I 2 Land north of Northway and East of New Charlestown Road (66.03 hectares)** (pg85)



- **C/I 3 Land south of Mandeville Road (41.72 hectares) (pg86)**

Figure 36: Industrial Zoning- Mandeville Road

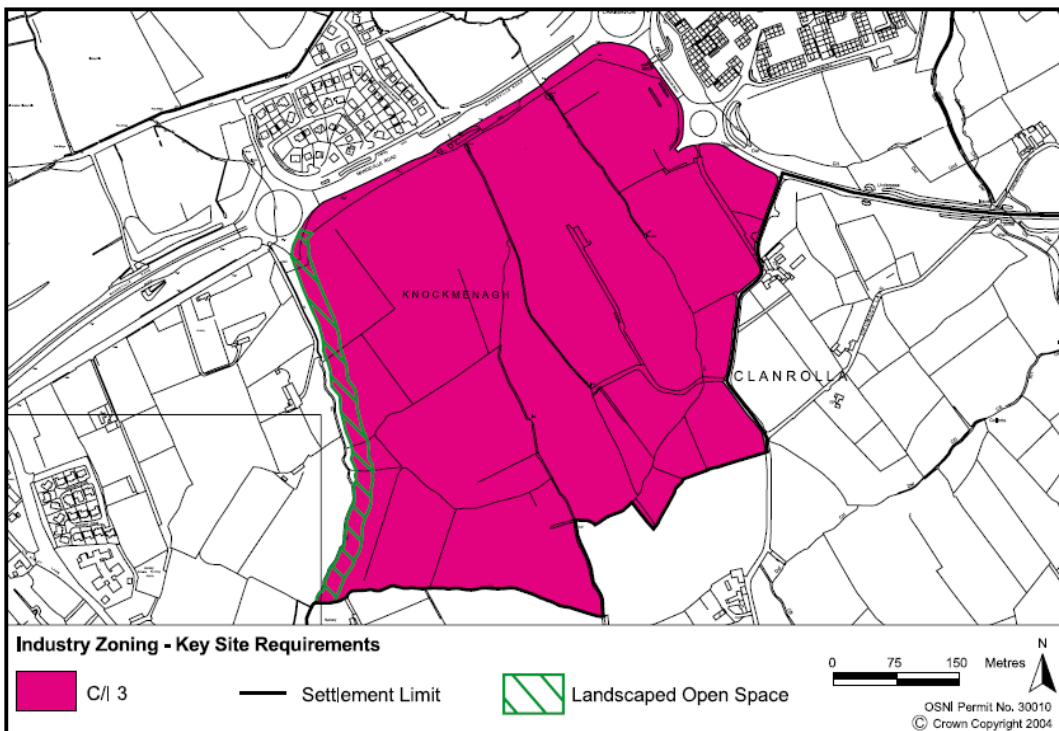


Figure 37: Industrial Zoning- Charlestown Road

- **C/I 4 Land west of Charlestown Road (20.13 hectares) (no map supplied)(Pg 86)**

Conservation- Local Landscape Policy Areas

A Local Landscape Policy Area is designated at Carn in Central Craigavon

- Designation C/LLPA Carn Local Landscape Policy Area



Investment in Craigavon

ABC Council and other stakeholders (DfC, EA, Invest NI and DfI) have invested in capital and revenue projects over the last number of years to improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of Craigavon for its residents and visitors. The list below is a synopsis of some of the completed and ongoing investment by Council and Statutory Bodies.

The following outlines investment information collected to date; however, it should not be considered as a definitive list.

	Craigavon Projects
2017/2019	Craigavon Paediatric Ward and Ambulatory Unit
2017	Craigavon to Agahlee Greenway feasibility study
2019/2020	Craigavon Hospital Aspetic Suite
2020	South Lake Leisure Centre (Opened 2020)
2021	Craigavon Town Centre Revitalisation - South Lakes
2021	Craigavon Civic Centre to Rushmere (Bridge 1) - Refurbishment and upgrade
2021	Tourism NI - Experience Development Programme
2022	Marlborough Bridge (Bridge 2) -Refurbishment and upgrade
2022	New Play Park Kernan and Oxford Island
2023	Urban Sports Area feasibility study
2024	Sensory Garden Oxford Island (Bushcraft Centre)
2024/2025	Black Paths - pedestrian and cycling enhancement (Phase 1)
2023	Urban Sports Area feasibility study
Mar-22	Chatty Benches at Tannaghmore Gardens
2015 onwards	Building Sustainable Communities - NR
Ongoing	Moylinn East Bridge replacement project DFI
Ongoing	Invest NI assistance to businesses
Ongoing	Education Authority School Enhancement Programme

	Borough Wide Projects
2015-2020 ongoing	Building Sustainable Communities (DfC- NR Areas)
2016-2019	Shop Front Grant schemes 2016 /2019
2017-2026	Health and Wellbeing programmes (PHA)
2018-2021	Capital Play Development One
2018-2020	ABC Revitalisation projects 2018/2020
2020-2022	Covid revitalisation business grants and projects
2020-2022	Brand identity creation and merchandise
2019-2022 & 2026- 2028	Forest Schools Training and Activities project (PEACEPLUS 1.1)
45078	"Oxford Island Play Park - springer seesaw
	Installation of audio trails in Lurgan Park
	SLCC - inclusive swim equipment"
2022-2024	Active Travel Cycling Infrastructure (DFI)



2017-2018-2024/25	Invest NI Assistance to businesses
2017-2018-2024/25	Invest NI Local economic development activity
Annual	Christmas light switch Ons (annual)
Ongoing	Fit for Future projects
Ongoing	Empty to Occupied projects
Ongoing	ABC Protecting & Enhancing our investment
Ongoing	Business support programmes, Go Succeed, Digital Transformation and Labour Market Partnership

Table 14: Craigavon Projects & Borough Wide Projects

Future Possible Investment

Recent engagement with stakeholders and businesses in the area also highlighted significant levels of community and private investment in the area, ranging from offices, shopping centres expansion plans, logistics hubs, warehousing, light industrial and retail food investments. The former Police Station site at Legahory could provide significant private investment outside of the town centre boundary.

There is also an estimated 938 new housing units being developed for residential. These are listed as being built across the area at Eastway, Kilvergan Rd, North Street, Cornakinneger Rd, Gilford Rd, Carrickdale Close/Drive/Grove/ Mews/Park, Foxwood Green/Manor (Belfast Rd), and Lilburn Hall Manor/Mews. Currently 38 units on-site and 29 units included on the 3-year social housing development programme for central Craigavon (2025-2028). The 5 year projected need 2024-2029 for central Craigavon is 149.

Conversations to date have indicate the following suggested public investment opportunities:

- Public realm improvements within the town centre boundary to improve the look and feel of a town centre space, particularly around Marlborough House / Retail Park, there could be an opportunity for a plaza. Other aspects to include- urban landscaping, signage, lakeside path and black path network upgrade, ,
- Craigavon Area Hospital phased re-development masterplans,
- Mid-South West Growth Deal investment in Green Energy District,
- SRC continue to explore options for a Further Education College future site
- Future of Brownlow Leisure Centre site and associated lands
- Marlborough House- future potential
- DfI Footbridge replacement scheme.
- DfI / Translink further exploration into the Craigavon Rail Halt as per the All-Island Rail Review.

In terms of development potential, Invest NI has a significant role to play in the unlocking and developing investment zoned lands which circa 93% remain underdeveloped, particularly in Mandeville Industrial Estate and Charlestown Road and Halfpenny Valley Industrial Estate.



Planning applications

In 2022-23 there was a total of 26 planning applications decided between Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown Town Centres. All of the applications were local and so were mainly residential and minor commercial applications.

Craigavon town centre applications decided were 4 which included 1 commercial application and 3 classed as 'other' applications.

Business demography

Craigavon DEA has the highest percentage share of both Construction and Production businesses compared to the other DEAs and the Borough overall. Construction businesses are the most common business type in Craigavon accounting for 17.8% of all businesses while Production are the second largest grouping accounting for 12.1% which is 4.7 percentage points above the average for the Borough overall. Agriculture, forestry and fishing is the third largest grouping of businesses in Craigavon DEA accounting for 11.5% of all businesses. Craigavon DEA also has the highest percentage share of businesses engaged in information and communication; property; business administration and support services; and education relative to the other DEAs in the Borough and the Borough overall.

	Armagh	Banbridge	Craigavon	Cusher	Lagan River	Lurgan	Portadown	ABC Borough
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	30.2%	27.7%	11.5%	41.3%	30.6%	10.1%	22.0%	26.7%
Production	6.4%	5.3%	12.1%	8.1%	7.2%	9.0%	7.0%	7.4%
Construction	14.9%	15.1%	17.8%	12.9%	15.3%	16.1%	10.3%	14.3%
Motor Trades	4.6%	4.1%	4.5%	4.2%	5.0%	3.5%	4.8%	4.4%
Wholesale Trades	4.1%	4.1%	4.5%	3.9%	5.9%	4.5%	5.5%	4.6%
Retail Trades	8.2%	8.5%	7.6%	5.5%	5.9%	11.6%	10.3%	8.1%
Transport and storage	4.9%	5.0%	5.7%	5.2%	3.6%	5.0%	7.7%	5.4%
Accommodation and food service activities	3.6%	4.4%	4.5%	2.6%	2.7%	8.0%	5.5%	4.3%
Information and communication	1.3%	1.9%	3.2%	1.3%	1.8%	2.5%	1.5%	1.8%
Financial and insurance activities	0.8%	0.9%	1.9%	1.0%	1.4%	1.0%	2.2%	1.2%
Property	2.8%	3.5%	4.5%	1.6%	2.3%	2.0%	3.3%	2.8%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	6.2%	7.5%	6.4%	4.8%	7.7%	8.0%	7.0%	6.7%
Business administration and support services	3.1%	3.1%	5.1%	2.3%	4.1%	5.0%	4.0%	3.6%
Education	0.8%	0.6%	1.3%	0.3%	0.5%	1.0%	0.7%	0.8%
Human health and social work activities	2.6%	2.5%	2.5%	1.9%	2.3%	4.5%	2.9%	2.7%
Arts, entertainment, recreation and other services	4.9%	6.0%	6.4%	3.2%	3.6%	8.5%	5.9%	5.3%
Total Number of VAT and/or PAYE Registered Businesses	1,940	1,590	785	1,550	1,110	995	1,365	9,330



Table 15: Broad industry group of VAT and / or PAYE registered businesses in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough, March 2024. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA.

In Craigavon town centre, 56% of businesses are engaged in wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles with a further 13% in accommodation and food services activities and 6% in administrative and support service activities. The remaining 20 businesses are split among seven business types, but all are suppressed due to small numbers.

Industry Section	Craigavon		Lurgan		Portadown	
	No. of Businesses	% of All Businesses	No. of Businesses	% of All Businesses	No. of Businesses	% of All Businesses
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*	*
Mining And Quarrying	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Manufacturing	N/A	N/A	10	4%	5	1%
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply	N/A	N/A	*	*	N/A	N/A
Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*	*
Construction	N/A	N/A	5	2%	10	3%
Wholesale And Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	45	56%	95	35%	115	32%
Transportation And Storage	*	*	*	*	5	1%
Accommodation And Food Service Activities	10	13%	30	11%	40	11%
Information And Communication	N/A	N/A	*	*	*	*
Financial And Insurance Activities	*	*	10	4%	30	8%
Real Estate Activities	*	*	5	2%	15	4%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	*	*	30	11%	40	11%
Administrative And Support Service Activities	5	6%	15	6%	15	4%
Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	*	*	*	*	*	*
Education	N/A	N/A	*	*	10	3%
Human Health and Social Work Activities	*	*	15	6%	25	7%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	N/A	N/A	10	4%	15	4%
Other Service Activities	*	*	35	13%	40	11%
Total	80		270		365	

Table 16: Business Demography in Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown Town Centres, 2023. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities. Please note, IDBR figure

Business Turnover and Size

Information on business turnover is available from the IDBR by DEA. In 2024, in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough overall, just 12% of businesses had a turnover exceeding £1m. However, in Craigavon DEA, more than one in every 5 businesses (20.4%) had a turnover of £1m or more. Furthermore, almost 9% of all businesses had a turnover of £5m or more in Craigavon DEA which is well above the average for the Borough of just 3.1%.



	Turnover Size Band (£ Thousands)							Total
	0-49	50-99	100-249	250-499	500-999	1,000-4,999	5,000+	
Armagh	23.7%	18.0%	23.7%	12.4%	8.5%	10.1%	3.6%	1,940
Banbridge	24.2%	18.2%	25.2%	13.2%	9.1%	8.8%	1.3%	1,590
Craigavon	17.2%	15.3%	26.1%	12.7%	8.3%	11.5%	8.9%	785
Cusher	29.4%	18.1%	23.2%	11.9%	8.7%	7.4%	1.9%	1,550
Lagan River	26.6%	18.9%	25.2%	12.2%	8.6%	6.8%	2.3%	1,110
Lurgan	15.6%	18.1%	28.1%	16.1%	10.6%	8.5%	3.0%	995
Portadown	20.9%	14.7%	27.1%	14.7%	9.5%	10.3%	2.9%	1,365
ABC Total	23.3%	17.4%	25.2%	13.2%	8.9%	8.9%	3.1%	9,330

Table 17: Number of Businesses in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council Area by District Electoral Area and Turnover Size Band (£000), March 2024. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA.

Craigavon has the least number of micro-businesses at 81.5% compared to Lagan River which has the largest amount at 94.1%. With Craigavon having the lowest proportion of micro-businesses, it is unsurprising that it has the highest percentage of businesses employing between 10-49 staff at 12.1% compared to the Borough average of 7.7%. Craigavon also has a much greater share of larger businesses with 5.7% of all businesses employing 50 or more staff. This is well above the average for the Borough at 1.8%.

District Electoral Area	Employee Size Band				Total
	0-9	10-49	50-249	250+	
Armagh	89.9%	8.2%	1.5%	*	1,940
Banbridge	91.8%	7.2%	0.9%	*	1,590
Craigavon	81.5%	12.1%	3.8%	1.9%	785
Cusher	93.9%	5.2%	1.0%	*	1,550
Lagan River	94.1%	5.0%	0.9%	*	1,110
Lurgan	88.9%	9.0%	1.0%	0.5%	995
Portadown	89.0%	9.2%	1.8%	*	1,365
ABC Total	90.5%	7.7%	1.4%	0.4%	9,330

Table 18: Number of Businesses in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council Area by District Electoral Area and Employee Size Band, March 2024. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA. Please note, IDBR figures are rounded to the

The Town Centre Database provides data on business turnover in the town centres, and this is presented in the table below for Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown town centre for 2021 which is the most recent year available. As can be seen in this table, a lot of the data is considered disclosive and so cannot be presented. In 2021 in Craigavon, Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles accounted for 63% of all businesses in Craigavon town centre but these businesses accounted for 87% of all business turnover. With regards accommodation and food service activities, in 2021 in Craigavon, these accounted for 11% of all businesses but just 4% of total turnover. Craigavon had 80 businesses in the town centre.



Industry Section	Craigavon		Lurgan		Portadown	
	Turnover (£million)	% of Total Turnover	Turnover (£million)	% of Total Turnover	Turnover (£million)	% of Total Turnover
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	d	d	d	d	d	d
Mining and Quarrying	d	d	d	d	d	d
Manufacturing	d	d	d	d	d	d
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply	d	d	d	d	d	d
Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	d	d	d	d	d	d
Construction	d	d	d	d	d	d
Wholesale And Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles And Motorcycles	£134.52	87%	£145.30	67%	£79.02	61%
Transportation and Storage	d	d	d	d	d	d
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	£6.61	4%	d	d	£23.95	19%
Information and Communication	d	d	d	d	d	d
Financial and Insurance Activities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Real Estate Activities	d	d	d	d	d	d
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	d	d	d	d	£2.06	2%
Administrative and Support Service Activities	£2.70	2%	£3.04	1%	£10.43	8%
Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Education	d	d	d	d	d	d
Human Health and Social Work Activities	d	d	d	d	d	d
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	d	d	d	d	d	d
Other Service Activities	d	d	£2.47	1%	£0.87	1%
	£154.43		£215.91		£129.01	
Disclosive Total	£10.60	7%	£65.09	30%	£12.67	10%

Table 19: Business turnover in Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown Town Centre, 2021. Source: Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry, NISRA Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities.

Employee Jobs

Information on employee jobs from the Town Centre Database is presented in the Table below. Craigavon had 80 businesses in the town centre, of which it had 1898 employee jobs.

Industry Section	Craigavon		Lurgan		Portadown	
	Employee Jobs	% of Total Employees	Employee Jobs	% of Total Employees	Employee Jobs	% of Total Employees
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mining and Quarrying	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Manufacturing	N/A	N/A	148	8%	*	*
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A



Industry Section	Craigavon		Lurgan		Portadown	
	Employee Jobs	% of Total Employees	Employee Jobs	% of Total Employees	Employee Jobs	% of Total Employees
Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*	*
Construction	*	*	N/A	N/A	*	*
Wholesale And Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	1,184	62%	743	38%	1,001	30%
Transportation And Storage	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*	*
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	258	14%	193	10%	375	11%
Information and Communication	N/A	N/A	*	*	*	*
Financial and Insurance Activities	*	*	115	6%	203	6%
Real Estate Activities	*	*	*	*	89	3%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	*	*	124	6%	173	5%
Administrative and Support Service Activities	46	2%	57	3%	*	*
Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	*	*	*	*	*	*
Education	N/A	N/A	*	*	90	3%
Human Health and Social Work Activities	*	*	170	9%	407	12%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	N/A	N/A	44	2%	78	2%
Other Service Activities	*	*	117	6%	125	4%
	1,898		1,937		3,283	

Table 20: Employee Jobs in Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown Town Centre, 2022. Source: Business Register and Employment Survey, NISRA Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities.

Business networks

While businesses can connect into the overarching networks such as the Business Partnership Alliance (BPA), businesses in and around Craigavon Town Centre could benefit from establishing a business network as none currently exists, similar to that of Lurgan and Portadown. This would provide a good opportunity to collaborate with the broader business group within the Craigavon Sector such as the businesses at Legahory, Brownlow Ltd Enterprise Centre, Rushmere, Marlborough Retail Park and any other businesses within the area.

A local network would provide a platform for business owners to share ideas, coordinate promotional activities, and work together on initiatives. It would also facilitate peer-to-peer business support, networking and sharing of best practise.



Craigavon Health Check

A 'Health check' of a town is an effective method to review its key aspects and identify opportunities for improvement. The Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) for Architecture and the Built Environment for Northern Ireland has identified the 'Essential qualities for our Living High Streets.'

This approach is particularly relevant for Craigavon and aligns with other place plan discovery across the borough. By conducting a health check, it highlights the qualities and improvements which can be discussed with communities at the next stage of place plan development to understand the aspirations of the community to enhance the economic, social, and environmental well-being of Craigavon.

(<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/communities/mag-living-high-streets-craftkit.pdf>)

The table below reviews the topics in the MAG 'heart' in relation to Craigavon and its opportunities.

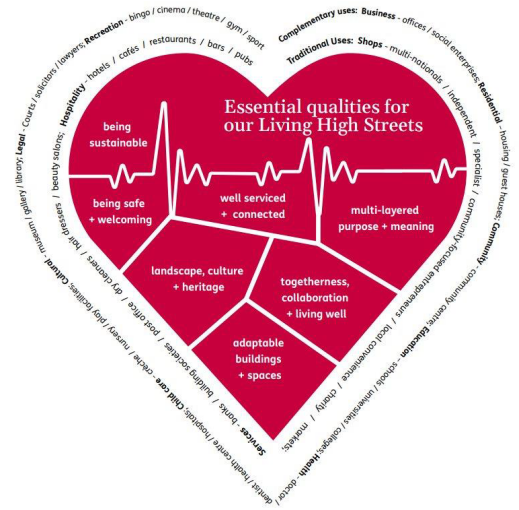


Figure 38: Figure Image source: Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) for Architecture and Built Environment NI

MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
Landscape Culture and Heritage	
<p>New Town - Craigavon, with a population of around 22,500, is Northern Ireland's only New Town, designed to link Lurgan, Portadown, and a new central core. Its polycentric layout, green infrastructure, and traffic-free Black Paths remain defining features, though they now present both opportunities and challenges.</p> <p>The town centre is anchored by Rushmere, Marlborough Retail Park, Tesco, and the Omniplex, but lacks a clear heart and is often confused with Legahory. Recent investment in the South Lake Leisure Centre and lakeside park has strengthened recreation and civic identity.</p> <p>The Black Paths and lakes form major assets, offering 40 km of segregated active travel routes, though upgrades are needed for underpasses, signage, and weaker stretches. Stronger links to Carn and Seagoe industrial estates and to Portadown and Lurgan railway stations are key to improving connectivity.</p> <p>Economically, Craigavon has notable strengths in production, construction, and agriculture, with significant employment at Carn and Seagoe. The polycentric structure of six centres could be better integrated through improved</p>	<p>As there is a lack of clarity around the identification of Craigavon's town centre, there is an opportunity to enhance the visibility and clarity of its boundary.</p> <p>The footpaths are overgrown, unsafe – Landowners have a responsibility for the local community to keep tidy their lands e.g. NIHE and DfI. Greater collaboration is needed between land owners.</p> <p>Craigavon should aim to differentiate but connect its neighbourhood hubs e.g. could a hub have a specific 'niche' purpose.</p> <p>In doing so, Craigavon can build on its original vision, positioning itself as a modern polycentric town where movement between centres is seamless, sustainable, and intuitive. The six hubs would together form a network of activity nodes, with the Black Paths and lakes providing the central green spine, reinforcing Craigavon's identity as both a connected urban area and a unique green town.</p> <p>Community clean ups and creating pride in the local black paths, nature, parks and surrounds is needed. Great cross departmental working around pavements, bridges, walk</p>



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
<p>public realm, wayfinding, and placemaking, while connections to Lough Neagh would enhance its regional role.</p> <p>Overall, Craigavon’s strengths lie in its leisure assets, green infrastructure, and strategic location. The main challenges are town centre definition, connectivity to employment and transport, and the modernisation of the Black Paths. With targeted investment, Craigavon could evolve into a sustainable “greenway town” and a national exemplar of New Town planning reimaged for the 21st century.</p>	<p>ways, signage and the heritage and natural environment is needed.</p> <p>Legahory as a District Centre is lacking investment.</p>
<p>Currently 20 listed building and monuments which include a hall, churches, houses, gates/screens/lodges, and a store. (source: Historic Environment Division, DfC 2024 & HED Map Viewer-Historic Buildings) (Appendix 5- Listed Buildings- Craigavon)</p>	<p>While the new town does not directly link to some of these heritage sites as focal points like it does in Lurgan and Portadown, these should be protected and connectivity between the other towns should be explored to create links which form part of a wider plan of informing locals and attracting visitors in the area.</p>
<p>One historic garden and demesnes which includes Fairview House (Tannaghmore Gardens) exists in the Craigavon area. Fairview House at Tannaghmore Gardens, which has a Georgian listed farmhouse which is heritage and nature site asset for Craigavon. It features a traditional gate trail (with gates named after local townlands), tree sculptures and both native and exotic tree trails that invite exploration. It includes a Children’s Play Area, free-to-enter animal farm home to rare breeds, a contemporary maze created from gabion and evergreen structures features interpretive storytelling. The grounds also include football pitches, a cricket square, and two indoor halls available for hire for events and parties</p>	<p>Opportunities for improvements include enhancing Fairview House’s role—such as developing heritage interpretation, introducing café or visitor centre, or running seasonal events tied to the house.</p>
<p>Lands comprising Silverwood Golf Course and Ski Centre, Gordon/Monbrief Playing Fields and Taghnevan Playing fields</p>	<p>Lands comprising Silverwood Golf Course and Ski Centre, Gordon/Monbrief Playing Fields and Taghnevan Playing fields, together, these assets form a network of green, recreational, and sporting spaces offer potential to position Craigavon as an active-living destination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silverwood Lands – regional outdoor activity hub. • Community Playing Fields – grassroots sport and wellbeing.
Togetherness, Collaboration And Living Well	
<p>Good educational offering in the Craigavon area. Schools include, Edenderry Nursery School, Harrison Nursery School, Bocombra Primary School, Edenderry Primary School, Tullygally Primary School, Drumgor Primary School, St Anthony’s Primary School, St Brendan’s Primary School, Portadown Integrated Primary School, Seagoe Primary School, Craigavon Senior High School, Killicomaine Junior High School and Brownlow College and Lismore College. Southern Regional College, Portadown Campus provides further education opportunities.</p>	<p>Opportunities to enhance education also include new school build investment (potential equal to funds for Primary £10 - £20m; Post Primary £30 - £40 million; SEN-£40-50m) in Lismore Comprehensive and Portadown Integrated Primary School (PIPS). The School Enhancement Programme (SEP) has also recently approved or completed works to the value of up to £4.5million, no schools in Craigavon have been awarded these funds for improvements.</p>



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
<p>Spaces of interest and community collaboration can be found at Tannaghmore Gardens which offers a small museum and a glimpse into rural life from the past.</p> <p>Brownlow Library – hosts weekly activities including stories and craft, loneliness, heritage and cultural talks and events. It has a positive influence on local people and communities.</p> <p>Oxford Island centre focuses on the natural history and environment of Lough Neagh and the Oxford Island National Nature Reserve. It houses a local history library with rare books, journals, maps, and photographs related to the area.</p>	<p>Craigavon’s museums do more than preserve heritage—they provide spaces for learning, social interaction, and healthy living, reinforcing the town’s identity while promoting collaboration, inclusion, and community wellbeing. Together, these museums act as community hubs, offering programmes and events that bring people together across generations. Workshops, guided tours, exhibitions, and volunteering opportunities help strengthen social cohesion, promote active lifestyles, and enhance wellbeing. By linking their activities with the wider Black Paths and cycle networks, the museums also encourage sustainable travel, connecting cultural learning with physical activity and local exploration.</p> <p>Promotion of activities on offer would inform people of ‘What’s Happening’ in the area.</p>
<p>Craigavon City Park is a vital community asset, recognised as Northern Ireland’s Favourite Park in 2022. It offers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active recreation: parkrun, cycling, mountain biking, pump track and angling. • Watersports & adventure: South Lake facilities offering kayaking, paddleboarding, and family-friendly activities. • Family and education: Tannaghmore Gardens and Animal Farm connect children, schools, and families with nature. • Community safety: The Park Watch scheme fosters collaboration between residents, police, and visitors, promoting shared stewardship. 	<p>It provides inclusive opportunities for togetherness, collaboration, and living well. These features make the park not only an open space but a shared social hub that strengthens wellbeing, pride, and identity for Craigavon residents.</p> <p>Further investment in watersports and use of the lakes, improving trails which connect the park and a clean-up of canals, paths, underpasses in the area is needed. Providing ownership of underpasses around cleanliness and reducing graffiti could be championed through local Good Relations and PCSP programmes along with future PEACEPLUS grants or 1.1.</p>
<p>Tannaghmore Rare Breeds Farm (RBST Approved) The rare breeds farm is co located on site with Tannaghmore Gardens and Action Mental Health (Horticulture) The farm is free to visit and accommodate group tours.</p>	<p>A masterplan was developed in Feb 2016 to review the current facility and identify investment opportunities to improve the offering and visitor experience for the site. The findings are most likely still relevant today however would require a second review and update on projected costs. There may be opportunities to seek external funding to support the delivery.</p>
<p>Black paths and trails and connectivity to Oxford Island nature reserve, Lough Neagh Discovery Centre & Kinnego Marina & Tannaghmore Farm & Gardens offer walking trails & link routes for cycle trails which connect to the black paths in Craigavon Cycle Trail.</p>	<p>Investing in a master plan for the black paths, active travel opportunities and linking the trails and National Routes should be a priority to maximise future greenway plans which extend into other jurisdictions like neighbouring Councils and Republic of Ireland.</p> <p>Enhancing the Black Paths Network -The Black Paths form the backbone of active travel in Craigavon and should be upgraded to improve safety, accessibility, and visibility. Path surfaces should be widened and resurfaced where necessary, especially on high use stretches, to accommodate both cyclists and pedestrians comfortably.</p> <p>Underpasses and bridges require improved lighting, visibility, and passive surveillance to make routes feel safer at all times. Wayfinding signage and digital mapping tools should be installed consistently across the network, highlighting destinations, distances, and journey times to encourage use</p>



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets

Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
	<p>by both locals and visitors. Current vegetation, clearing and improved maintenance is needed in some areas along the paths.</p> <p>Connectivity to Oxford Island Nature Reserve - A continuous, high-quality active travel link should be established from the Black Paths to Oxford Island. This could involve upgrading existing informal tracks or creating new off-road sections through green corridors, ensuring safe crossing points over roads and clear signage along the route. Interpretive signage about local wildlife and conservation could enhance the visitor experience and encourage walking and cycling tourism.</p> <p>Linking to Lough Neagh Discovery Centre and Kinnego Marina- Cycle and pedestrian paths connecting the Black Paths to the Lough Neagh Discovery Centre and Kinnego Marina should be formalised and surfaced to a consistent standard. Key junctions should include priority crossings, tactile paving, and cycle-friendly traffic calming measures where paths meet roads. Secure cycle parking and resting areas near these destinations would encourage longer journeys and integrate recreation with sustainable travel.</p> <p>Access to Tannaghmore Farm & Gardens- Paths to Tannaghmore should be upgraded to support a range of users, including families and school groups. Signage highlighting trails, points of interest, and circular walking routes would improve legibility and visitor engagement. Path surfaces should be resilient to weather conditions, and any overgrown informal routes should be cleared and maintained for safe use. Integration with the Black Paths network ensures that these local leisure destinations are directly connected to Craigavon’s broader active travel system.</p> <p>Trail Branding and Promotion- A consistent trail branding scheme for all paths linking Craigavon to these natural and recreational destinations would raise the profile of the network. Maps, digital apps, and printed guides could highlight routes, key attractions, and recommended circular journeys, promoting Craigavon as a “Greenway Town” and a gateway to Lough Neagh and surrounding sites.</p> <p>Supporting Infrastructure-Additional Street lighting, resting points, benches, and water refill stations along key sections would enhance usability. Clear directional signage and markers should indicate route choices, distance, and estimated travel times. Where routes intersect with roads, traffic calming measures and raised crossings should be introduced to prioritise pedestrian and cyclist safety.</p> <p>Long-Term Connectivity Planning-Future development should ensure that all new housing, schools, and commercial areas are designed to connect seamlessly to the Black Paths and linked trails. This would create a continuous network that</p>



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
	integrates Craigavon's urban centres with its surrounding natural and recreational assets, providing a sustainable and attractive alternative to car-based travel.
There is a large variety of sporting, community, history, heritage and church organisations focussing on togetherness, collaboration and living well in Craigavon, many with excellent facilities. These link to work done by Rural Community Network which supports grants and initiatives in Craigavon & its surrounds	<p>Food Banks and Social Supermarket supports have a growing need to support pockets of poverty across the Craigavon area. This is a growing issue with the cost-of-living crisis and post covid impacts. Great community engagement around food and fuel poverty and advice wrap around services to address these issues is needed. ABC Community Food Hub Craigavon and Craigavon Food Bank is doing a good job, but great support is needed. ABC Community Food Hub is an example of positive coordination between the sector and Council in tackling poverty.</p> <p>Additional funding for engagement and projects which focus on togetherness, collaboration and living well could provide further improvement opportunities. There is a gap in communication and promotion of community activity and support. Supporting volunteers is vital to maintain local support within the communities across the diverse population.</p>
<p>Community Centres and Hubs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bleary Business & Community Centre • Brownlow Community Hub • Craigavon Civic & Conference Centre • Drumellan Family Learning Complex 	The centres operate and run in partnership with community to encourage togetherness, collaboration and living well. Suggested improvements include improve pathways and cycle parking to link the centre with the Black Paths and nearby residential areas. Clearer signage and branding to make the hub more recognisable within the neighbourhood. There is also a need to establish regular feedback mechanisms so users can shape programming and facility improvements. Greater promotion and upgrade online booking systems, websites, and social media to promote activities and events is required as a theme across all.
<p>Neighbourhood Renewal (NR) area- Brownlow -9,939 population in Brownlow NR area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burglary- 86% decrease between 2003 and 2021 • Anti-Social Behaviour- 42% increase between 2008 and 2021 • Theft- 66% decrease between 2003 and 2021 • Recorded Crime- 56% decrease between 2003 and 2021 • Criminal Damage- 81% increase between 2003 and 2021 • Drug Offences- 41% of drug decrease between 2003 and 2021 • Violence, sexual offences & Robbery- remain similar between 2003 and 2021 • Domestic Abuse- 46% increase between 2005 and 2021 	Continued focus on NR areas and inclusion through investment schemes and team in the area is vital to ensure no one is left behind. There are pockets of poverty in Craigavon which are not always observed as part of the overall findings and data analysis. These pockets need to be identified and supported.
Being Safe and Welcoming	
Physical improvements to the streetscape	Craigavon town centre, developed as part of the New Town Act, has a dispersed layout with limited sense of arrival and undefined boundaries. To enhance the town centre as a place for residents, visitors, and businesses, a series of physical improvements to the public realm are recommended:



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets

Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
	<p>Streetscape Enhancement Upgrading pavements, footways, and pedestrian areas with high-quality surfacing, tactile paving, and level access will improve mobility for all users, including those with disabilities or pushchairs. Introducing consistent street furniture, benches, and shelters can provide rest points and encourage longer visits. Tree planting, landscaping, and planters will create a more attractive environment, soften the urban fabric, and improve microclimate and wellbeing.</p> <p>Wayfinding and Signage Clear, consistent, and branded signage is required to guide pedestrians and cyclists to key destinations, including shops, leisure facilities, transport hubs, and nearby green spaces. Informational boards highlighting the town’s history, heritage, and public amenities will also enhance the visitor experience and strengthen local identity. Signage around the lakes is dirty and broken and some hidden by overgrown vegetation at the roadside.</p> <p>Public Open Spaces and gathering areas Creating flexible public spaces, such as pocket parks, or squares, would provide areas for social interaction, events, markets, and outdoor leisure. These spaces can act as focal points, helping define the town centre and improving the sense of arrival.</p> <p>Lighting and Safety Improved Street lighting, particularly in pedestrian routes, underpasses, and quieter streets, will enhance perceptions of safety and encourage evening use. Lighting should be energy-efficient and integrated with landscaping to create a welcoming night-time environment.</p> <p>Integration with Active Travel Networks The public realm should better connect with the Black Paths and cycle routes, with safe crossings, cycle parking, and clear access points.</p> <p>Maintenance and Accessibility Regular upkeep of pavements, street furniture, lighting, and landscaping is essential to maintain a high-quality public realm. Ensuring all routes are fully accessible, with step-free paths and ramps, will support inclusivity and ease of movement. Greater collaboration between DfI and Council, along with other land owners is needed.</p> <p>Placemaking and Identity Public art, murals, and historical markers can reinforce Craigavon’s identity, celebrating its New Town heritage while creating visual interest. Cohesive design themes across streets, squares, and public facilities will make the town centre more recognisable and inviting.</p>
<p>Crime recorded in town In 2022, the Craigavon town centre recorded 174 reported crimes alongside 61 incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB), according to the Police Service of Northern Ireland via the Town Centre Database.</p>	<p>While these figures indicate that the town experiences some levels of crime and ASB, they reflect typical challenges for a regional urban centre of Craigavon’s size. Continued investment in public safety measures, active policing, and community engagement is important to maintain a safe environment for residents, businesses, and visitors.</p>



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets

Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
<p>Cleanliness</p>	<p>While on discovery walks, areas on along the black paths, bus stops, bridges and underpasses, also canals, there is aa lack of care of the environment and litter is evident. Council-backed campaigns like the Big Spring Clean, Adopt-a-Street, and Clean Neighbourhoods Service, Local retailer involvement, with shops organising their own clean-up drives and Volunteers and informal action, though less formally organised, demonstrating community concern and willingness to engage could assist with the ongoing challenges</p>

Multi-Layered Purpose And Meaning

<p>Daytime and Evening/Night time economy</p> <p>The evening and night time economy in Craigavon sector is limited.</p>	<p>Craigavon’s daytime economy could be strengthened by enhancing the town centre’s streetscape, creating attractive retail and café areas with outdoor seating, and improving signage to guide visitors to key shops, services, and leisure facilities. Flexible public spaces, such as plazas or pop-up market areas, could host events, farmers’ markets, and family-friendly activities, encouraging footfall and social interaction.</p> <p>The evening and night-time economy would benefit from measures to increase safety and confidence, including improved street and public space lighting, particularly around squares, underpasses, and key pedestrian routes. Encouraging a diverse mix of restaurants, cafés, pubs, and cultural venues to operate later into the evening, supported by programmed events and performances, would create a vibrant night-time environment.</p> <p>Public realm activation, such as outdoor stages, art installations, or seasonal attractions, could further animate the town centre and attract residents and visitors alike. Ensuring safe walking and cycling routes, convenient parking, and clear connections to nearby transport hubs would support both daytime and evening users.</p> <p>Coordinated marketing and wayfinding, combined with the integration of events and active travel networks, would reinforce Craigavon’s identity, improve visitor experience, and create a cohesive strategy to boost both daytime and evening economic activity, making the town centre a more dynamic and accessible destination throughout the day and into the night.</p>
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Adaptable Buildings and Spaces

<p>Vacancy rates in the town centre is the lowest in the Craigavon Urban Area and the Borough at 7.8%. This is mainly due to new town layout and the concentration of retail within a managed site.</p>	<p>Improving services in the six neighbourhoods and redeveloping designated hubs like Legahory are vital to ensure all communities are serviced. Working with developers and existing owners of land, considerations around new developments require being connected. A combination of economic, physical, and strategic interventions could make the centre more attractive to businesses and visitors.</p>
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<p>Housing capacity within the town. The is an estimated 560 residential housing units in progress in and around</p>	<p>With new housing developments planned across the Craigavon area, it is essential to ensure that these</p>
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MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets

Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
<p>Craigavon town. There is a projected need for 149 social houses in the area in the next 5 years. These include South Lakes Park (Highfield Heights), Rathview Hall (Tullygally Rd), Dickson’s Wood (Moyraverty West Rd), Drumford Meadows, Rowan Manor/Mews (Tullygally Rd)</p>	<p>communities are well-connected to schools, hospitals, and the town’s polycentric hubs. Active travel infrastructure, including safe, well-lit, and segregated cycle lanes and pedestrian pathways, should be integrated into new developments from the outset, linking directly to schools, healthcare facilities, and community hubs. Continuous connections to the Black Paths and other walking and cycling networks will provide residents with sustainable and convenient alternatives to car travel, promoting health and wellbeing.</p> <p>For schools, clear safe routes and crossings should be established, with traffic calming measures on feeder roads and direct pedestrian or cycle access from residential streets.</p> <p>Connectivity between new housing and the town’s polycentric hubs should be reinforced through strategic urban design. Green corridors, multi-use paths, and wayfinding signage can help residents navigate easily between residential areas and key destinations, while also enhancing the town’s identity and sense of place.</p> <p>Ensuring that developments provide linked community facilities, such as local shops, parks, and leisure spaces, will reduce the need for car trips and encourage social interaction.</p>
<p>Enterprise & industry within Craigavon- Craigavon accounts for 21.3% of all businesses in the CUA. The sector has a relatively low business density compared with Lurgan and Portadown. The largest industry categories include: Wholesale & retail trade, Health & social work and Manufacturing.</p> <p>There is underrepresentation in knowledge-intensive sectors such as professional, scientific, and technical services. The area has a higher proportion of larger employers compared with Lurgan, but fewer micro-businesses and start-ups.</p>	<p>Craigavon has a strong base in retail, health, and manufacturing, but there is significant scope for economic diversification and growth. There is no business group or Chamber of Commerce in the area to help build on the strengths of the area. Encouraging entrepreneurship and supporting start-ups would help broaden the local economy, particularly through the development of micro-businesses and community enterprises. A focus on diversifying the industrial base could strengthen resilience, with targeted efforts to attract knowledge-based industries such as ICT, life sciences and professional services. Building on existing manufacturing strengths to move into higher-value production would also enhance competitiveness.</p> <p>Skills development is central to future opportunities. Investment in digital and STEM-related training would better align the workforce with emerging sectors, while stronger collaboration between education providers and employers could create clearer pathways into employment. Supporting innovation is equally important, particularly through the adoption of digital technologies and sustainable practices among small and medium-sized enterprises.</p> <p>Craigavon Industrial Development Organisation (CIDO) has expanded immensely in recent years, now supporting innovation and enterprise across three sites, including a</p>



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
	<p>newly added outdoor space. They have growth plans in the pipeline for the future.</p> <p>At the same time, improvements to business infrastructure, including enhanced transport connectivity between Craigavon, Lurgan, and Portadown, as well as increased provision of modern industrial and office space, would make the area more attractive to new investment.</p>
<p>Localise leisure and tourism economy</p>	<p>Craigavon’s wider assets, such as the South Lake Leisure Centre and the surrounding City Park, Tannaghmore Gardens and Animal Farm and Craigavon Golf and Ski site present an opportunity to stimulate growth in tourism, leisure, and events.</p> <p>These open spaces and facilities could act as catalysts for further investment in the local economy, with connectivity being key. Water sports storage facility at South Lakes has a poor, unsightly location in front of the Leisure Centre. There could also be the potential for further visitor accommodation in the area</p>
Well Served & Connected	
<p>Transport hub- Craigavon Bus Station is located on Highfield Road and is operated by Translink. It serves as a hub for several Ulsterbus routes, including the 46c and 47 services, which connect Lurgan, Portadown, and surrounding areas. Additionally, the 61-route links Craigavon with Armagh, providing further regional connectivity. The station is situated near Rushmere Shopping Centre, making it accessible for residents and visitors. There is no rail halt within Craigavon.</p>	<p>The current bus station may not meet the growing demand for public transport services in the area. Upgrading the bus station to include amenities like real-time schedule displays, sheltered waiting areas and improved accessibility features, also introducing additional bus routes and increasing service frequency to accommodate a larger number of passengers.</p> <p>Currently, there is no rail halt within Craigavon. The nearest operational train stations are in Portadown and Lurgan. However, the idea of establishing a rail halt in central Craigavon has been a topic of discussion. The All-Island Strategic Rail Review, published in 2023, proposed a new rail station in Craigavon, highlighting the potential benefits it could bring to the area.</p> <p>Public transport integration is also critical. Bus routes and stops should be strategically located within new neighbourhoods to ensure easy access to Lurgan and Portadown town centres, the Craigavon Area Hospital, and retail and leisure hubs. Coordinated timetables and safe waiting areas will improve usability and encourage regular use by all age groups.</p>



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets

Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
<p>Traffic & parking – Craigavon benefits from strategic road networks like the M1 and M12 motorways but public transport system has struggled to meet the needs of its residents. Infrequent bus schedules and not adequate cover for all residential and commercial areas. Parking availability and convenience in Craigavon vary across different areas, with notable differences between the town centre, hospital, and shopping facilities.</p> <p>The Carn and Seagoe areas in Craigavon face several transportation challenges, particularly concerning regional connectivity, public transport, traffic congestion around the hospital area, the bus station and at the end of shifts when employees are leaving at the same time.</p>	<p>While parking in Craigavon is generally accessible, certain areas, particularly the hospital, can experience congestion during peak times. Fees vary across the area and there is free car parking at the Civic Centre and City Parks and Lakes to service the local amenities. The shopping centres provide extensive parking.</p> <p>Dedicated drop-off zones for schools and public transport hubs, clearly marked and strategically placed, would reduce conflict between vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians. Where possible, on-street parking should be managed to maintain safe visibility at junctions and crossing points.</p> <p>Road improvements should focus on making it easier to navigate between Craigavon’s six centres, industrial estates, and recreational areas. For example, the approach roads to Carn and Seagoe industrial estates could be upgraded with clearer lane markings, priority crossings, and better signage linking to the Black Paths. Similarly, routes to the lakes, Oxford Island, Kinnego Marina, and Tannaghmore Farm should be clearly marked and integrated with traffic-calmed sections for safe access.</p> <p>Any road or roundabout upgrade should be designed to accommodate future growth, including new residential developments, schools, and leisure facilities. This includes maintaining sufficient lane widths for buses and emergency vehicles, as well as flexible designs that can integrate with planned cycle and pedestrian networks.</p>



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
Being Sustainable - Social, Environmental and Economic	
<p>Active Travel and the Black Path Network- This is a unique offering which provides over 40 km of fully segregated, traffic-free paths linking homes, schools, shopping centres, leisure, and industry. These are based on the principle of separating “man and motor” created when the new town was developed. Generally high standard following 2015 upgrades (surfacing, underpasses, lighting).</p>	<p>As mentioned earlier in the report and in the ‘Togetherness, Collaboration and Living Well’ quality section improvements which could be made include the weak connections to Carn and Seagoe industrial estates due to barriers (Northway, railway, M12) and several underpasses in poor condition (Drumnagoon, Carn).</p> <p>Recent project applications consisting of 9.795km of active travel route which services approx. 120 businesses within the Carn Seagoe Industrial areas, business/retail and leisure within Craigavon town centre and 1375 residential properties within central Craigavon.</p> <p>Following on from the DfI Active Travel consultation there may be opportunity for the upgrade of old and construction of new paths.</p>
<p>Future investment potential</p>	<p>Recent engagement with stakeholders and businesses in the area also highlighted significant levels of community and private investment in the area, ranging from offices, shopping centres expansion plans, logistics hubs, warehousing, light industrial and retail food investments.</p> <p>There is also an estimated 938 new housing units being developed for residential. These are listed as being built across the area at Eastway, Kilvergan Rd, North Street, Cornakinneger Rd, Gilford Rd, Carrickdale Close/Drive/Grove/Mews/Park, Foxwood Green/Manor (Belfast Rd), and Lilburn Hall Manor/Mews. Currently 38 units on-site and 29 units included on the 3-year social housing development programme for central Craigavon (2025-2028). The 5-year projected need 2024-2029 for central Craigavon is 149.</p> <p>Public investment includes public realm improvements- urban landscaping, signage, lakeside path & black path network upgrade, Invest NI lands, Craigavon Hospital phased re-development masterplans, growth deal investment in Green Energy District, Further Education College future site, South Lakes Leisure Centre & surrounding experiential potential, ABC field behind Brownlow Leisure Centre- possible Community Asset Transfer and Skate park development, Marlborough House- future potential and the DfI Footbridge replacement scheme.</p> <p>DFC has a series of investment programmes ABC Empty to Occupied, ABC Protecting & Enhancing our Investment and ABC Fit for Future.</p>

Table 21: Craigavon MAG Health Check



Shaping the Future of Craigavon

The table below shows a SWOT analysis of Craigavon following engagement with key stakeholders across the town and site walk through the place. The following is indicative of what has been raised to date, but it is not an exhaustive list.

Strengths	Gaps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Sports Clubs and community groups • Craigavon Area Hospital • Craigavon Civic and Conference Centre • Craigavon Court and services • Cycling infrastructure- black paths connectivity • Growing business in Medical, Logistics, Food, Carn/Seagoe Industrial Estate/ CIDO etc • Industrial Business Centre and Parks • Infrastructure and Connectivity with other towns • Lakes & trails • Modern town • MUGA facilities • Retail offering/day time economy • Strategic location and access to M12 Junction 11 • South Lakes Leisure Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to funding for town centre • Lack of suitable premises to aid businesses to scale and grow • Lack of marketing and communications for events and activities • Lack of visibility of town centre boundary • Maintaining what already exists e.g. footpaths • Transport – rural connectivity
Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black Path active travel connectivity improvements • Black paths signage project • Develop of a further education facility (SRC) • Housing Executive opportunities to regenerate owned assets • Industrial Sites – Silverwood and Halfpenny Valley • Invest Northern Ireland Lands • Lakes – recreation, leisure and tourism • Large amount of shift pattern working in Hospital, Almac, Logistics, Moy Park and manufacturing in the area • Local Nature reserve (space for nature & people) • Marlborough House- future role • MSW Green infrastructure growth deal project • Golf and Ski, & equestrian investment in facilities and car parking • New Play Parks in area • Potential for job creation • Rail halt in Craigavon • Social Housing • Way finding and black paths • Young Population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASB Hotspots • Deprivation • Graffiti • Housing costs • Hubs have lost their purpose • Industry and Housing backing up closed together • Lack of identity/heart, sense of belonging • Lack of respect/care of the environment – black paths, rubbish, fly tipping, broken glass • Loss of green spaces • Regional connectivity & public transport- Carn/Seagoe area • Safety and lighting on black paths • Skills pipelines linked to changing economics • Skills Shortage for local industry • Traffic congestion around new developments (hospital Area) • Vandalism

Table 22: SWOT Analysis of Craigavon



Key findings & recommendations for Craigavon

The early-stage discovery work for Craigavon highlights the following key findings and recommendations, which can be further tested and explored in the next stage of the place plan development through targeted stakeholder engagement, site visits, analysis, spatial and community workshops.

CRAIGAVON FINDINGS AND IDEAS

FINDING 1 - MAXIMISING NEW TOWN CONNECTIVITY AND PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Craigavon has a unique town centre developed under the 1965 New Towns Act (NI). It was designed to connect the existing towns of Lurgan and Portadown, along with neighbourhoods, industry, and parks. Its location on rail, road and proximity to Lough Neagh connects it effectively with the rest of Northern Ireland and beyond to Ireland.

The town centre features key destinations like Rushmere Shopping Centre, Marlborough Retail Park (M&S), and Tesco, (and Lidl coming soon), along with the Omniplex Cinema and various restaurants, contributing to the night-time economy.

Craigavon stands out with its higher concentration of production and construction businesses compared to nearby towns. Agriculture, forestry, and fishing businesses dominate, accounting for 30.2% of all businesses. Production businesses make up 6.4%, and construction businesses account for 14.9%. It also has a notable presence in information and communication, property, business administration and support services, and education sectors.

The town centre fabric is different from traditional towns, with bridges and black paths acting as streets. There is a lack of clear town centre boundaries and a sense of arrival, making it unclear where the heart of the town lies.

The South Lake Leisure Centre is a significant investment, offering state-of-the-art facilities and connecting to a network of walking and cycling paths. Craigavon City Park, with its lakes and trail networks, is a key recreational asset. The Black Paths form a unique, traffic-free active travel network, but some sections are in poor condition and need improvement.

FINDING 1 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

Craigavon should build on its pioneering New Town positioning itself as a modern polycentric town where movement between centres is seamless, sustainable, and intuitive. As a finding it is suggested it has a vision to position itself as a “Greenway Town,” where the Black Paths form the central spine linking rail, road, town centre, and Lough Neagh. Targeted investment in missing links, safety, and placemaking will ensure that Craigavon develops as a nationally significant model of integrated active travel and sustainable urban planning. Its focus should remain on:

- **Sustainable Development:** Focus on environmentally friendly practices and sustainable growth.
- **Economic Growth:** Encouraging business development and job creation.
- **Infrastructure Improvement:** Enhancing transport links, housing, and public services.
- **Community Well-being:** Focusing on health, education, and recreational facilities to improve the quality of life for residents.
- Placemaking measures are essential to define a clear ‘town centre heart’ and its connections to its surrounds, including the district centre of Legahory.



- Public realm investment in civic spaces, open spaces and landscaping, alongside the integration of small-scale retail and café uses along key path intersections.
- Reframing the Black Paths as visible, celebrated streets rather than hidden infrastructure, the town can unlock their full potential as connectors of people, places and opportunities (Further explored in Finding 2).
- The six neighbourhoods would together form a network of activity nodes.
- Improved integration with the rail network and / or development of a rail halt.
- Supporting infrastructure such as wayfinding, cycle parking, and shuttle connections could strengthen Craigavon’s function as a transport hub.
- Arrivals and gateways also require enhancement.

FINDING 2 – BLACK PATHS

As discussed earlier in the report Craigavon Black Paths form a unique, traffic-free active travel network built in the 1960s as part of the Craigavon New Town. This network extends for approximately 40 kilometres, with the vast majority of the route fully segregated from road traffic. The system connects residential areas, schools, shopping centres, leisure spaces, and industrial zones, creating one of the most ambitious cycling and walking networks in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

The Black Paths Community Greenway was upgraded in 2016, however with an emphasis on sustainable travel there is an opportunity to do more improvements. The Black Paths themselves remain the backbone of active travel in Craigavon, but investment is required to upgrade weaker sections through resurfacing, improved lighting, better underpasses, and consistent signage. Strengthening connections into employment areas such as Carn and Seagoe industrial estates will encourage commuting by foot and cycle, while direct links to the South Lake Leisure Centre, Rushmere Shopping Centre, Omniplex, and new schools and residential areas will ensure that all major destinations are seamlessly integrated. Future developments should be required to connect directly into this network, embedding the principle of safe, segregated movement by foot and cycle into the planning process.

Craigavon’s proximity to Lough Neagh offers a significant opportunity to enhance its regional role. Extending the Black Paths northwards to Oxford Island would provide a continuous greenway between the town centre and the Lough, linking recreation, tourism, and education facilities to the urban core. Branding and wayfinding should position this route not only as a leisure amenity but also as a viable commuter corridor, reinforcing Craigavon’s identity as a green and connected town.

FINDING 2 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

As detailed in the MAG Essential Qualities table recommendations to improve the black paths would include investment linked to active travel masterplan and greenway investment funding project for active travel. The black paths are more than just a travel network; the paths can be promoted as a destination in their own right. This is a unique opportunity for position as a “Greenway town”.

- Create more recognisable active travel routes- Branding, colour-coded route distinctions, and integration with digital mapping platforms would help make the network more visible, creating a sense of identity and encouraging greater use.
- Create safe and accessible routes- improvements should focus on designing paths that feel secure for children, older people, and those with limited mobility.
- Formalise the connections to footways- Formalising these connections is essential, with clear, direct junctions between the paths, footways, and cycleways.



- Install wayfinding and directional signage- Consistent, branded signage should be installed across the network, highlighting key destinations, estimated travel times, and distances.
- Improve the width and surfacing of the existing pathways in the areas highlighted.
- Enhance underpasses in terms of servicing, lighting, and visibility- Design interventions such as murals, public art, or community-led projects could also contribute to making underpasses feel more welcoming and distinctive rather than intimidating.
- Provide additional street lighting along the connection- Well-lit routes are vital not only for practical safety but also for perceptions of security, which strongly influence user behaviour.

FINDING 3 - SKI, GOLF & EQUESTRIAN LEISURE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE AREA

Craigavon Ski Centre and Silverwood lands area form the core of an established leisure cluster, offering long-standing recreational facilities with potential to attract both local residents and visitors. The cluster is complemented by the wider South Lake leisure and recreation zone, including the new South Lake Leisure Centre, Craigavon Lakes, and surrounding parkland. Historically, the equestrian centre provided a third pillar of the offer, but its closure has reduced both the diversity and vibrancy of the leisure destination.

Both the ski slope and golf are perceived as tired and in need of modernisation, with facilities that no longer reflect contemporary visitor expectations. The golf facilities and course while benefitting from an attractive landscape setting, faces increasing competition from more modernised golf facilities elsewhere in Northern Ireland.

The equestrian centre's closure has left a gap in the cluster and created a visible sign of underinvestment in the area.

The cluster enjoys strong regional connectivity by road and rail and benefits from its location adjacent to South Lake and the CUA green assets. There is clear potential to position golf offering, the ski slope, and the wider leisure zone as part of a Craigavon "Destination South Lake" brand, combining sport, outdoor activity, and cultural programming.

FINDING 3 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

This leisure cluster, centred on Craigavon Ski Centre and golf offering, holds strong potential but is restricted due to dated facilities and the loss of the equestrian centre. Through targeted modernisation, diversification of the golf and ski offers, adaptive reuse of the equestrian site, and a strong unified branding strategy, the area can be repositioned as a regional hub for active leisure and outdoor experiences.

There is merit to look at the entire Golf and Ski site to ascertain what its future role, offering and investment required to improve the quality of the site. A needs and demand assessment should be considered. The Ski Slope is a unique offering in Northern Ireland with one other comparable in the Republic of Ireland in Kiltarnan, Co Dublin. More recently there has been significant achievements recognised on the slopes with Gold Medal winners having trained there.

Investment and Modernisation-

- **The Ski Centre:** Upgrade facilities and digital systems
- **The Golf Offering:** Diversify the offer making the facility more accessible to families, beginners, and younger players. Consider amenity upgrades to match modern leisure expectations.



- **Equestrian Centre Site:** The sand area in its current form requires investment particularly for evening usage. Options and needs to be further considered in this significant area.
- **Branding and Marketing-** Develop a unified “Adventure & Leisure” identity, positioning the golf offering, Ski Centre, and associated facilities as a single destination. Consider introducing cross-marketing and combined ticket packages (e.g., golf + ski + South Lake Leisure Centre) to extend dwell time and visitor spend. Create transport solutions for locals to enable access.
- **Events and Programming-** Leverage the golf and ski slope’s offerings to host seasonal events, competitions, and festivals, boosting regional profile.

FINDING 4 - THE POWER OF 10+ FOR CRAIGAVON

The “Power of 10+” concept highlights the importance of offering multiple reasons for people to visit, linger, and return to a place. For Craigavon, applying this principle means building on its unique assets and ensuring that a wide range of attractions, services, and experiences are layered across its centres and connected through its distinctive green infrastructure. By doing so, Craigavon can establish itself not only as a functional town but also as a vibrant destination within the wider Lough Neagh region.

Craigavon already benefits from a strong foundation of assets. The South Lake Leisure Centre, Craigavon Lakes and City Park, Rushmere Shopping Centre, the Omniplex and surrounding restaurants, and its golf, ski, and equestrian facilities provide a broad mix of retail, recreation and leisure activities and experiences. The Black Paths, with their unique traffic-free design, and the town’s proximity to Lough Neagh, offer further opportunities to build a distinctive identity around active travel, greenways, and outdoor experiences. These strengths can be developed into a coordinated offer that ensures Craigavon becomes a place with many layers of activity and appeal.

FINDING 4 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

Central to this recommendation is the enhancement of the **Black Paths**. More than just a travel network, the paths can be promoted as a destination in their own right, with improved wayfinding, lighting, and branding to strengthen their identity. Art installations, fitness routes, and school-led activities would add character and encourage everyday use. At the same time, extending the paths to Oxford Island would provide a direct connection to Lough Neagh, positioning Craigavon as a gateway to eco-tourism, water-based recreation, and the wider Lough Neagh visitor economy. These connection in turn can link to the Newry Canal and beyond to future projects linking Carlingford across the border into Ireland as part of wider investment and connectivity.

- A key priority lies in strengthening **Craigavon’s polycentric structure**. Each of the six centres can play a distinctive role or have a ‘niche purpose. Together, the centres would act as a network of complementary hubs, ensuring that Craigavon functions as a cohesive urban area rather than as a collection of dispersed neighbourhoods.
- **Cultural identity** should also be foregrounded. Craigavon’s unique history as a planned New Town can be celebrated through trails, public art, and interpretive programming, reinforcing its distinct character.
- **Connectivity** must be promoted as part of the experience. Seamless movement between road, rail, the town centre, and the Black Paths presenting Craigavon as a “greenway town,” the transport network itself becomes an attraction, linking together leisure, culture, commerce, and community.

Through the layering of these initiatives, Craigavon can achieve the Power of 10+, creating multiple reasons to visit and engage across its centres, parks, and transport links. This approach will establish it as a place of vibrancy and variety, where connectivity, activity, and identity come together to reinforce its role as a polycentric hub and a distinctive destination within Northern Ireland.



FINDING 5 - OPEN SPACES AND FACILITIES OPPORTUNITIES

Craigavon is rich in open spaces and outdoor facilities. However, are these being utilised to their full potential?

City Park, The Lakes, and Tannaghmore Gardens and Rare Breeds Animal Farm play a vital role in enhancing the social, environmental, and economic landscape of Craigavon. Together, they provide a well-rounded mix of recreational, educational, and cultural experiences that significantly contribute to the quality of life for residents and the attractiveness of the area to visitors.

City Park and the adjacent lakes offer expansive green space and a variety of outdoor activities, including walking, cycling, and water sports, which support physical wellbeing and promote active lifestyles. The park also serves as an important ecological asset, encouraging biodiversity and sustainable urban living.

Tannaghmore Gardens adds a layer of cultural and historical value with its formal gardens, heritage trails, and community spaces, while the Rare Breeds Animal Farm contributes to conservation efforts and environmental education through its work with endangered native livestock. These interconnected attractions foster community engagement, attract tourism, and support local businesses, making them essential elements of Craigavon's identity and ongoing development.

FINDING 5 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

To improve and maximise the potential of City Park, The Lakes, and Tannaghmore Gardens and Rare Breeds Animal Farm in Craigavon, several strategic recommendations include:

- Improved signage, digital wayfinding, and interpretive displays that highlight historical, environmental, and educational features across all three sites.
- To expand educational and conservation impact, the Rare Breeds Animal Farm could develop interactive learning programmes, seasonal workshops, and partnerships with schools and environmental organisations, making it a year-round resource for local education. Similarly, introducing volunteer and community stewardship programmes could strengthen local engagement and promote ownership of these shared spaces.
- From a tourism and marketing perspective, creating a cohesive brand and promotional campaign for all three sites—positioning them as a connected destination—would help attract more regional and national visitors.

Coordinated management plan with long-term funding strategies, possibly through grants, sponsorships, or public-private partnerships, would ensure sustainable development and the preservation of the area's natural and cultural assets.

FINDING 6 - ECONOMIC LANDS

As mentioned earlier in the report, 93% of Invest NI public lands remain under developed in Craigavon, this study considers Halfpenny Road in the Craigavon Sector (12.30 acres land).

FINDING 6 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

Future planning and infrastructure development are required to bring these lands into economic use and enable the development of same.

- Engagement with the landowners is important.
- Ensure that new businesses entering the area, complement the clusters of the existing market and are developed in sustainable manner, while working with the current infrastructure investment available and planned expansions.



FINDING 7 - NEIGHBOURHOODS

The Brownlow area comprises of six neighbourhood hubs, one of which is a district centre these include Tullygally, Monbrief, Legahory, Drumgor, Moyraverty and Knockmenagh.

The people of Brownlow also consider the Craigavon Lakes and the town centre of Craigavon to be key components of the Brownlow area. In this context, the relationship between these three apparently distinct areas will be an important consideration for the future spatial planning of urban Craigavon. Pockets of vacancy and dereliction exist within many neighbourhoods.

Brownlow Neighbourhood renewal area benefits from health and wellbeing services and health initiatives and programmes aimed to address health inequalities and help residents take more responsibility for their personal wellbeing, with sustainable outcomes in mind.

FINDING 7 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

While the original vision for Brownlow was not realised in full, the area does benefit from an established and undulating landscape and open space which presents a wide range of future opportunities.

- The legacy design of cul-de-sacs and dead ends has reduced connectivity and harmed environmental quality in areas.
- There is a need within the existing Neighbourhood Renewal area/ more deprived areas within the Craigavon to improve the purpose of each of these areas through the development of an urban development concept which gives each area a **specific purpose and function** of a village within an urban setting.
- Community engagement to work through the challenges and strengths of each area.
- The Legahory District Centre, opportunities exist to explore how Legahory could be revitalised and regenerated.

FINDING 8 – PRIDE OF PLACE

Through this discovery the levels of under-maintenance at arrival points, roundabouts, spaces, places and paths in Craigavon have been noticed. There have been sightings of overgrowth, fly tipping, rubbish and litter, which is unwelcoming for visitors and portrays a negative first impression of the place. Large pieces of land are managed and owned by Statutory Bodies and large businesses.

FINDING 8 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

Encouraging pride of place is essential in fostering vibrant, welcoming communities. Everyone has a part to play in shaping a place they're proud to live and work in.

- Greater collaboration and responsibility from the residents, communities and landowners is needed to create a sense of pride in the local streets, paths and spaces, to ensure these are accessible and clean.
- Encourage supporting local clean-up efforts such as keeping properties tidy, planting flowers, preserving green spaces can make a significant difference.
- Campaigns and initiatives should be promoted to support volunteer tidy up or gardening groups e.g. 'Live here love here' programmes or Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful.
- Explore options to improving the sense of arrival to Craigavon Road verges and roundabouts. Could roundabouts be sponsored or adopted and could bridges be named to give a sense of belonging.

Table 23: Key findings & recommendations for Craigavon



Lurgan Sector



Lurgan in focus

Lurgan, a traditional market town, owes much of its origins to the Brownlow family, who shaped the town's distinctive linear street pattern in the 16th century. This historic form still defines the centre today, where a weekly market continues to draw visitors from the surrounding hinterlands, maintaining Lurgan's long-standing role as a trading hub.

Much of Lurgan's historic core is safeguarded by its Conservation Area designation (2004), where listed buildings and a strong streetscape convey a distinctive sense of place. At the heart of the town lies Lurgan Park, the largest urban park in Northern Ireland. Beyond being a valued community space, the park is a major tourism and leisure asset, hosting popular events such as weekly Park Runs, a Kids Park Run, and the annual Lurgan Agricultural Show, which draws thousands of visitors.

Alongside Lurgan Park sits the historic Brownlow Castle Grade A building, erected by Charles Brownlow, the house today has a tea room and exhibitions, it now welcomes tour buses from international cruise liners. These attractions give Lurgan the potential to grow as a heritage and cultural tourism destination, supporting both the visitor economy and town centre vitality.

The town benefits from a highly strategic location. Situated directly on the Belfast–Dublin rail line and within easy reach of the M1 motorway, Lurgan enjoys strong regional and cross-border connectivity. The local rail service offers access between Newry and Belfast, making the town attractive for commuters and visitors alike. However, challenges remain around capacity and signalling at Lurgan station, with older infrastructure limiting timetable flexibility and reliability. These issues highlight the importance of ongoing and future rail



Figure 39: Lurgan site walk images

investment opportunities, which could strengthen Lurgan's role as a well-connected hub



within both Northern Ireland and the wider economic corridors. The construction of the Millennium Way has also redirected through-traffic away from Market Street and High Street, improving the pedestrian environment and opening up the town centre for regeneration.

Despite its assets, vacancy levels remain high (18.8%), particularly along High Street and Market Street, where the linear form makes them more visible. This has led to concerns among residents about the town's future. Nevertheless, regeneration efforts are beginning to make a difference.

The Lurgan Townscape Heritage Scheme is helping to enhance the town's appearance and civic pride through heritage-led investment, while the Empty to Occupied and Fit for Future initiatives show how creative reuse of vacant premises can revitalise town centres. Further opportunities exist in encouraging town centre living, which could increase town centre footfall, strengthen the evening economy, and support more sustainable growth.

Today, Lurgan's economy is centred on its independent businesses and specialist services, offering an alternative to larger retail centres. Notable examples include Alana Interiors, Fulton's, High Street Harvest, Millar's Shoes, Cafolla Bros and New Haven Café, supported by bespoke services such as hair, beauty, butchery, bridal, dentists, opticians and solicitors. This independent character is a strength that adds individuality and draws repeat local custom.

Lurgan is also a key part of the Craigavon Urban Area (CUA), connecting it closely with Portadown and Central Craigavon. This wider network allows for complementary roles across retail, leisure, employment, and housing, with Lurgan contributing its heritage, independent retail, and tourism strengths. Future rail investment, alongside ongoing town centre regeneration, could significantly enhance its position within both the CUA and the broader Belfast–Dublin corridor.

Cultural and intellectual heritage further enrich the town's identity. The Carnegie Library on Carnegie Street reflects historic investment in learning and civic life, while Lurgan is the birthplace of AE Russell (1867–1935), the renowned poet, artist, and journalist. Together, these cultural anchors, combined with its history, green assets, and regeneration initiatives, present Lurgan as a town with deep roots, strong connections, and new opportunities—one that has the potential to flourish as a place to live, shop, work, visit, connect and invest.

Lurgan offers a range of notable schools with two nursery schools, five primary schools and three secondary and grammar schools in the area, one special educational need (SEN) school and a campus for the Southern Regional College. The Education Authority continue to assess and improve their assets through the school enhancement programmes and new build projects.

The Dickson Plan is a distinctive two-tier post-primary education system implemented in the Craigavon area, encompassing towns such as Portadown and Lurgan. Unlike the rest of



Northern Ireland, where grammar school selection occurs at age 11 via the Transfer Test, the Dickson Plan defers selection until age 14.

In the Craigavon Urban Area, there are a total of 31 Super Output Areas (SOAs) included in the proxy area. Of these, seven SOAs are in the top 10% most deprived SOAs in Northern Ireland, and a further three are in the top 10-20% most deprived. The most deprived SOAs are located in the Lurgan sector, with four SOAs in the top 10% most deprived overall in Northern Ireland. Two SOAs are in Craigavon, and one is in Portadown. Lurgan Neighbourhood Renewal area benefits from health and wellbeing services and health initiatives and programmes aimed to address health inequalities and help residents take more responsibility for their personal wellbeing, with sustainable outcomes in mind.



Lurgan Statistical Profile

Whilst a statistical profile has been developed for the entire project area and will remain under review as new statistics are released, the below dashboard gives a snapshot of the key statistics for Lurgan.

Lurgan Statistical Dashboard	Lurgan	Source
Population	28,631	Census 2021, Population by Data Zones, NISRA
Household	11,869	Last updated 28th April 2025
No of Units - projected 5 year Social Housing Need	406	Northern Ireland Housing Executive Commissioning Prospectus data 2024/25-2026/27 - Note: Craigavon = Central Craigavon; Lurgan = North Lurgan (316) + South Lurgan (90); Portadown = Portadown 1 (100) + Portadown 2 (229) + Portadown Rural (11) https://www.nihe.gov.uk/working-with-us/partners/commissioning-prospectus
Qualification of school leavers 5+ GCSE (FSME)	47%	2022/2023 - NI School Leavers Survey Dept of Education, NISRA 25% did not
Qualification of school leavers 5+ GCSE (or Equiv) (all levels)	83%	2022/2023 - NI School Leavers Survey Dept of Education, NISRA
Enroled at FE College (SRC)	810 (71%)	2022/2023 - NI School Leavers Survey Dept of Education, NISRA
Total Economically Active 16+	12449	Census 2021
Total Economically Inactive 16+	9074	Census 2021
No of VAT and/or PAYE Registered Businesses in DEA	995 (10.6% of Borough)	Per DEA (total in borough 9330) Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA 2023.
Town Centre Data		
Vacancy Rate - town centre	18.8%	NI Average (22.8%) Land and Property Services via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities. (30/04/2025)
No of Businesses in town centre	270	Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities 2023.
Employee jobs	1937	Business Register and Employment Survey, NISRA Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities 2022.
Crimes recorded - town centre	580 (8% of SDL)	Police Service of Northern Ireland Statistics, via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities 2022.
ASB - town centre	198 (8% of SDL)	Police Service of Northern Ireland Statistics, via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities 2022.
Foot Fall	17412	Source Springboard : w/c 17feb25
Listed Buildings and Monuments - SDL	87	Historic Environment Division, Department for Communities 2024.

Table 24: Lurgan Statistical Profile



Population demographics in summary

As of Census Day 2021, Lurgan had a population of 28,631, accounting for 39.6% of the Craigavon Urban Area. The population distribution shows that 49.7% of residents are male and 50.3% are female. The age structure reveals that 21.4% of the population is under 15 years old, 63.1% are between 16 and 64 years old, and 15.5% are 65 years and older. The data also indicates a diverse ethnic composition, with 3.7% of the population belonging to ethnic groups other than white. Additionally, 84.3% of residents were born in Northern Ireland, while 8.7% were born in other EU countries. The main language for 90.4% of the population is English, with Polish, Bulgarian, and Lithuanian being the next most common languages.

Lurgan within the CUA

The Craigavon Urban Area settlement development limits are shown below with Lurgan in pink and the dotted line outlining the town centre.

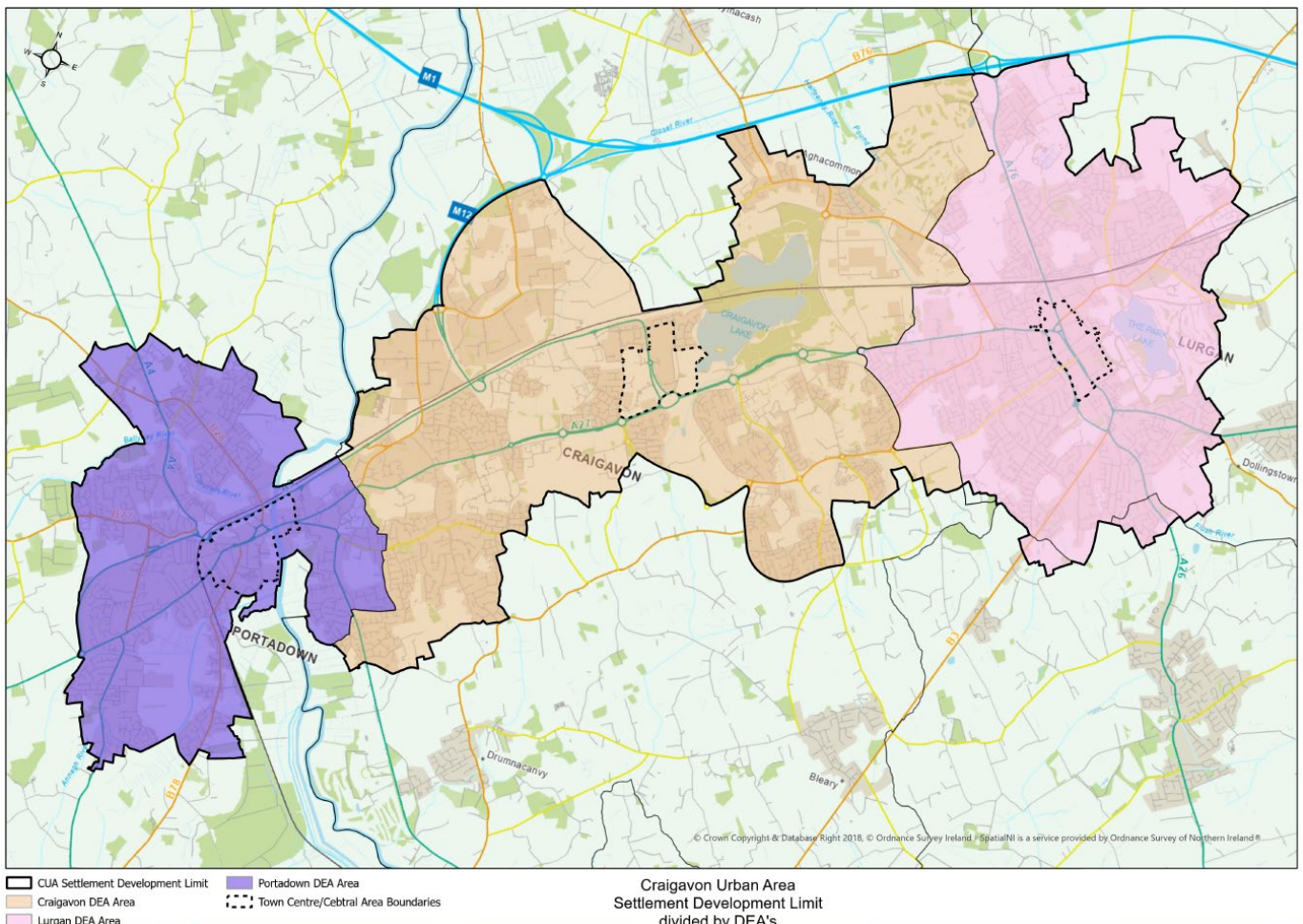


Figure 40: Map- Lurgan within the CUA

The town centre boundary map below taken from the 'Craigavon Town Centre Boundaries and Retail Designations Plan 2010'. The town centre provides a broad range of retail, service and other facilities, and are the focus for community and public transport. Within the centre,



retail development and other uses that generate significant numbers of people will be encouraged and promoted as the most sustainable locations with optimum accessibility by a range of means of travel. The town centre provides the main opportunity for further commercial expansion. Primary Retail Cores (PRCs) normally contain the traditional concentration of retailing and other town centre functions. There is a Primary Retail Frontage (PRF) in Lurgan town centre that should be retained in retail use to ensure the maintenance of a compact shopping environment.

Bars, cafes and restaurants complement the primary shopping function of town centres by contributing to the range and choice of facilities available to residents and visitors. They also contribute to the evening economy and support tourism. Such uses will normally be expected to locate outside primary retail frontages

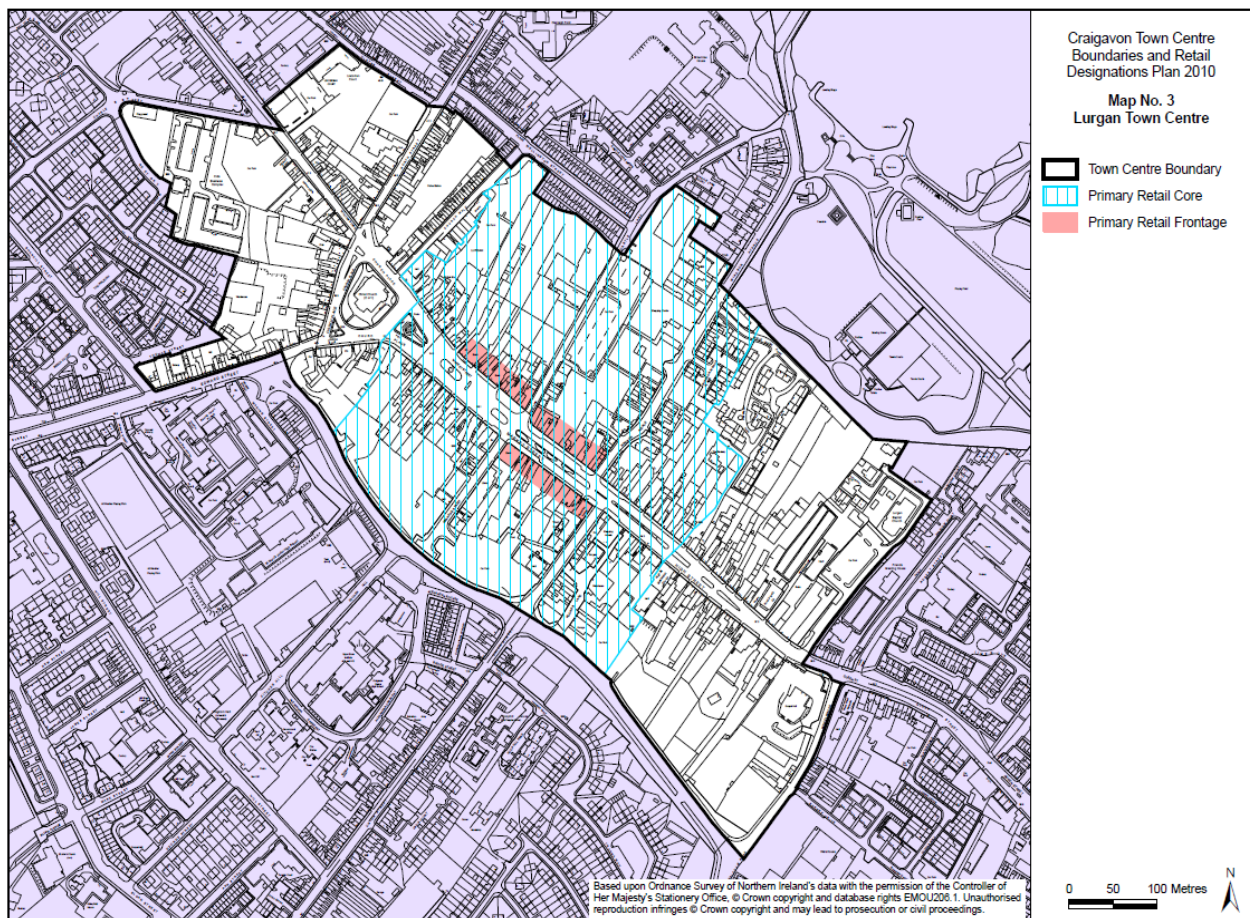


Figure 41: Map- Lurgan Town Centre Boundaries & Retail Designations

Lurgan history & evolution

The town was founded in the early 17th Century when in 1610, during the Plantation of Ulster, John Brownlow of Nottingham was granted 1500 acres of land by James I.

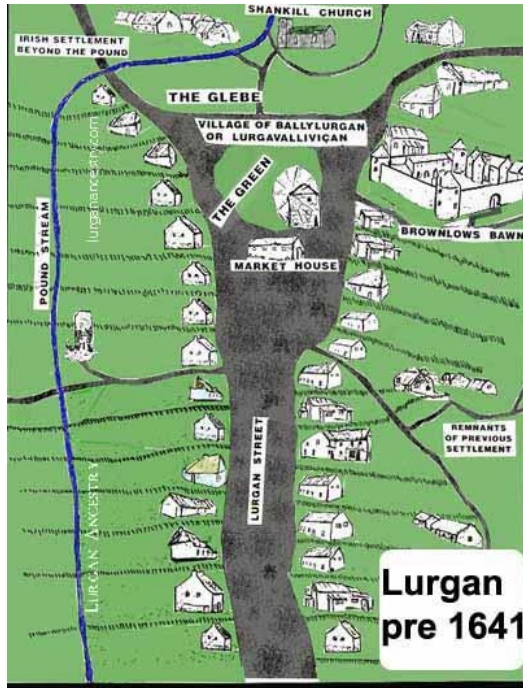


Figure 42: Image Lurgan pre-1641 illustration

The name Lurgan first appeared in the grant dated in 1629 to William Brownlow giving permission for a weekly market and two annual fairs.

The original tenements stipulated by Arthur Brownlow when he inherited the estate in 1660 required tenants to erect dwellings 20 to 30 feet long and 18 to 20 feet high within tenements which averaged 30m wide by 200m long. The town was actively engaged in the linen Industry in the 18th Century and the money which this generated helped to develop the town. Despite demolition and re-development in the 20th Century, the character of the main street remains and behind the main street there is still evidence of the workers houses, factories and industrial buildings which were typical of the historic town. (Source: Lurgan TH Activity Plan Document)

Within the town is Lurgan Park, the largest urban park in Northern Ireland and second largest public park in Ireland, which is 259 acres, includes a 59 acre manmade lake



The timeline below demonstrates how Lurgan, a town with a rich history dating back to its founding in 1610 by the Brownlow family. Initially driven by agriculture and early linen production, Lurgan experienced substantial growth during the industrial revolution, particularly in linen weaving. The town's development continued through various phases, including the introduction of the railway in 1863, which connected Lurgan to major cities and facilitated its industrial expansion. Despite facing economic challenges and slower growth in the mid-20th century, Lurgan has made efforts to regenerate its town centre and improve its infrastructure.

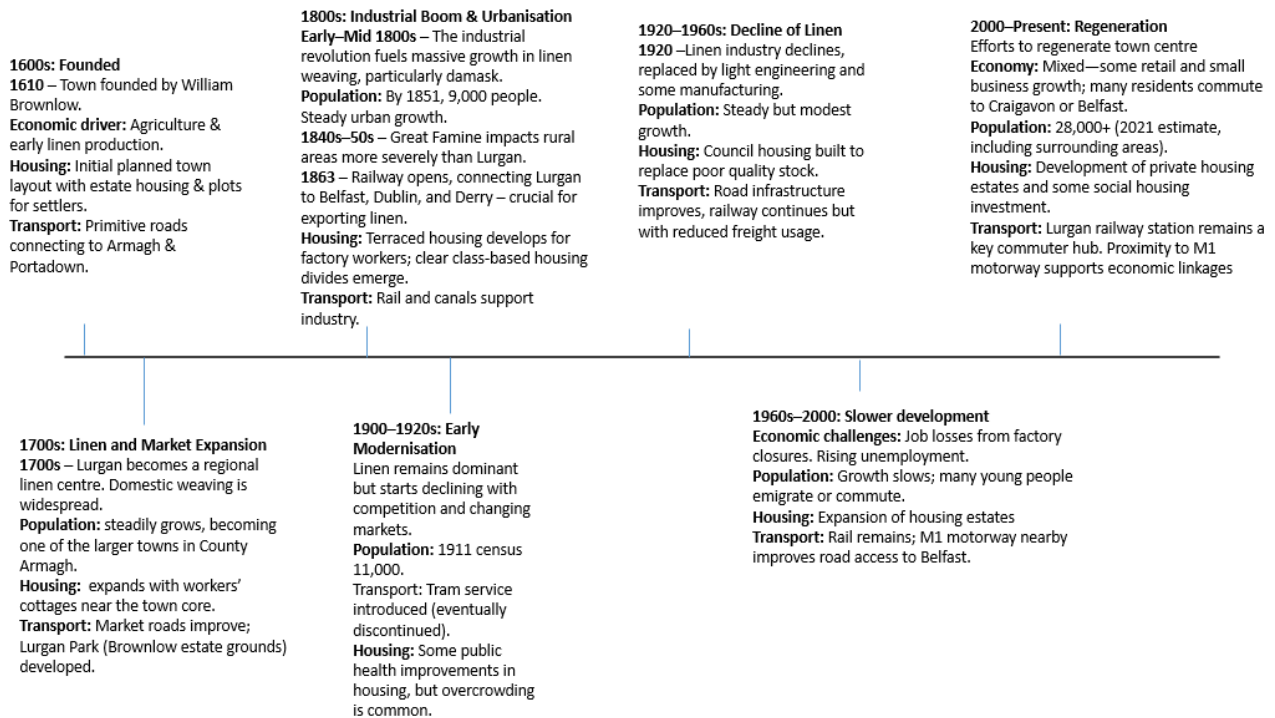


Figure 43: Lurgan timeline image

Lurgan has a wealth of heritage with notable industries, places, significant periods in history, people, events, arts and crafts. For example:

- The first Quaker meeting for worship in Ireland was held in 1654 in the house of William Edmondson.
- Brownlow Castle, listed by NIEA for its special architectural and historical interest, was built in an Elizabethan style date from 1833. The House was the headquarters of the 16th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles and the 10th Battalion Royal Irish Fusiliers during World War 1 and was also home to British and American troops during World War 2.
- Lurgan was the birthplace of AE Russell in 1867 a notable poet, artist and journalist.



Conservation Area Designation

The Department of the Environment designated the town centre of Lurgan as a Conservation Area on the 15th of June 2004 as it is considered an area of special architecture and historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance. One of the main strengths of the Conservation Area is its linear street pattern and continuous frontage punctuated at intervals by streets running to the North and South. Where these streets enter the main street corner buildings have been designed and created in a way, which has a unique and significant impact upon character and appearance in the area. They celebrate their position and are particularly important to the streetscape. Of particular note are statement buildings such as the Mechanics Institute, the former Danske Bank and the Central Bar – Fa' Joe's.



Figure 44: Lurgan Conservation Area

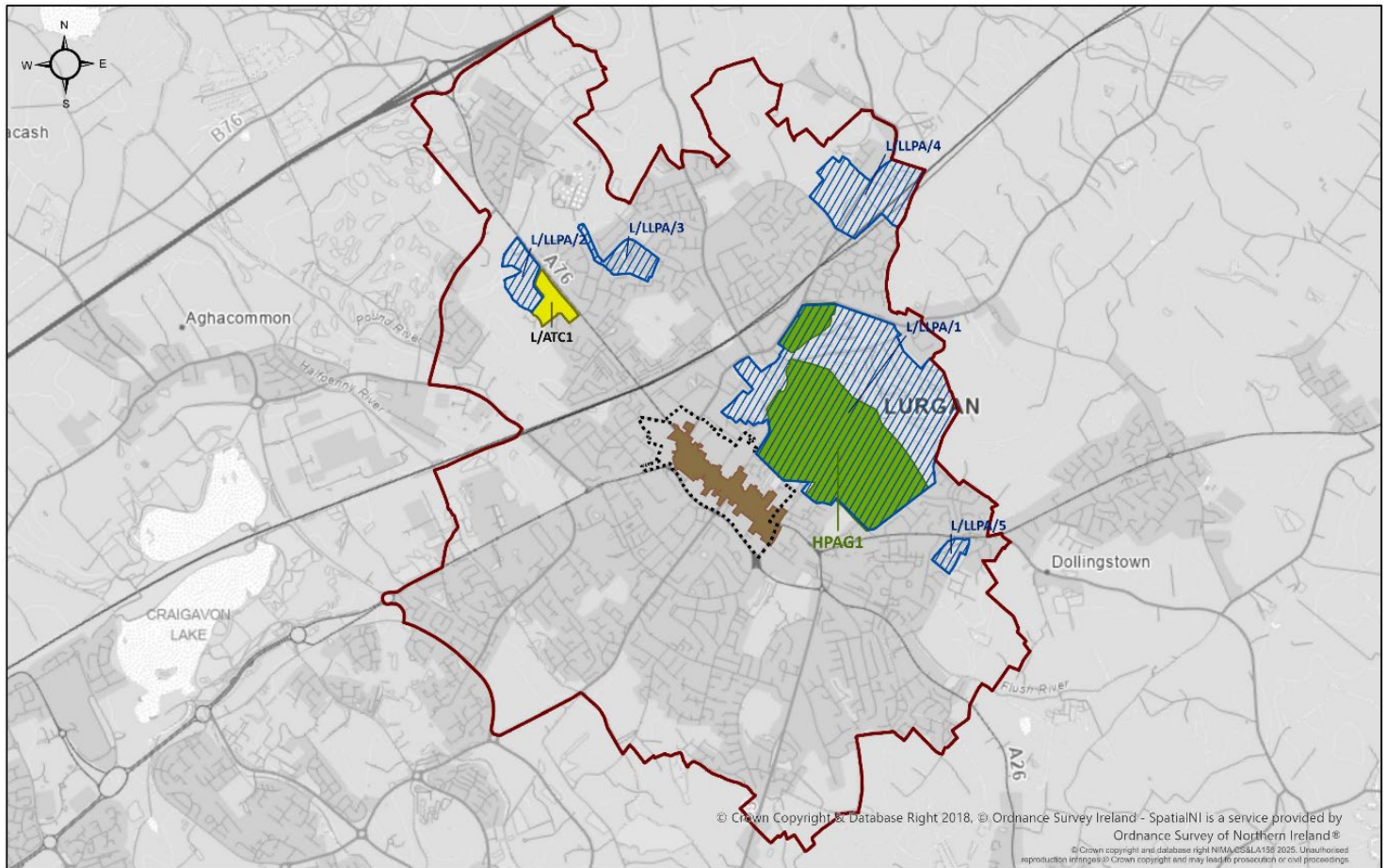
The Conservation Area boundary encompasses the historic core of the town including, Church Place, and the thoroughfare of Market St and High St, which largely developed during the eighteenth and nineteenth century, it contains a rich collection of buildings of varying periods and styles.

The Conservation Area Designation booklet was published in 2004, to provide supplementary planning guidance for development within the designated area.

The Conservation area guide can be accessed here ([https:// www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/conservation-area-guide-lurgan](https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/conservation-area-guide-lurgan))



The map which follows, provides a visual aid to the various planning designations that are applicable to Lurgan, and which will be discussed in the report.



- Lurgan DEA Area
- Town Centre
- Area of Townscape Character
- Conservation Area
- Historic Park, Garden & Demesne
- Local Landscape Policy Area

Historical Environment Designations Lurgan



Figure 45: Map Lurgan Historical Environment Designation



	Lurgan	Craigavon Urban Area
Factory	2	3
Fountain	1	1
Gates / Screens / Lodges	2	3
Hall	2	7
Hotel	1	1
Hospital Building		1
House	19	47
House - Terrace	23	23
Library	1	2
Memorial	3	5
Office	4	9
Post Box	1	1
Public House	1	3
Recreational Club	1	1
School	4	5
Shop	6	10
Store		2
Town Hall	1	2
Warehouse		1
	87	164

Table 25: Listed buildings within Craigavon Urban Area and Lurgan.

Lurgan Townscape Heritage Project

The Lurgan Townscape Heritage Scheme is a five-year, heritage-led regeneration initiative launched in October 2018, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council, and property owner contributions, with a total projected investment of approximately £6.6 million. Its core aim is to conserve and enhance the built heritage within the Lurgan Conservation Area by restoring up to 25 historic buildings, many of which are derelict or underused and returning them to sustainable use. The scheme also seeks to promote civic pride, support local economic growth, and improve the town's visual appeal. Its key objectives include delivering a wide range of community engagement activities to celebrate Lurgan's heritage, involving over 10,000 local people and more than 100 volunteers; providing training for property owners in traditional building maintenance and conservation techniques; and fostering a deeper understanding of the town's historical significance. Through educational programmes, walking trails, public events, and building restoration, the project aims to create a lasting legacy that strengthens the identity, vibrancy, and long-term viability of Lurgan's historic core.

Brownlow Castle

Brownlow Castle (Grade A listed) stands on the edge of Lurgan Park and is one of the town's most recognisable landmarks. Commissioned by Charles Brownlow and designed by the noted Scottish architect William Henry Playfair in 1833, the house is famed locally as a



“calendar” building—its dramatic skyline punctuated by dozens of ornamental chimneys and a distinctive tower—symbolising the ambition of the Brownlow family, who had shaped Lurgan since the early Plantation era and were ennobled when Charles became 1st Baron Lurgan in 1839.

Across the 20th century the Castle played a pivotal military role. In the First World War it served as headquarters for Irish regiments, and during the Second World War it became the Northern Ireland headquarters for American forces—associated with General Dwight D. Eisenhower’s presence and Allied planning work—connections now interpreted through on-site museums opened in 2015. Despite serious fire damage in 1996, the building was restored and today welcomes groups for guided tours, exhibitions and hospitality, with strong transatlantic heritage appeal.

As part of the Lurgan’s timeline, notable occasions in Brownlow Castle’s history include:

- Early 1600s: Brownlow family settle in Lurgan during the Plantation of Ulster.
- 1833: Charles Brownlow commissions William Henry Playfair to build Brownlow House.
- 1839: Brownlow elevated to 1st Baron Lurgan.
- 1847: Lord Lurgan dies during the Great Famine (“Black ’47”).
- 1868: Family’s greyhound Master McGrath wins first Waterloo Cup.
- Late 19th c.: Family ownership ends; the property later passes to the Lurgan Loyal Orange District (purchased for them by Sir William Allen in 1904).
- WWI: HQ for the 16th Royal Irish Rifles and 10th Royal Irish Fusiliers.
- WWII: Northern Ireland HQ for U.S. forces; Eisenhower associated with the site.
- 1996: Major fire; subsequent restoration undertaken.
- 2015: WWII (and later WWI/local history) museums open in the basement.



Lurgan Park

Lurgan Park, the largest urban park in Northern Ireland and the second largest in Ireland, covering approximately 250 acres, has a rich history dating back to its founding in 1610 by William Brownlow. Initially part of the Brownlow estate, the park was acquired by the Lurgan Borough Council in 1893. The park's development was driven by the need for a public space for the town's residents, and it officially became a public park in the early 20th century.



Figure 47: Lurgan Park Illustration map

Lurgan Park is a flagship open space offering a variety of recreational and cultural activities. The park features a large man-made lake, 5 km of mature woodland paths, open grasslands, and the historic cast-iron fountain. It includes sports fields, tennis courts, a bowling green, play areas, football and cricket pitches, and angling opportunities. The park also hosts regular events such as the Saturday Park Run, Junior Park Run on Sundays, and the annual



Lurgan Agriculture Show. Additionally, the park is well-equipped with benches and picnic tables, making it a perfect spot for family outings and leisurely walks.

The man-made lake in Lurgan Park is a central feature, offering a serene setting for visitors to enjoy. The lake is surrounded by pathways that provide picturesque views and opportunities for leisurely walks and bird watching. Angling is also a popular activity at the lake, attracting fishing enthusiasts from the local community.

Lurgan Park is home to the Lurgan Cricket Club, which provides facilities for cricket enthusiasts to practice and play matches. The cricket pitches are well-maintained and offer a great venue for both casual and competitive cricket games.

The park includes tennis courts which provide an excellent opportunity for locals and residents to engage in tennis, whether for recreation or more serious play.

Parking at Lurgan Park offers free on-street parking at Windsor Avenue and Robert Street. This makes it convenient for visitors to access the park and enjoy its amenities. Additional parking provision would be beneficial.

Lurgan Park introduced audio trails, enhancing the visitor experience by providing guided tours and information about the park's history, flora, and fauna. These trails are accessible via a mobile app, allowing visitors to explore the park at their own pace while learning about its unique features.

Several investments are needed in the future to facilitate its size and the demands placed on the park and improve the park's offerings. These include the installation of much-needed toilet facilities, the development of an annual activities calendar, and greater engagement to reduce anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Improved signage to connect the park with the town centre, Brownlow Castle, and the golf club. Ongoing investments in facilities such as the synthetic pitch replacement and the development of new walking trails are essential.

Two brand new modular Changing Places toilet facilities were installed at Lurgan Park to improve accessibility. These facilities are situated at the Robert Street entrance, enabling easy access for families and those needing support from a carer. However, there is still a need for additional toilet facilities to accommodate the growing number of visitors and ensure a comfortable experience for all.

The Waves Leisure Centre site, which has been levelled, presents a significant opportunity for future development, adjacent to the park entrance.

Lurgan Trails

Lurgan Park Trails – developed as scenic walking loops (ranging from under a mile to two miles), woodland trails, a fountain, and heritage landmarks.

Lurgan Park Heritage Trail adds depth by guiding walkers through over 350 years of history, from the Brownlow family estate to its role in the linen industry, wartime training, and community events. Points of interest include Brownlow House (“the Castle”), the



ornamental lake, the Jubilee Fountain, and stories of aviation displays, soldiers, and local legends

George Russell ‘AE’ Lurgan Historic Walk Guide

The guide is a useful resource that details the life of George Russell ‘AE’ a significant figure from Lurgan. The guide includes historical insights about his childhood in Lurgan, his family’s connection to the Brownlow estate, and his contribution to the town’s cultural landscape.

Lurgan Town Trail offers a self-guided walking route through the town’s streets, showcasing over 40 heritage sites and historic buildings. Highlights include Quaker Meeting Houses, 18th- and 19th-century linen factories, fine churches, the Town Hall, Carnegie Library, Mechanics Institute, and grand townhouses. The trail reveals the town’s strong links to the linen trade, religious diversity, and architectural craftsmanship, while keeping much of its character intact despite modern redevelopment



Figure 48: Lurgan Town Trail image & QR code

Together, these walking experiences provide:

- Health and wellbeing benefits through accessible green space and open trails.
- Cultural and historical enrichment by connecting walkers to Lurgan’s industrial, religious, and social past.
- A sense of place where town and park complement each other – heritage streets leading naturally to tranquil parkland.
- Both urban discovery and natural retreat within easy reach, making it a unique and attractive walking destination.

Rail Connectivity and Congestion.

Lurgan is served by three key railway level crossings at William Street, Lake Street, and Antrim Road, and the current train station is located at William St just abutting the town centre boundary. More recently Translink increased the frequency of the Enterprise Train Service to an hourly service, which travels through Lurgan but does not stop.

Collectively, these level crossings form critical pinch-points within the local transport network. Barriers are lowered much more frequently to accommodate the Enterprise and



the local train services. Due to signalling sequences and the intensity of rail services this is now leading to prolonged delays for vehicles and pedestrians across multiple approach routes.

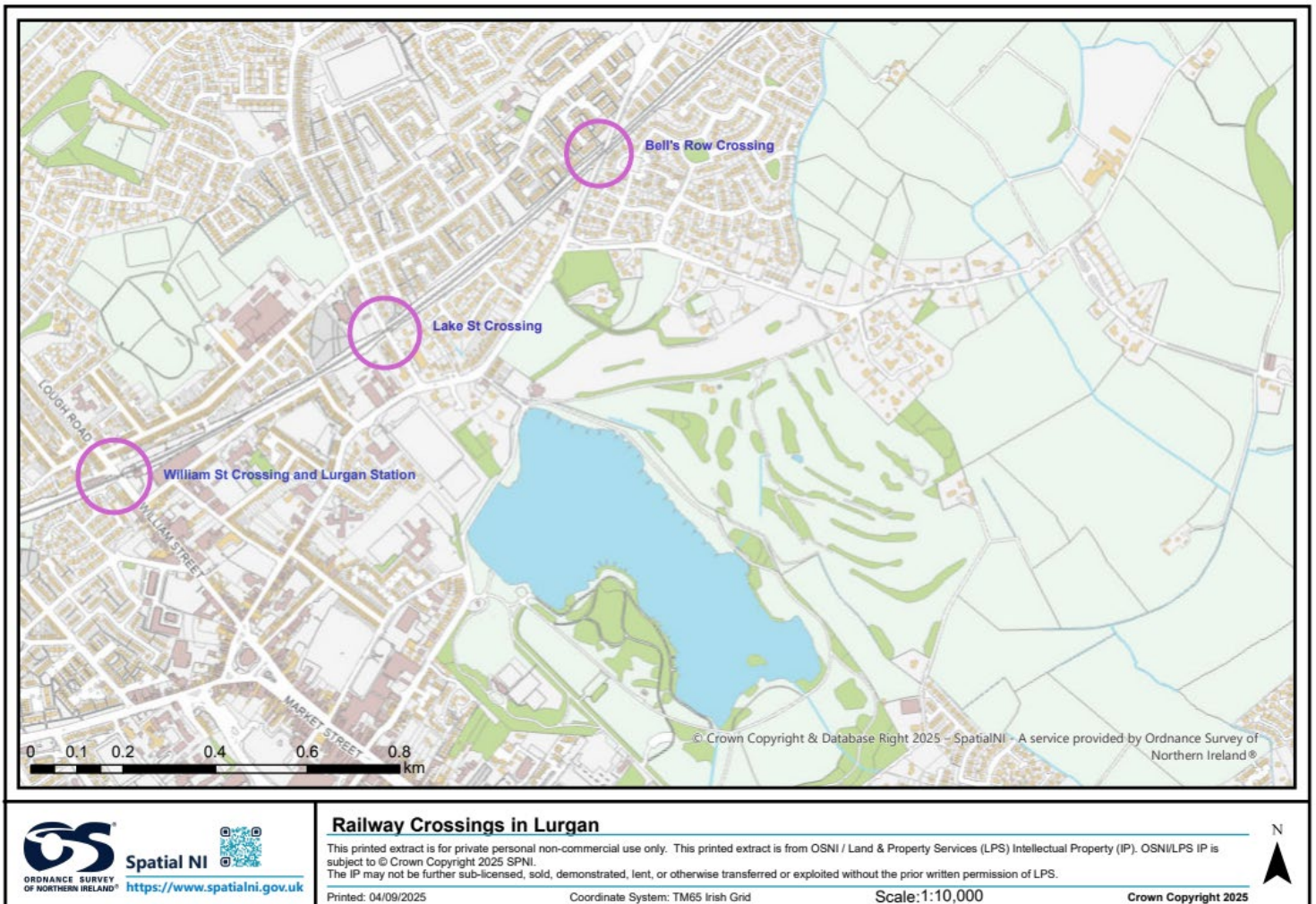


Figure 49: Map- Rail Crossing in Lurgan

Congestion builds up on key arterial routes, restricting access to the town centre from several directions. For businesses and residents, this results in daily frustration, reduced efficiency of local travel, and a deterrent to through traffic stopping within Lurgan.

The current signalling and barrier systems across all three crossings are designed to prioritise safety. However, they operate conservatively, with barriers closing well in advance of train arrival and reopening only after extended buffer periods. While this minimises risk, it results in significantly longer closure times compared with modern signalling standards. The consistency of this issue across William Street, Lake Street, and Antrim Road means that the congestion effects are felt town-wide, rather than being isolated to a single crossing point.

Impact on Town Centre Regeneration- Traffic delays associated with the three crossings is discouraging visitors to Market Street and High Street, therefore reinforcing perceptions of



inaccessibility. This undermines ongoing regeneration efforts, as reliable and efficient access is critical to the success of town-centre revitalisation. People (locals, visitors, businesses, and logistics firms) want an accessible place to visit and to do business.

Pedestrian movement is similarly disrupted. Closures affect footfall between the main car parks, residential areas, the railway station, and retail or service destinations.

This congested connectivity experience is having a negative impact generally between public transport, active travel, and the town centre economy, reducing opportunities to grow local trade and visitor numbers.

It's important to note that Translink has committed to a major redevelopment of Lurgan Railway Station, including new platforms, modern station buildings, enhanced accessibility measures, and expanded park-and-ride facilities. These upgrades will significantly improve passenger experience and encourage increased rail use. However, while the station redevelopment represents an important investment in sustainable transport, it will not directly address the congestion caused by barrier down-times at William Street, Lake Street, and Antrim Road. The underlying challenge lies in the track layout, signalling infrastructure, and the physical level crossings themselves.

Car Parks and Government Owned Land

Car Parks

- Castle Lane, spaces 174, disabled spaces 5 (P&D)
- Millennium Way, spaces 47, disabled spaces 3 (P&D)
- Edward Street, spaces 9, disabled 0 (No charge)
- Waring Street, spaces 5, disabled 0 (No charge)
- Moore's Lane, spaces 78, disabled 0 (P&D)
- Union Street, spaces 21, disabled 0 (P&D)
- Robert Street, spaces 70, disabled 6 (No charge)
- Foster Place, spaces 26, disabled 3 (No charge)
- Black's Court, Church Walk, spaces 200, disabled 8 (No charge)
- Johnston's Row, spaces 102, disabled 9 (No charge)
- Alexandra Square, spaces 29, disabled 0 (No charge)
- Connolly Place, spaces 21, disabled 1 (No charge)
- Castle Lane, spaces 174, disabled spaces 5 (P&D)
- Millennium Way, spaces 47, disabled spaces 3 (P&D)
- Edward Street, spaces 9, disabled 0 (No charge)
- Waring Street, spaces 5, disabled 0 (No charge)
- Moore's Lane, spaces 78, disabled 0 (P&D)
- Union Street, spaces 21, disabled 0 (P&D)
- Robert Street, spaces 70, disabled 6 (No charge)
- Foster Place, spaces 26, disabled 3 (No charge)
- Black's Court, Church Walk, spaces 200, disabled 8 (No charge)



- Johnston's Row, spaces 102, disabled 9 (No charge)
- Alexandra Square, spaces 29, disabled 0 (No charge)
- Connolly Place, spaces 21, disabled 1 (No charge)

Government Owned

(source: Government Owned property was sourced from Open Data NI August 2025)

Within the town centre there is only one Government owned piece of land shown which is the

- Millennium Way is the only piece of land which border the town centre

Government Owned outside the settlement limit boundary

- College Grounds - Plot 1, Southern Regional College - Lurgan Campus, Kitchen Hill, Lurgan
- Staff Parking, Lurgan Crown Buildings, 10 Alexandra Crescent, Lurgan

Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes

- Brownlow House
- Lurgan Park
- Lord Lurgan Memorial Park



Lurgan Open Spaces

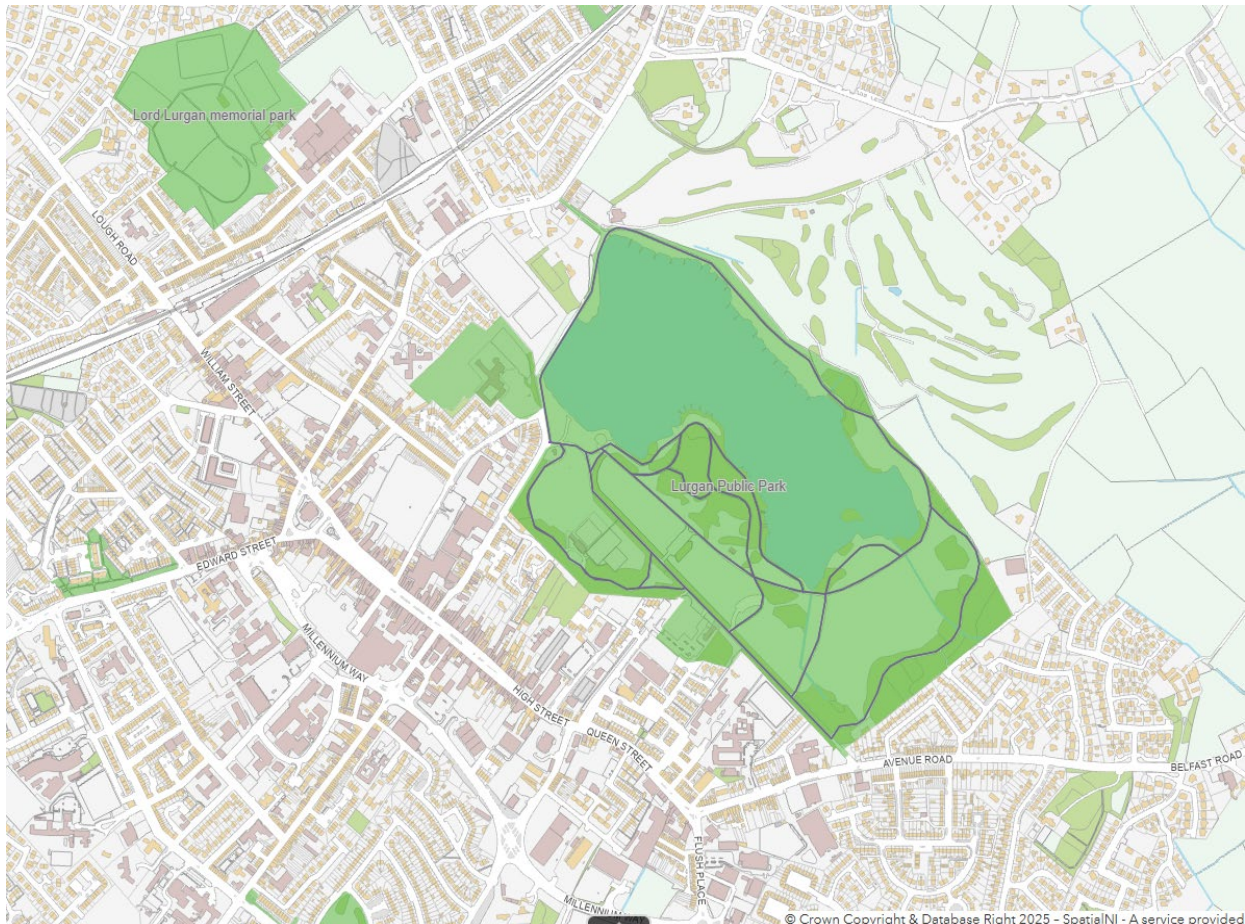


Figure 50: Map- Lurgan Open Spaces- source-
<https://outdoorrecreni.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d1b8e59f7842408cb869648fcc28eac8>

Lurgan’s existing public open spaces are located both within the town and on the periphery and they serve the whole community. They comprise a number of historic parks, as well as playing fields and specialised recreation facilities. These open spaces and recreational uses form part of the urban structure of Lurgan, in that they contribute to the environmental quality of the town, as well as providing for the recreational needs of residents.

Existing Open Space

The following areas of existing open space are identified in Lurgan and are protected as stated in the Craigavon Area Plan 2010.

- Lurgan Park (114.92ha)
- Lord Lurgan Memorial Park (9.2 ha)
- Taghnevan Playing fields (8.0 ha).

Any other areas of existing open space and recreation are, however, also covered by the same safeguarding provisions of prevailing regional planning policy.



Lurgan Park (together with the adjacent Lurgan Golf Course) is also designated as a Local Landscape Policy Area (see Plan Policy CON 2 and Designation L/LLPA 1). (Craigavon Area Plan 2010 page 113)

Development Opportunities

In the Craigavon Area Plan 2010 page 142, it references and identifies four development opportunities sites, refer to the stars in the map below.

- Designation L1 Castle Lane Development Opportunity Site
- Designation L2 Castle Lane Development Opportunity Site
- Designation L3 Castle Lane Development Opportunity Site
- Designation L4 Johnson's Row Development Opportunity Site

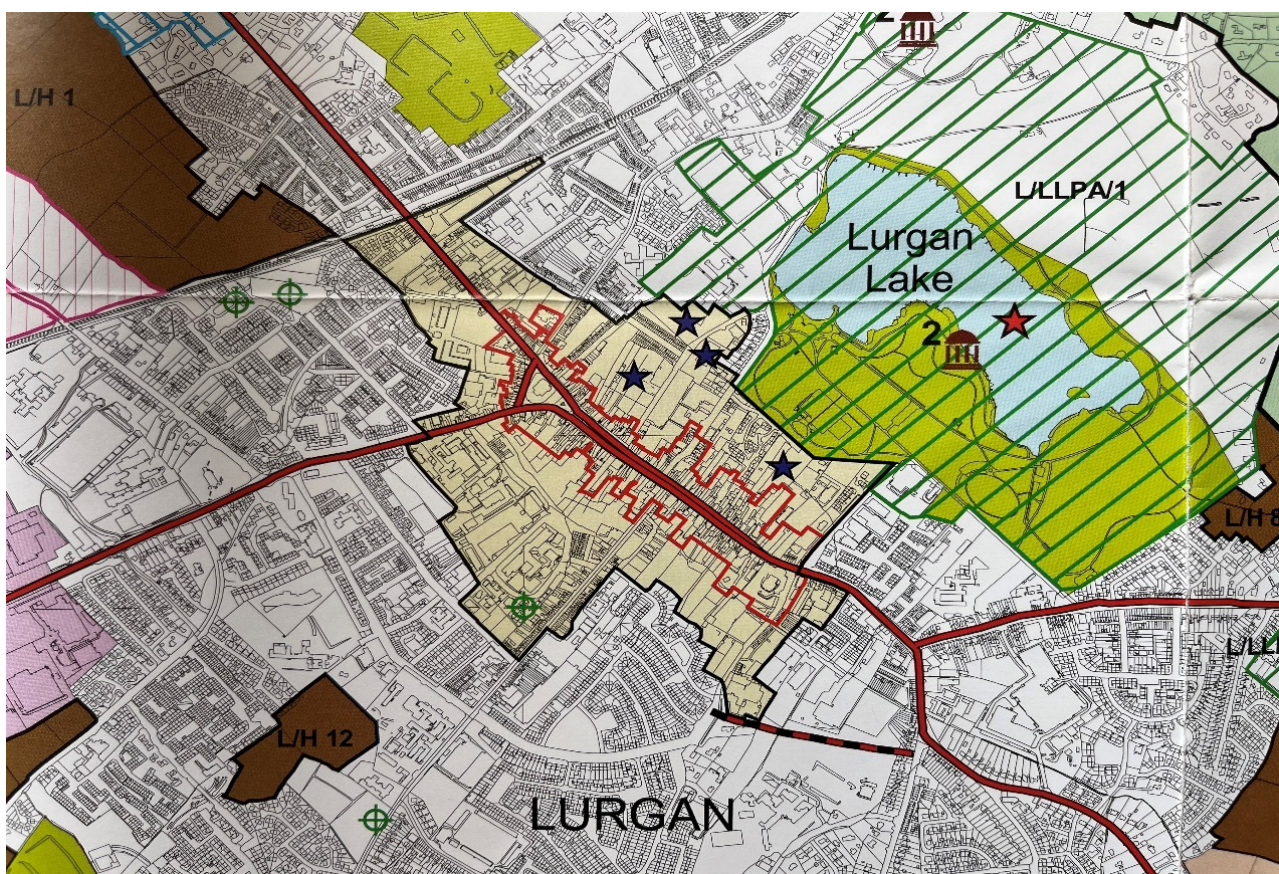


Figure 51: Development Opportunity Sites for Lurgan taken from Map 5 Craigavon Urban Area 2010

Whilst these opportunity sites have been formally recognised in the Craigavon Area Plan 2010 for Lurgan, there are other notable gap sites, derelict industrial lands and long-term vacant premises (listed and non-listed buildings) dotted within the project boundary, that could serve as key developments and regeneration for the place.

To name a few; the former Waves Site, former Tesco's on Castle Lane, development site on Castle Lane, lands along Millenium Way and upcoming vacant primary school sites.

Conservation



Local Landscape Policy Areas - There are Five Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs) are designated in and adjoining Lurgan.

- Designation L/LLPA Lurgan Park, Lurgan Golf Course and Brownlow House Local Landscape Policy Area
- Designation L/LLPA 2 Lurgan College Local Landscape Policy Area
- Designation L/LLPA Woodville House Local Landscape Policy Area
- Designation L/LLPA 4 St Michael's Senior High School
- Designation L/LLPA The Pines Local Landscape Policy Area

Local Landscape Policy Area Areas of Townscape Character- Designation L/ATC College Walk Area of Townscape Character

The Area of Townscape Character covers the residential development which lies between College Walk and Lough Road, as well as dwelling numbers 3-6 College Walk. The houses are of individual design, but all are set in mature gardens, in spacious plots, which extend from Lough Road to the rear of dwelling numbers 3-6 College Walk. The boundary with Lough Road is defined by a row of mature trees on a raised bank. The Area of Townscape Character is designated to retain the housing density, mature planted settings and the spacious plot size within the area, and to complement the adjoining Local Landscape Policy Area which is designated at Lurgan College.

Social Supermarkets

Freedom Foods Pantry Lurgan- Freedom Foods Pantry in Lurgan is a Social Supermarket located within the Emmanuel Church in Lurgan Town Centre. The Social Supermarket is a shop for members that provides food and essential goods to support people facing financial difficulties. Members pay a small weekly fee and in return can choose from fresh, refrigerated, frozen and long-life foods.

There are also wraparound services offered such as a drop-in centre, English lessons and coffee and chat which enables the support staff to link those in need to other services that may help alleviate their financial distress, for example, Community Advice ABC.

While food poverty remains a wider societal issue, Social Supermarkets are creating places where people can begin to transition out of food poverty, hopefully for the long-term.

The Salvation Army, Lurgan- The Salvation Army is based in Union Street in Lurgan and is part of the Network Support of Social Supermarkets and Wraparound Services within the ABC Borough.

The Salvation Army offers practical support and pastoral care to people with difficult and demanding circumstances.

They offer general help with emergency support through an emergency helpline and drop-in sessions at their premises in Lurgan. They are a main distribution point for the Foodbank offering food parcels to those in need, as well as providing electricity and gas top ups, clothing, signposting, weekly job club and Community Advice sessions.



Investment in Lurgan

ABC Council and other stakeholders (DfC, EA, Invest NI and DfI) have invested in capital and revenue projects over the last number of years to improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of Lurgan for its residents and visitors. The list below is a synopsis of some of the completed and ongoing investment by Council and Statutory Bodies.

The following outlines investment information collected to date; however, it should not be considered as a definitive list.

	Lurgan Projects
2016	Public Realm Scheme - Lurgan Linkages
2019 onwards	Lurgan Townscape Heritage Scheme - Buildings restoration and programmes
2018-2020	Lurgan Welcome Signs
2021	Church Walk EI Scheme
Jun-21	Lord Lurgan Memorial Park - refurbished play park
Jun-21	New Play Park in Lurgan Park
Mar-22	Chatty Benches at Lurgan Park
May-22	A new self-guided geological walking trail of Lurgan's built heritage
2022.00	DFI lighting upgrade scheme
Mar-23	Changing Places toilet facilities in Lurgan Park
Feb-24	Launch of App - Audio Trails in Lurgan Park
May-24	New walking trail for Lurgan Park
2017/ 2026	Health and Wellbeing programmes
Mar-24	Spring into our Towns
Ongoing	Promotion & Marketing of Lurgan via Urban ABC and Food Heartland
Ongoing	Invest NI assistance to businesses
Ongoing	Education Authority School Enhancement Programme
2015 onwards	Building Sustainable Communities - NR area
2025	Synthetic Pitch Replacement (including Tennis Courts in Lurgan Park)
Autumn 2025	Lurgan Laneways & Linkages project

	Borough Wide Projects
2015-2020 ongoing	Building Sustainable Communities (DfC- NR Areas)
2016-2019	Shop Front Grant schemes 2016 /2019
2017-2026	Health and Wellbeing programmes (PHA)
2018-2021	Capital Play Development One
2018-2020	ABC Revitalisation projects 2018/2020
2020-2022	Covid revitalisation business grants and projects
2020-2022	Brand identity creation and merchandise
2019-2022 & 2026- 2028	Forest Schools Training and Activities project (PEACEPLUS 1.1)
	Installation of audio trails in Lurgan Park
2022-2024	Active Travel Cycling Infrastructure (DFI)



2017-2018-2024/25	Invest NI Assistance to businesses
2017-2018-2024/25	Invest NI Local economic development activity
Annual	Christmas light switch ons (annual)
Ongoing	Fit for Future projects
Ongoing	Empty to Occupied projects
Ongoing	ABC Protecting & Enhancing our Investment in Urban Centres (DfC Funding)
Ongoing	Lurgan Linkages (DfC Funding)
Ongoing	Business support programmes, Go Succeed, Digital Transformation and Labour Market Partnership

Table 26: Lurgan Projects & Borough Wide Projects

Future Possible Investment

Recent engagement with stakeholders and businesses in the area also highlighted significant levels of community and private investment in the area, ranging from ...Offices, light industrial and retail food investments. There is also an estimated 938 new housing units being developed for residential. These are listed as being built across the area at North Street, Cornakinneger Rd, Gilford Rd, Carrickvale Close/Drive/Grove/ Mews/Park, Foxwood Green/Manor (Belfast Rd), and Lilburn Hall Manor/Mews.

The ongoing renovations in the **Townscape Heritage Scheme** buildings will enable opportunities for new business units as well as town centre living.

St Ronan's College in Lurgan is a landmark new school that will cater to 1,750 pupils and deliver a modern, cutting-edge teaching curriculum. The new building, which is over 21,000m², is designed in a campus style with three impressive courtyards to facilitate efficient circulation and optimal class changing times. The school includes extensive sports facilities, two double-height dining areas, and a chapel integrated into the new building. It opened in August/September 2025.

Lurgan Train Station, which will deliver a new, modern station and an upgraded Park and Ride facility with increased capacity. Translink is preparing to submit a planning application to Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council for the proposed redevelopment. Consultation has been ongoing during 2024 and early 2025.

There are series of investment programmes ABC Empty to Occupied, ABC Protecting & Enhancing our Investment, ABC Fit for Future and the upcoming Lurgan Laneways and Linkages project. Some synthetic pitches and tennis courts in Lurgan Park will undergo surface replacements.

Lurgan Community Centres; investment has been agreed to support the development of Mourneview and North Lurgan Community Centres.

There are recent **planning approvals** which include 45 William Street (three-storey building with ground-floor retail and two apartments on the upper floors) and Silverwood Road Housing Development (66 dwellings).



Please note that the traditional and locally known Lurgan industrial lands, such as Silverwood Industrial Estate, Quarry Business Park which leads to Halfpenny Valley Industrial Estate fall under the Craigavon Sector Map for this research.

Planning applications

In 2022-23 there was a total of 26 planning applications decided between Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown Town Centres. All of the applications were local and so were mainly residential and minor commercial applications.

Lurgan town centre applications decided were 10 of which 3 were categorised as other and 4 as change of use, 1 mixed use, 1 civic use and 1 commercial application in Lurgan

Business demography

In Lurgan DEA, Construction accounts for the highest percentage share of businesses accounting for 16.1% while Retail Trades accounts for the second highest percentage share at 11.6% and Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, the third highest at 10.1%. Lurgan has a higher percentage share of accommodation and food service activities and arts, entertainment, recreation and other services when compared to the other DEA's and the Borough overall.

	Armagh	Banbridge	Craigavon	Cusher	Lagan River	Lurgan	Portadown	ABC Borough
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	30.2%	27.7%	11.5%	41.3%	30.6%	10.1%	22.0%	26.7%
Production	6.4%	5.3%	12.1%	8.1%	7.2%	9.0%	7.0%	7.4%
Construction	14.9%	15.1%	17.8%	12.9%	15.3%	16.1%	10.3%	14.3%
Motor Trades	4.6%	4.1%	4.5%	4.2%	5.0%	3.5%	4.8%	4.4%
Wholesale Trades	4.1%	4.1%	4.5%	3.9%	5.9%	4.5%	5.5%	4.6%
Retail Trades	8.2%	8.5%	7.6%	5.5%	5.9%	11.6%	10.3%	8.1%
Transport and storage	4.9%	5.0%	5.7%	5.2%	3.6%	5.0%	7.7%	5.4%
Accommodation and food service activities	3.6%	4.4%	4.5%	2.6%	2.7%	8.0%	5.5%	4.3%
Information and communication	1.3%	1.9%	3.2%	1.3%	1.8%	2.5%	1.5%	1.8%
Financial and insurance activities	0.8%	0.9%	1.9%	1.0%	1.4%	1.0%	2.2%	1.2%
Property	2.8%	3.5%	4.5%	1.6%	2.3%	2.0%	3.3%	2.8%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	6.2%	7.5%	6.4%	4.8%	7.7%	8.0%	7.0%	6.7%
Business administration and support services	3.1%	3.1%	5.1%	2.3%	4.1%	5.0%	4.0%	3.6%
Education	0.8%	0.6%	1.3%	0.3%	0.5%	1.0%	0.7%	0.8%
Human health and social work activities	2.6%	2.5%	2.5%	1.9%	2.3%	4.5%	2.9%	2.7%
Arts, entertainment, recreation and other services	4.9%	6.0%	6.4%	3.2%	3.6%	8.5%	5.9%	5.3%
Total Number of VAT and/or PAYE Registered Businesses	1,940	1,590	785	1,550	1,110	995	1,365	9,330



Table 27: Broad industry group of VAT and / or PAYE registered businesses in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough, March 2024. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA.

In Lurgan town centre, the majority of businesses (35%) are also engaged in wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles. Other services activities had the next highest share at 13% followed by accommodation and food service activities and professional, scientific and technical activities accounting for 11% each.

Industry Section	Craigavon		Lurgan		Portadown	
	No. of Businesses	% of All Businesses	No. of Businesses	% of All Businesses	No. of Businesses	% of All Businesses
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*	*
Mining And Quarrying	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Manufacturing	N/A	N/A	10	4%	5	1%
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply	N/A	N/A	*	*	N/A	N/A
Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*	*
Construction	N/A	N/A	5	2%	10	3%
Wholesale And Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles And Motorcycles	45	56%	95	35%	115	32%
Transportation And Storage	*	*	*	*	5	1%
Accommodation And Food Service Activities	10	13%	30	11%	40	11%
Information And Communication	N/A	N/A	*	*	*	*
Financial And Insurance Activities	*	*	10	4%	30	8%
Real Estate Activities	*	*	5	2%	15	4%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	*	*	30	11%	40	11%
Administrative And Support Service Activities	5	6%	15	6%	15	4%
Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	*	*	*	*	*	*
Education	N/A	N/A	*	*	10	3%
Human Health and Social Work Activities	*	*	15	6%	25	7%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	N/A	N/A	10	4%	15	4%
Other Service Activities	*	*	35	13%	40	11%
Total	80		270		365	

Table 28: Business Demography in Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown Town Centres, 2023. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities. Please note, IDBR figure were recorded during Covid.

Business Turnover and Size

Information on business turnover is available from the IDBR by DEA. In 2024, in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough overall, just 12% of businesses had a turnover exceeding £1m. However, in Craigavon DEA, more than one in every 5 businesses (20.4%) had a turnover of £1m or more. Lurgan strength in % of turnover in the CUA falls across bands shown in £100-249 thousand (28.1%), £250-499 (16.1%) and £500-499 (8.5%).



	Turnover Size Band (£ Thousands)							Total
	0-49	50-99	100-249	250-499	500-999	1,000-4,999	5,000+	
Armagh	23.7%	18.0%	23.7%	12.4%	8.5%	10.1%	3.6%	1,940
Banbridge	24.2%	18.2%	25.2%	13.2%	9.1%	8.8%	1.3%	1,590
Craigavon	17.2%	15.3%	26.1%	12.7%	8.3%	11.5%	8.9%	785
Cusher	29.4%	18.1%	23.2%	11.9%	8.7%	7.4%	1.9%	1,550
Lagan River	26.6%	18.9%	25.2%	12.2%	8.6%	6.8%	2.3%	1,110
Lurgan	15.6%	18.1%	28.1%	16.1%	10.6%	8.5%	3.0%	995
Portadown	20.9%	14.7%	27.1%	14.7%	9.5%	10.3%	2.9%	1,365
ABC Total	23.3%	17.4%	25.2%	13.2%	8.9%	8.9%	3.1%	9,330

Table 29: Number of Businesses in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council Area by District Electoral Area and Turnover Size Band (£000), March 2024. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA.

Lurgan (and Portadown) both have a higher percentage share of businesses employing between 10 and 49 staff when compared the Borough average of 7.7%.

District Electoral Area	Employee Size Band				Total
	0-9	10-49	50-249	250+	
Armagh	89.9%	8.2%	1.5%	*	1,940
Banbridge	91.8%	7.2%	0.9%	*	1,590
Craigavon	81.5%	12.1%	3.8%	1.9%	785
Cusher	93.9%	5.2%	1.0%	*	1,550
Lagan River	94.1%	5.0%	0.9%	*	1,110
Lurgan	88.9%	9.0%	1.0%	0.5%	995
Portadown	89.0%	9.2%	1.8%	*	1,365
ABC Total	90.5%	7.7%	1.4%	0.4%	9,330

Table 30: Number of Businesses in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council Area by District Electoral Area and Employee Size Band, March 2024. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA. Please note, IDBR figures are rounded to the nearest

The Town Centre Database provides data on business turnover in the town centres, and this is presented in the table below for Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown town centre for 2021 which is the most recent year available. As can be seen in this table, a lot of the data is considered disclosive and so cannot be presented. In Lurgan, Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles accounted for 34% of all businesses and 67% of all business turnover. Lurgan had 295 businesses in the town centre.

Industry Section	Craigavon		Lurgan		Portadown	
	Turnover (£million)	% of Total Turnover	Turnover (£million)	% of Total Turnover	Turnover (£million)	% of Total Turnover
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	d	d	d	d	d	d
Mining and Quarrying	d	d	d	d	d	d
Manufacturing	d	d	d	d	d	d
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply	d	d	d	d	d	d
Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	d	d	d	d	d	d



Industry Section	Craigavon		Lurgan		Portadown	
	Turnover (£million)	% of Total Turnover	Turnover (£million)	% of Total Turnover	Turnover (£million)	% of Total Turnover
Construction	d	d	d	d	d	d
Wholesale And Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles And Motorcycles	£134.52	87%	£145.30	67%	£79.02	61%
Transportation and Storage	d	d	d	d	d	d
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	£6.61	4%	d	d	£23.95	19%
Information and Communication	d	d	d	d	d	d
Financial and Insurance Activities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Real Estate Activities	d	d	d	d	d	d
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	d	d	d	d	£2.06	2%
Administrative and Support Service Activities	£2.70	2%	£3.04	1%	£10.43	8%
Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Education	d	d	d	d	d	d
Human Health and Social Work Activities	d	d	d	d	d	d
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	d	d	d	d	d	d
Other Service Activities	d	d	£2.47	1%	£0.87	1%
	£154.43		£215.91		£129.01	
Disclosive Total	£10.60	7%	£65.09	30%	£12.67	10%

Table 31: Business turnover in Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown Town Centre, 2021. Source: Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry, NISRA Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities.

Employee Jobs

Information on employee jobs from the Town Centre Database is presented in the Table overleaf.

Lurgan had 295 businesses in the town centre, of which it had 1937 employee jobs.

Industry Section	Craigavon		Lurgan		Portadown	
	Employee Jobs	% of Total Employees	Employee Jobs	% of Total Employees	Employee Jobs	% of Total Employees
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mining and Quarrying	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Manufacturing	N/A	N/A	148	8%	*	*
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*	*
Construction	*	*	N/A	N/A	*	*
Wholesale And Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	1,184	62%	743	38%	1,001	30%
Transportation And Storage	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*	*



Industry Section	Craigavon		Lurgan		Portadown	
	Employee Jobs	% of Total Employees	Employee Jobs	% of Total Employees	Employee Jobs	% of Total Employees
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	258	14%	193	10%	375	11%
Information and Communication	N/A	N/A	*	*	*	*
Financial and Insurance Activities	*	*	115	6%	203	6%
Real Estate Activities	*	*	*	*	89	3%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	*	*	124	6%	173	5%
Administrative and Support Service Activities	46	2%	57	3%	*	*
Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	*	*	*	*	*	*
Education	N/A	N/A	*	*	90	3%
Human Health and Social Work Activities	*	*	170	9%	407	12%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	N/A	N/A	44	2%	78	2%
Other Service Activities	*	*	117	6%	125	4%
	1,898		1,937		3,283	

Table 32: Lurgan Employees Job - Town Centre Database

Business networks

Lurgan benefits from a varied business landscape, supported by a range of local organisations and facilities. The town is home to the Lurgan Business Complex, operated by the Craigavon Industrial Development Organisation (CIDO), which offers flexible workspace solutions for start-ups and growing enterprises. With proximity to major transport links, makes Lurgan an ideal base for commercial, industrial, and retail ventures

Lurgan Working Group are endeavouring to revitalise a network support with the town centre businesses and foster relationships with Council and Statutory bodies to foster economic development, networking opportunities, and collaboration on initiatives that promote civic pride and enterprise.



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
Currently 42 industrial heritage sites which include bridges, brewery, railway crosses, gasworks, saw pit, distillery, brickfield, bottling works, linen factories and a power loom factory. (HED Map Viewer-Heritage sites). Approximately two defence heritage sites which include an army camp and headquarters.	Wider knowledge, sign posting and promotion for heritage in the town is needed on the ground and online. Greater awareness of existing heritage tours of new potential operators should be collaborative supported for better local and tourism outcomes.
There are a few already developed Heritage Trails for the area. These are available on ABC Get Outdoors and the Lurgan Townscape Heritage web pages.	The trails could benefit the place with further promotion and creating walking events. The potential for heritage walking tours run locally by Brownlow Castle to include these sites and attract visitors from the likes of passengers docking in Belfast from Cruise liners are now exploring other sites in Lurgan area, to which joint promotion and opportunities could be accommodated.
Currently twelve heritage properties at risk include Family wing at Brownlow Castle, 38 Church Place, 3-5 Market Street, Former Northern Bank at 16 High Street, 45,46, 47 High Street, Soye's Mill, Lower North Street, The Lurgan Factory LTD, Site 12, Ulster St. Industrial Estate, Brick wall along Ulster St. and Two-Storey block adjacent to the Lurgan Factory Ltd. Ulster Street, Brownlow Memorial Shankill Burial Ground, Demesne House Kilmore Road/ Antrim Road (HED Map Viewer-Heritage at Risk)	Working closely with the Town Heritage Team further opportunities to protect through redevelopment schemes requires consideration by Council and partners, along with local developers/investors/owners. Heritage assets are vital for the identity and future regeneration of the area. Practical working solutions marrying scheme and investors with potential which aligns with planning is the key to driving forward solutions for the development and future use.
One historic garden and demesnes which includes Brownlow Castle and Lurgan Park exists in the Lurgan area.	Family wing at Brownlow Castle is seeking investment for future plans. Greater promotion and collaborative efforts to link to the town, its heritage and dwell time outside of tours in the town centre could improve retail, and leisure opportunities. There is positive plans and actions in place to continue developing these assets and attracting tourism and events.
Togetherness, Collaboration and Living Well	
Good educational offering in the Lurgan area. Schools include, Drumnamoe Nursery School, Harrison Nursery School, Tannaghmore Primary School, Lurgan Model Integrated Primary School, St Francis' Primary School, Dickson Primary School, King's Park Primary School Lurgan College, St Ronan's College, Lurgan Junior High School, Ceara School (SEN). Southern Regional College also has a campus in Lurgan.	Opportunities to enhance education also include new school build investment (potential equal to funds for Primary £10 - £20m; Post Primary £30 - £40 million; SEN-£40-50m) in St Ronan's College. The School Enhancement Programme (SEP) has also recently approved or completed works to the value of up to £4.5million in Carrick Primary School, Lurgan Model and Lurgan College. Ceara School is the only Special Needs School within CUA. It caters to pupils with a range of learning needs. Pupil spaces are in high demand within the catchment area.
Libraries NI - Lurgan Carnegie Library was refurbished in 2020 and is a place for all generations to learn, connect and work together.	Linked to community planning, facilitating intergenerational communications, working with schools and in partnership with Southern Health & Social Care Trust heritage resources and AE Russel Appreciation society could have a positive influence on cultural, social, economic and environmental developments to empower and enable people and communities.
Lurgan Park is a jewel hidden from the town with its fountain, lake and sporting opportunities along with events. As the second largest Park on the island of Ireland it is well presented with a variety of opportune	Toilet facilities are lacking, improved signage is needed to link the town centre, Brownlow Castle, the lake and golf club and offer great potential for local residents and visitors alike. An annual events schedule is needed and could be developed beyond existing offerings on a frequent basis.



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
spaces and facilities for the whole community to utilise.	
There is a large variety of sporting, community, history, heritage and church organisations focussing on togetherness, collaboration and living well in Lurgan, many with excellent facilities.	Greater opportunities which link to youth, hard to reach and deprivation projects supported through initiatives like PEACEPLUS, Good Relations and PCSP, along with other charities is required to engage and help improve some of the challenges in Lurgan Park. (e.g. ASB) Freedom Foods Pantry - Lurgan - bring people together around food, leading to people avoiding food poverty. Additional funding for engagement and projects which focus on togetherness, collaboration and living well could provide further improvement opportunities. Supporting volunteers is vital to maintain local support within the communities across the diverse population.
<p>Community Centres and Town Hall - The Lurgan Town Hall is a Grade B1 listed building turned community arts and resource centre, offering space for exhibitions, training, community groups, and events. Local community centres offering rooms, halls, and activity spaces for classes, support groups, youth programmes and celebrations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avenue Road Community Centre, • Mourneview Community Centre, and • North Lurgan Community Centre. • The Jethro centre, managed by Shankill Parish Caring Association 	<p>The facilities operate and run in partnership with community to encourage togetherness, collaboration and living well.</p> <p>Facility owners to continue to actively promote their offering and seek funding to improve activities.</p> <p>Ongoing maintenance and investment of these buildings is important. Clearer signage and branding to make the centres more recognisable within the neighbourhood.</p>
<p>Neighbourhood Renewal (NR) area- Lurgan -9,194 population in Lurgan NR area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burglary- 83% decrease between 2003 and 2021 • Anti-Social Behaviour- 42% increase between 2008 and 2021 • Theft- 49% decrease between 2003 and 2021 • Recorded Crime- 26% decrease between 2003 and 2021 • Criminal Damage- 7% increase between 2003 and 2021 • Drug Offences- % of drug offences increased by more than 10 times between 2003 and 2021 • Violence, sexual offences & Robbery- more than doubled between 2003 and 2021 <p>Domestic Abuse- 42% increase between 2005 and 2021</p>	Continued focus on NR areas and inclusion through investment schemes and team in the area is vital to ensure no one is left behind.
Being Safe & Welcoming	
<p>Physical improvements to the public realm</p> <p>Over the years, there have been 3 phases of public realm improvements in the town centre.</p>	<p>Under a new project Lurgan Linkages, this will revitalise and improve the linkages between the town centre and the carparks via Black's Court and Moore's Lane.</p> <p>Protecting and Enhancing Our Investment in Urban Centres project which is applicable to Lurgan (Funded by DfC) includes the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Festive lighting upgrade • Tree Works in the town centres



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Street furniture replacement, upgrade and maintenance as identified. <p>Addressing retail challenges in the core of Lurgan through partnership and engaging property owners, addressing dereliction in the town and seeking solutions through schemes to support heritage are needed to improve Lurgan. Particularly along Market Street/High Street and towards Brownlow House and the park, require ongoing works and further investment and engagement with land owners. Less reliance on High Street anchor brand tenants and more local shops with living above opportunities is required.</p>
Lurgan Interfaces	Removal of a small interface at Margretta Park recently completed in a welcoming and attractive manner and with good community engagement.
Crime recorded in town - 580 (8% of SDL), ASB in town centre 198 (8% of SDL) (PSNI stats, via Town Centre Database, DfC, 2022).	CCTV monitoring and expansion to other areas of town could provide improvement along with active PCSP projects to engage active groups and reduce ASB, in the town and park.
Cleanliness	<p>The town streets off the high street and back lands suffer from rubbish and are unsightly in places. Wardens in the Park have a large job following up on dog walkers and their waste.</p> <p>Council-backed campaigns like the Big Spring Clean, Adopt-a-Street, and Clean Neighbourhoods Service, Local retailer involvement, with shops organising their own clean-up drives and Volunteers and informal action, though less formally organised, demonstrating community concern and willingness to engage could assist with the ongoing challenges</p>
Multi-layered Purpose and Meaning	
<p>Daytime time economy- The daytime economy of Lurgan is primarily driven by its role as a traditional market town with a strong independent retail and service base. Food and hospitality play an important role in the town's daytime economy, with cafés and small eateries creating a café culture that attracts both local residents and visitors, although the overall range of restaurants and dining options remains limited.</p> <p>Beyond retail and hospitality, Lurgan is sustained by a range of essential services including banking, pharmacies, legal and professional services, and convenience retail which underpin its function as a service centre for the rural hinterland. Community and civic assets further support the daytime economy, with the Carnegie Library providing cultural and educational value and Lurgan Park, Northern Ireland's largest urban park, acting as a significant daytime draw for leisure and recreation.</p> <p>The weekly town plaza market continues the historic tradition of Lurgan as a market town, reinforcing the town's role as a gathering and trading place. Employment opportunities exist within and around the town centre, though larger employers located in the Kitchen Hill area are not yet strongly connected to the</p>	<p>To strengthen the daytime economy, improvements are required in several areas. There is a clear opportunity to diversify the retail mix by attracting artisan, craft, sustainable retail, and co-working uses into vacant units. Expanding the food and hospitality offer, particularly by encouraging family dining, restaurants, and crossover venues that operate into the evening, would help to lengthen visitor stays and improve dwell time in the centre.</p> <p>Lurgan's heritage and tourism assets also present untapped potential to support the daytime economy. Linking Brownlow Castle, which now attracts international cruise tour groups, and Lurgan Park more directly with the town centre through signage, walking trails, and visitor packages could increase town centre footfall. Similarly, heritage-led walking routes highlighting AE Russell's birthplace, listed buildings, and the Conservation Area could integrate cultural tourism with local retail and hospitality businesses. Supporting town centre living and bringing underused upper floors back into residential use would also strengthen the town's vibrancy by increasing footfall during both the day and evening.</p> <p>Further improvements could come from strengthening physical and wayfinding connections between Kitchen Hill and the town centre, thereby capturing more lunchtime and after-work trade. Environmental Improvements to enhance Market Street and High Street with greenery, seating, and better pedestrian environments would reinforce the attractiveness of the centre. Complementing this, the redevelopment of Lurgan rail station and planned signalling improvements present</p>



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
<p>town centre, limiting their contribution to local footfall and daytime trade.</p> <p>While the town benefits from a resilient service base, the daytime economy faces challenges relating to retail diversity and vitality. Vacancy levels remain high, particularly along High Street and Market Street, and the town’s retail mix is heavily weighted towards services and convenience rather than comparison retail or destination food and drink.</p>	<p>opportunities to enhance accessibility and better connect the town centre to the wider Belfast–Dublin corridor. Finally, building on the weekly town market through seasonal or themed markets, as well as more frequent use of Lurgan Park for family-oriented events, would expand the daytime visitor base.</p>
<p>Evening/Night time economy- Lurgan’s evening and night-time economy is relatively limited compared to its daytime offer and reflects the town’s small scale, service focus, and absence of large-scale leisure or entertainment facilities. At present, activity in the town centre after traditional retail hours is primarily supported by a small number of cafés, takeaways, and licensed premises, which serve local residents but do not create a strong destination offer. The café culture that contributes positively to the town during the day does not yet extend significantly into the evening, and opportunities for family dining and later-night food venues are restricted. As a result, footfall in the town centre falls sharply after 6pm, with few attractions to encourage people to stay longer.</p> <p>The hospitality sector, while modest, does provide a foundation for growth. Pubs, bars, and social venues sustain elements of the night-time economy and support community interaction, but the choice is limited when compared to larger neighbouring centres such as Portadown or Central Craigavon. Cultural and leisure assets such as Lurgan Park and the town’s heritage sites are not currently programmed or promoted for evening use, meaning that some of Lurgan’s most distinctive assets do not contribute directly to after-hours activity.</p> <p>Safety and accessibility are important factors in shaping the evening economy. While Lurgan benefits from good regional connectivity, the rail service timetable and signalling constraints limit late-evening services, reducing public transport options for those visiting the town centre at night. The presence of vacant units along High Street and Market Street also impacts the vibrancy and perception of safety in the evening, further discouraging activity once shops close.</p>	<p>There are clear opportunities to strengthen and diversify the night-time economy. Expanding the food and drink offer to include family restaurants, casual dining venues, and independent eateries to open later into the evening would significantly enhance choice and attract a broader customer base. Encouraging existing cafés to extend their trading hours or operate as hybrid café-bars could build on the daytime culture and provide a more seamless transition into evening activity. Introducing a greater variety of cultural and leisure events, such as evening markets, outdoor cinema, music or theatre performances, or heritage-themed events, would also help animate the town centre and make fuller use of assets like Lurgan Park and Brownlow Castle.</p> <p>Public realm improvements, particularly better lighting, wayfinding, and activation of vacant units would improve perceptions of safety and create a more welcoming evening environment. Encouraging residential use above shops would also play a vital role, increasing natural surveillance and supporting a town centre population that sustains after-hours trade. Strengthening transport connectivity, especially through planned investment in the Lurgan rail station redevelopment and signalling upgrades, could improve late-evening accessibility and encourage more visitors to travel into the town at night.</p> <p>Overall, Lurgan’s night-time economy is underdeveloped but has the potential to grow significantly if built around the town’s independent character, heritage, and green assets. With a stronger food and drink offer, more cultural programming, and improved safety and accessibility, Lurgan could develop a more balanced economy that supports activity both during the day and into the evening, creating a town centre that is lively, inclusive, and sustainable.</p> <p>Lurgan Town Hall in previous years had a greater evening offering, with some investment to the town hall, it could renew its role in the provision of evening events and activities.</p>
Adaptable Buildings and Spaces	
<p>Vacancy rates in the town 18.8% (NI average 23%) according to land and property services town centre</p>	<p>In Lurgan town centre, the biggest change has been with regards the average internal size of manufactories which have decreased by</p>



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
<p>database, DfC (30/4/25). The vacant properties identified in the CUA stats study (ARUP) were found to be in various different states of condition however, in Lurgan town centre, almost 55% were in very good (9.1%) or good (45.5%) condition. Four of the 77 properties were rated as poor condition which would imply substantial deterioration with a further 8 rated as very poor (10.4%) where the building was found to have deteriorated and failed. A total of 23 properties (29.9%) were rated as satisfactory in that the building has deterioration and has not been recently maintained.</p>	<p>approximately 24 m2. The average internal size of shops, showrooms, supermarkets etc. and warehouses, stores, workshops, and garages have increased in Lurgan between 2017 and 2024.</p> <p>Town Centre management are working closely with local businesses to meet and seek solutions proactively together. There is ongoing promotion of independent retailers and the promotion of businesses (workshops, shops, market stalls etc) in sectors such as arts and crafts, food and produce, clothes, via the UrbanABC brand.</p>
<p>Housing capacity within the town. There is an estimated 938 residential housing units in progress in and around Lurgan town. There is a projected need for 406 social houses in the area in the next 5 years. Lurgan = North Lurgan (316) + South Lurgan (90)</p>	<p>The active Townscape Heritage project and its scheme presents opportunities to cater for the housing need. Successful examples of town centre living have been completed and there is great demand for renting above shops as demonstrated by recent completed works.</p> <p>Further considerations around living above shops and working with Heritage teams and the planners could assist in creating a living high street aligned with meeting what appears to be a latent demand for town centre living opportunities at present.</p>
<p>Enterprise and industry within Lurgan - 295 businesses in town, 1937 employee jobs in the area, 955 (10.6% of ABC Borough) VAT registered/or PAYE registered Businesses (9330 in total ABC Borough) including significant food, logistics, retail businesses.</p> <p>Lurgan Business Complex, operated by the Craigavon Industrial Development Organisation (CIDO), offers flexible workspace solutions for start-ups and growing enterprises.</p>	<p>There is growing support for the local Lurgan Working Group with several businesses meeting and bringing forward ideas to progress trade in the town. Collaboration by working together is an important step to boosting local trade.</p> <p>There is a variety of larger businesses and industry located along the Portadown Road. Industrial lands include Portadown Road Ind Estate, Quarry Business Park leading to Halfpenny Valley Ind Estate and Silverwood Industrial Estate. <i>However, for the purpose of this research some of the above are considered in the Craigavon DEA Sector.</i></p>
Well Serviced & Connected	
<p>Transport hub</p> <p>Lurgan is the 11th busiest station in Northern Ireland it runs half-hourly trains between Lurgan and Belfast Grand Central. The Enterprise Cross-Border Service (Belfast–Dublin Line) does not stop in Lurgan, locals have to go to Portadown- 15 trains each way per day (Monday–Saturday) and 8 each way on Sundays The enterprise frequency and its three road crossing points in Lurgan are having impact on the Community impact.</p>	<p>Concerns have been raised over the frequent rail crossing closures at William Street, Antrim Road, and Lake Street, increasing local traffic congestion. Residents have called for mitigation measures such as electronic warning signs or reconfigured crossings.</p> <p>The station redevelopment is viewed as a major local boost—expected to support economic growth and improved accessibility. Plans are in consultation stage for the redevelopment of Lurgan Train Station (Aug 2025).</p> <p>Engagement with Translink to explore operational solution to congestion caused by train station barrier timing is urgently needed.</p>
<p>Traffic & parking</p>	<p>A heavy reliance on the car is still existent. There are a variety of well-located car parks in Lurgan. The current rail timetable changes are however causing much disruption to traffic (3 crossing points) and trade in Lurgan and requires urgent solutions from Translink and DFI.</p>



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
<p>Retail offering Independent businesses such as Alana Interiors, High Street Harvest, Millar’s Shoes, Cafolla Bros and New Haven Café, alongside butchers, florists, and specialist outlets, provide the town with individuality and a distinctive character not found in larger retail centres. A significant proportion of activity comes from personal services, particularly hair, beauty, and barbering businesses, which generate regular footfall and support repeat local custom.</p> <p>There is a weekly market on the plaza.</p>	<p>Weekly footfall 17392 (Springboard, w/c 23/06/2025). The main retail and services are located on the High Street, Market Street and Millenium Way.</p> <p>Millenium Way also offers larger chains such as (e.g. Tesco, Lidl, Screwfix) and independent home and home improvement businesses (e.g. Alwood, Alanna Interiors)</p> <p>The future of Lurgan’s Market Street and High Street however lies in shifting the focus to promotion of independent retailers and businesses via exploring niches and promotion of businesses (workshops, shops, market stalls etc) in targeted sectors: arts and crafts, food and produce, clothes offer potential for the town centre retail.</p>
Being Sustainable - Social, Environmental and Economic	
<p>Sustainable opportunities</p>	<p>Lurgan offers a wide range of opportunities for sustainable improvements, particularly in the restoration of existing buildings. The Town Heritage Scheme has seen a number of properties invested in and great demand subsequently for town centre living and above the shop residential opportunities. Utilising sustainable construction methods for both new and existing environments in playing an important role in guiding and sustaining the heritage of the town centre buildings.</p>
<p>Active Travel The Community Greenway linking Portadown and Lurgan was revitalised in 2016 to better connect the train stations, hospitals and local communities.</p>	<p>Whilst the Community Greenway is in place, it would benefit from further promotion and maintenance.</p> <p>Following DfI active travel consultation, the Active Travel Delivery Plan will provide future direction and opportunities.</p>
<p>Future investment potential</p>	<p>Waves Leisure site, Lurgan Park, Lurgan TH – capital and revenue (improvements to facilities), Lough Neagh (Blue-Green Algae – solutions / outputs, , Invest NI assistance to businesses supporting new jobs, Brownlow Castle – family wing refurbishment, Lurgan Train Station redevelopment</p>

Table 33: Lurgan MAG Health Check



Shaping the Future of Lurgan

The table below shows a SWOT analysis of Lurgan following engagement with key stakeholders across the town and site walk through the place. The following is indicative of what has been raised to date but is not an exhaustive list.

Strengths	Gaps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brownlow Castle and tourism activities • Community Greenway • Connectivity to main transport routes • Good local primary schools • Heritage buildings & investment – Townscape Heritage Scheme • Junior Park Run – Sunday • Lurgan Agriculture Show • Lurgan Park- fountain, lake, tennis courts, bowling green, golf club, cricket ground, green space, car parking • Many active sporting clubs, community groups and active church communities • Proximity to Oxford Island and Lough Neagh • Staffed community centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities and events calendar and promotion of same • Attractions and experiences in town centres • Brown signs of the M1 for Brownlow Castle and Lurgan Park • Connecting community and creating sense of place • Dereliction in town • Hinterland transport to rural not great • Newcomers’ inclusion and celebration of their culture • Physical connection between Brownlow Castle, Lurgan park and the town centre, under developed. • Signage to Parks • Walking trails under promoted
Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversionary activities • Evening economy offering • Heritage and Health programming • Improved signage to facilities • In town accommodation/living investment schemes • Invest Northern Ireland lands • Lurgan Park investment in facilities & lake and promotion thereof • Mean-whileing opportunities • More café & good restaurants • Saturday Park Run • Social housing development • Solutions to rail signals timings (3 crossings) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Division • Dereliction • Drugs/Alcohol • Industry & housing next to one another • Investment from services – NI water, electricity, broadband, sewerage • Multi agency support & getting things done • Ongoing ASB in the park • Poverty • Revitalising the town centre • Toilets in the park • Traffic congestion created by rail signal system due to Enterprise timetable frequency changes • Vacancy in town centre • Vandalism

Table 34: SWOT Analysis of Lurgan



Key findings & recommendations for Lurgan

Table 35: Key findings & recommendations for Lurgan

The early-stage discovery work for Lurgan highlights the following key findings and recommendations, which can be further tested and explored in the next stage of the place plan development through targeted stakeholder engagement, site visits, analysis, spatial and community workshops.

LURGAN FINDINGS AND IDEAS
FINDING 1 - HERITAGE LED REGENERATION
<p>Lurgan benefits from a distinctive Georgian and Victorian urban fabric, historic shopfronts, churches, and civic buildings that provide a unique sense of place compared with more generic town centres. The architectural continuity along Market Street and around Church Place gives the town centre a cultural identity that can be marketed as a differentiator.</p> <p>Lurgan has a vacancy rate of 18.8%, which is slightly below the Northern Ireland average of 23%. Vacant upper floors, historic premises in poor repair, and long-term voids weaken the vitality of the town centre. Many properties are suitable for adaptive reuse (residential, creative workspaces, boutique retail, or cultural uses). Regional and local policies encourage town-centre living, reuse of vacant buildings, and heritage-led regeneration.</p> <p>Lurgan Park, Brownlow House, and historic churches are strong heritage assets but are not fully linked to the retail core, resulting in missed opportunities to draw footfall into Market Street and adjacent areas.</p>
FINDING 1 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION
<p>Lurgan has the opportunity through heritage maximisation and asset utilisation to reduce vacancy, attract new uses, and grow a living, mixed-use Conservation Area. Linking the retail core to landmark assets, supporting adaptive reuse, and embedding community-led cultural activity will reinforce Lurgan’s identity as a distinctive historic town with a sustainable future. Below are some recommendations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lurgan Heritage-Led Regeneration: Consider undertaking a Lurgan Heritage Regeneration Action Plan mapping key historic assets, heritage vacancy, highlighting potential heritage investment opportunities, and clustering of projects on the streetscape, using the heritage as an enabler. ● Create a Living Conservation Area: Support to bring a flexible approach to the Conservation Area to bring units back into residential and economic use and allow access to derelict sites ● Incorporating sensitive sustainable development: Adopt sustainable construction methods and net zero carbon approaches in the redevelopment plans of the heritage-built environment while addressing environmental concerns. ● Heritage vibrancy: Promote small-scale cultural, food, and creative industries in vacant heritage premises. Continue to expand on the success of the Townscape Heritage programme of activities and initiatives. ● Collaborating and working in partnership: with public and private owners of heritage assets is imperative to fulfil the needs of locals and visitors. Refer to the findings for Lurgan Park and Brownlow Castle. ● Funding streams (e.g., Heritage Lottery, Levelling Up Fund, PEACEPLUS) support adaptive reuse and cultural heritage projects.



- Develop clear **pedestrian connections** between Lurgan Park, Brownlow House, and the retail core. Introduce wayfinding signage and heritage walking trails that encourage visitors to circulate through Market Street and High Street.

FINDING 2 - RAIL CONGESTION AND CONNECTIVITY

Lurgan is served by three key railway level crossings at

- William Street
- Lake Street
- Antrim Road

Collectively, these crossings form critical pinch-points within the local transport network. With the introduction of the new hourly Enterprise Train Service, the level crossing barriers are closed more frequently leading to prolonged delays for vehicles and pedestrians across multiple approach routes. This is impacting traffic and pedestrian movement across Lurgan and resulting in disruption to daily routines of the people who live work and visit Lurgan. It should be noted that there are schools in close proximity to the current level crossings.

Continuous engagement with Translink to explore operational solution to congestion caused by the increase in frequency of level crossing closures is crucial.

FINDING 2 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

Whilst the railway connection has many benefits, its increased services have led to traffic congestion and delays in town. It is important to continue to gather evidence from residents and businesses on the economic cost of barrier delays to strengthen the case for operational improvements should be carried out in a co-ordinated manner. Engagement is ongoing in relation to this impact.

Other recommendations to improve the rail service in Lurgan could include:

- **Barrier Timing Review:** Translink and NI Railways should consider an operational review of barrier down-times, benchmarking against modern signalling practices. Furthermore, short term solutions to upgrade to smarter signalling or barrier technology could reduce closure duration without compromising safety.
- **Integrated Transport and Town Centre Strategy- Traffic Management Measures:** Work with DfI Roads to optimise traffic flows around the level crossing, including diversionary routes, improved signage, and smart traffic lights to relieve peak congestion should be considered.
- **Improving the arterial routes** into the town centre in line with previous 'Renewing the Routes' projects and seek solutions which are short term to the rail signalling issues and timetables causing the disruption to business.
- **Active Travel Links:** Enhance pedestrian and cycling connections/bridges across the railway line to reduce dependency on vehicle crossings particularly around school times. This could be an opportunity to strengthen the case for active travel funding, and alternative parking options to enable town centre access on foot.
- **Investment options** will need to be explored to alleviate the congestion issues in Lurgan at present.
- **Major redevelopment and upgrade works at Lurgan Station.** Proposals have been out to public consultation closing on 29 August 2025.



FINDING 3 - LURGAN PARK PLAN AND ENHANCEMENTS

Lurgan Park is the largest urban park in Northern Ireland, and the second largest in Ireland covering approximately 250 acres. It offers a variety of recreational and cultural activities, including a large man-made lake, mature woodland paths, sports fields, tennis courts, a bowling green, play areas, and angling opportunities.

The park hosts regular events such as the Saturday Park Run, Junior Park Run on Sundays, and the annual Lurgan Agriculture Show.

Through conversations, there are aspects of the park which require improvement and enhancement works. Unfortunately, there are no lights in Lurgan Park, which raises concerns for safety particularly in the shorter evenings and for lone walkers. By upgrading facilities, creating year-round activity, fostering community ownership it can also reach further for linking to tourism initiatives and funding.

Consider framing improvements to boosting storytelling, visitor engagement, or immersive experiences in park planning to align with Tourism schemes' priorities from Tourism NI and Shared Island opportunities as they arise.

The new trails and audio interventions are an excellent investment for visitors and the local community alike.

FINDING 3 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

Lurgan Park could benefit from an **initial masterplan**, to identify investment opportunities to improve the space, but also to conserve the natural and built heritage of the park, including condition site surveys.

Key areas of physical **improvements and interventions** which have been identified and require further exploration include.

- Primary and secondary entrance enhancements
- On site toilet improvements including accessibility
- On site facility upgrades such as pitches, tennis courts and trails
- Family friendly feature installations to encourage more play and dwell time
- Restoration and upgrade of current on-site infrastructure
- Park signage upgrades
- Park lighting along walking routes particularly the Great Avenue
- Safety enhancements to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour
- Using digital integration for visitor information and interpretation

To **raise appreciation** for the park, its heritage and natural assets, further programmes could be delivered for all ages. Further events and activities generally would be welcomed and could be explored.

Promotion and Collaboration- could be strengthened, particularly with the other local Heritage Assets owners such as Brownlow Castle, and with similar historic parks such as Phoenix Park. Brown tourism signage at Junction 10 from the M1 would be beneficial.

Tourism Partnerships will be important to strengthen the appeal of Lurgan Park such as Tourism NI, Visit Armagh, and local tour operators to position Lurgan Park as a heritage and leisure destination.



Similarly, there is merit collaborating with local educational institutions on a range of park related topics; biodiversity, arts projects, and walks.

FINDING 4 - BROWNLOW CASTLE & TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES

The impressive Brownlow Castle is located next to Lurgan Park and is a significant heritage asset.

Brownlow Castle has recently been rebranded, focusing on new marketing and promotion initiatives at the site, as well as new product offerings.

The site has been collaborating with tour operators over the last few years and have secured bus tours from cruise ships to stop at Lurgan, in turn increasing visitor spend and footfall to the town centre. There are proposals to extend the accommodation provision in the family wing at Brownlow Castle to increase overnight stays and wedding provision.

FINDING 4 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

Brownlow Castle has a vision to develop its offering in the coming years, with significant investment proposals in the pipeline, and a strategic plan in place.

Investment opportunities at Brownlow Castle:

- **Brownlow Castle restoration and extension** - these projects offer greater opportunities to host weddings, overnight stays, bus tours, business conferencing etc
- **Visitor promotion and packages with town centre businesses** - Develop packages combining castle tours with town-centre retail, food, and leisure opportunities to encourage longer dwell times and visitor spend. Brown tourism signage at Junction 10 from the M1 would be beneficial.
- **Cultural programming** - Brownlow Castle aspires to grow and expand their heritage and cultural events and experiences, which will be greatly enhanced following the capital investment.
- **Strategic Partnerships** – Continue to engage with Heritage Stakeholders such as Historic Environment Division, National Lottery Heritage Fund, and local heritage groups.
- **Physical connections** – Collaborate with strategic partners to improve the physical connections via Castle Lane and Windsor Ave to the town centre. Creating a positive walking experience, and vitality along this route.

FINDING 5 - THE "POWER OF 10+" AND PROMOTION OF PLACE

The Power of 10 concept demonstrates the importance of creating multiple reasons for people to visit and engage with a place. For Lurgan, this means identifying and building on at least ten unique attractions or activities that can draw people to the town of Lurgan, as part of the Craigavon Urban Area (CUA).

Lurgan has a wealth of heritage identity such as Linen history, Georgian and Victorian architecture, Lurgan Park, Brownlow Castle. This heritage is not consistently marketed as a collective and if done well there would be a strong 10+ reasons for visitors to stay longer, return often, or spend more.

The town centre still suffers from vacancy, lack of diversity of uses, and limited evening economy, which reduces the number of experiences available in a single visit.

The success of the Townscape Heritage activities has demonstrated a clear appetite and following of Lurgan Heritage stories, which can be built upon.



FINDING 5 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

The Power of 10+ framework is an opportunity for Lurgan to highlight its offering and experiences to make the town centre and its assets lively, attractive, and resilient.

- **Build layers of activity** - Develop 10 distinct reasons to visit Lurgan (places to visit, eat or experiences), through digital platforms e.g. Tripadvisor and encourage businesses, venues and visitors to get involved. Involvement and engagement with local and regional digital promotional campaigns will support this.
- Lurgan has **heritage as its unique selling point**, however, these need promoted and developed further, particularly to attract day trippers and increase visitor spend in the place. The top 2 heritage attractions in the town centre are Lurgan Park and Brownlow Castle alongside associated heritage stories.
- **Promotion of Place** - Lurgan town should maximise its presence through online promotional visitor platforms. Utilising and collaborating with Tourism NI, ABC Council to feature Lurgan in regional tourism initiatives. There are opportunities for **Cross-Promotion of Lurgan**, creating half or full day experiences packages. Increased promotion of place presents an opportunity to grow the **day and night time economy** in Lurgan, however some venues require investment.
- **Support and build capacity** amongst town centre businesses and the Lurgan Working Group. Collectively by working together and in partnership with other businesses there is the potential to provide a roadmap to reimagine Lurgan as a vibrant, living town centre with heritage at its heart and community-led pride in place.



Portadown Sector



Portadown in focus

Portadown, a traditional market town, sits on the edge of the River Bann. In the 19th Century, the River Bann, Old Town Quay and Shillington's Quay played vital roles in Portadown ensuring cargo and fuel were transported to the factories and mills in along its banks. It was the main shipping route from Lough Neagh to Carlingford Lough, and joins Newry Canal, transporting goods between Portadown, Ireland, England and Scotland.

Portadown has a rich history and has always played an important role in agriculture and industry. Its strategic location for road and rail transport has been a key factor in its development and continues to offer future opportunities. The town is well-connected to the rest of Northern Ireland through its transport infrastructure.

- **Rail Transport:** Portadown Railway Station is a major hub on the Belfast-Dublin railway line. This station serves as a crucial link for passengers traveling between these two cities and other destinations along the route. There are proposals to reinstate the Portadown-Armagh railway line, as referenced in the All-Island Strategic Rail Review, which would further enhance connectivity and support regional growth.
- **Road Transport:** Portadown is well-connected by road, with several key routes passing through the town. This includes connections to major roads that facilitate travel to other parts of Northern Ireland. The town's strategic location on the River Bann also adds to its connectivity and potential for future development.



Figure 53: Portadown site walk images

Today, Market Street, Magowan West and the adjoining streets offers a wide range of independent retail, services and hospitality businesses, with industrial developments on the periphery to the town centre. Meadow Lane Shopping Centre is home to 11 businesses of which there are two anchor tenants Tesco and the Range. Plans are underway to transform a significant portion of High Street Mall from retail units into office spaces. With the growing



appeal of flexible work environments and hot-desking, this shift could attract more professionals to the area, boosting footfall and providing valuable support to town centre businesses.

Portadown is experiencing a stable evening and night-time economy (ENTE) in the locally named Mandeville Quarter which supports the hospitality and entertainment sector in the town. It could be said that Portadown has the most active evening economy at present across the three towns, however there is opportunity for growth in other evening activities such as arts and drama to make the most of the local venues.

The vacancy rate in Portadown currently at 20.6% is the 2nd highest in the borough, and the highest in this project area. Vacancy is ad hoc on Market Street and visible along the adjoining streets and particularly in the Marley Island area, containing poor-quality building stock. There is an opportunity to work with landlords, estate agents and avail of future rounds of Empty to Occupied and Fit for Future funding.

In recent years, the River Bann overflowing its banks has led to substantial damage to businesses and infrastructure. However, the planned 9.5km of flood defences under the Flood Alleviation Project is expected to reduce the risk of future flooding. There have been some conversations around a Riversides Development Project to follow the flood alleviation works, which would complement the regeneration at the Old Town Quay and Pump House Café area.

Portadown offers a range of notable schools with three nursery schools, six primary schools and five secondary and grammar schools in the area. The Education Authority continue to assess and improve their assets through the school enhancement programme and new build projects.

The Dickson Plan is a distinctive two-tier post-primary education system implemented in the Craigavon area, encompassing towns such as Portadown and Lurgan. Unlike the rest of Northern Ireland, where grammar school selection occurs at age 11 via the Transfer Test, the Dickson Plan defers selection until age 14.

Portadown offers cycles and walking access along the River Bann for pedestrians (Bann Boulevard) and further connects with the Newry Canal Way (The first summit level canal in Ireland and Great Britain opened in 1742) which runs for 20 miles currently, but it is suggested that Statutory bodies work towards the long-term vision of delivering a navigable waterway and accessible greenway which stretches from Lough Neagh to Newry and beyond. This is aligned to Newry, Mourne and Down District Council's Newry Canal Blueway tourism priority and could build upon cross-border relations through the East Border Region and with Louth County Council to develop the Great Eastern Greenway linking Newry, Omeath and Carlingford.



There are three parks and green spaces, nine play parks and four MUGAS in Portadown along with the Portadown Boat Club which is located at the heart of the town and is part of the strong sporting heritage in the area.

There are over 240 different community groups registered in the local community, many of whom are actively involved in volunteering, togetherness and collaboration, living well, sport and recreation and inclusiveness. There are also several community centres in Portadown, including Ashgrove, Brownstown, and Killicomaine Community Centres and Portadown Town Hall, which serve as hubs for local activities and events.

In the Craigavon Urban Area, there are a total of 31 Super Output Areas (SOAs) included in the proxy area. Of these, seven SOAs are in the top 10% most deprived SOAs in Northern Ireland, and a further three are in the top 10-20% most deprived. The most deprived SOAs are located in the Lurgan sector, with four SOAs in the top 10% most deprived overall in Northern Ireland. Two SOAs are in Craigavon, and one is in Portadown. North West Portadown Neighbourhood renewal area benefits from health and wellbeing services and health initiatives and programmes aimed to address health inequalities and help residents take more responsibility for their personal wellbeing, with sustainable outcomes in mind.



Portadown Statistical Profile

Whilst a statistical profile has been developed for the entire project area and will remain under review as new statistics are released, the below dashboard gives a snapshot of the key statistics for Portadown.

Portadown Statistical Dashboard	Portadown	Source
Population	21,091	Census 2021, Population by Data Zones, NISRA
Household	8,738	Last updated 28th April 2025
No of Units - projected 5 year Social Housing Need	340	Northern Ireland Housing Executive Commissioning Prospectus data 2024/25-2026/27 - Note: Craigavon = Central Craigavon; Lurgan = North Lurgan (316) + South Lurgan (90); Portadown = Portadown 1 (100) + Portadown 2 (229) + Portadown Rural (11) https://www.nihe.gov.uk/working-with-us/partners/commissioning-prospectus
Qualification of school leavers 5+ GCSE (FSME)	48%	2022/2023 - NI School Leavers Survey Dept of Education, NISRA 25% did not
Qualification of school leavers 5+ GCSE (or Equiv) (all levels)	88%	2022/2023 - NI School Leavers Survey Dept of Education, NISRA
Enroled at FE College (SRC)	970 (83%)	2022/2023 - NI School Leavers Survey Dept of Education, NISRA
Total Economically Active 16+	9716	Census 2021
Total Economically Inactive 16+	6854	Census 2021
No of VAT and/or PAYE Registered Businesses in DEA	1,365 (14.6% of Borough)	Per DEA (total in borough 9330) Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA 2023.
Town Centre Data		
Vacancy Rate - town centre	20.6%	NI Average (23%) Land and Property Services via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities. (30/4/25 data)
Number of Businesses in town centre	365	Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities 2023.
Employee jobs	3283	Business Register and Employment Survey, NISRA Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities 2022.
Crimes recorded - town centre	858 (12% of SDL)	Police Service of Northern Ireland Statistics, via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities 2022.
ASB - town centre	270 (11% of SDL)	Police Service of Northern Ireland Statistics, via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities 2022.
Foot Fall	17,370	Source Springboard : w/c 23/6/25
Listed Buildings and Monuments - SDL	57	Historic Environment Division, Department for Communities 2024.

Table 36: Portadown Statistical Profile



Population demographics in summary

As of Census Day 2021, Portadown had a population of 21,091, accounting for 29.2% of the Craigavon Urban Area. The population distribution shows that 49.8% of residents are male and 50.2% are female. The age structure reveals that 21.5% of the population is under 15 years old, 63% are between 16 and 64 years old, and 15.5% are 65 years and older. The data also indicates a diverse ethnic composition, with 9.8% of the population belonging to ethnic groups other than white. Additionally, 72.4% of residents were born in Northern Ireland, while 16.4% were born in other EU countries. The main language for 80.8% of the population is English, with Portuguese, Polish, and Lithuanian being the next most common languages

Portadown history & evolution

The timeline below demonstrates how Portadown has grown and evolved since the 1600's up until today.

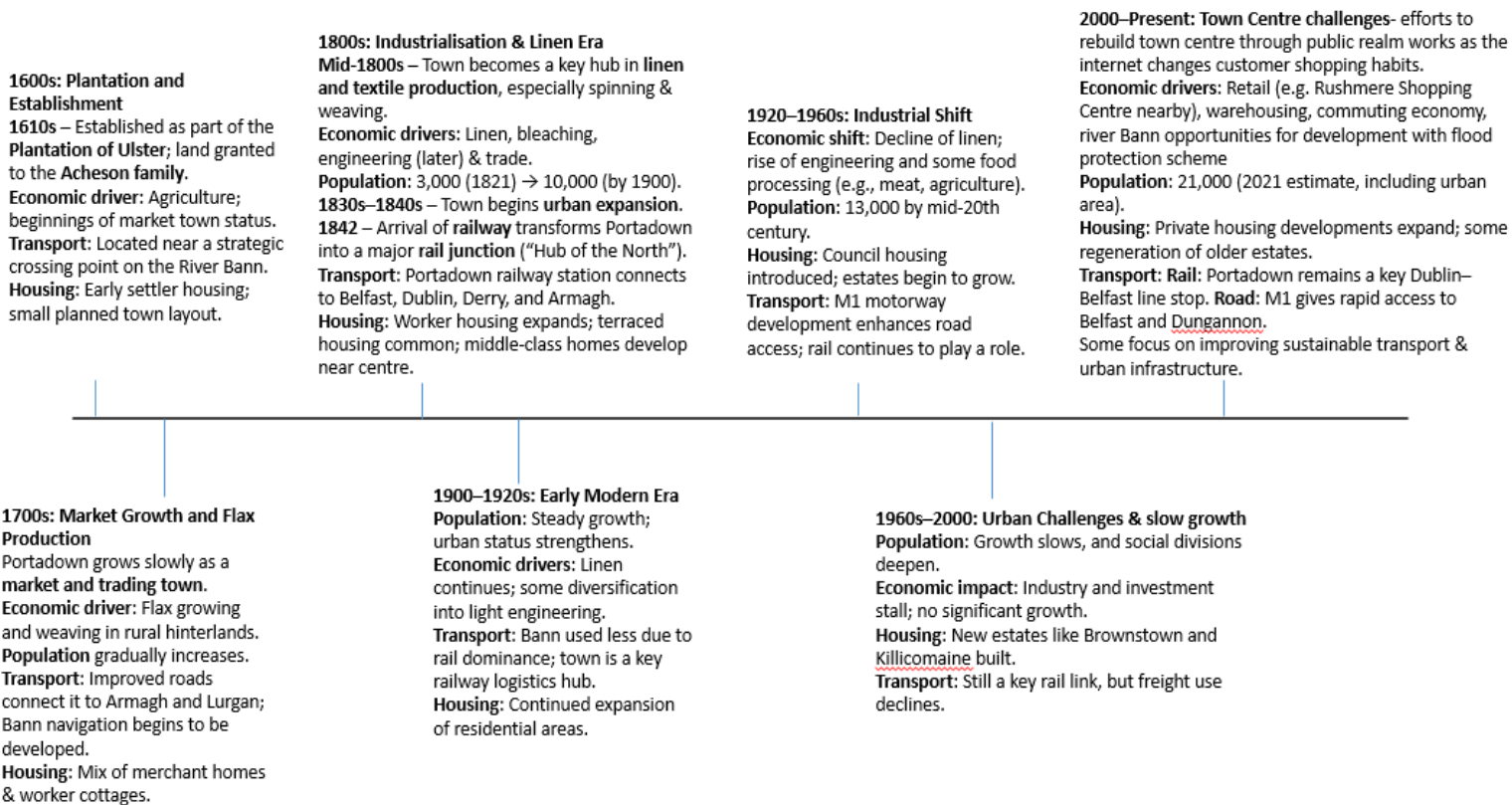


Figure 54: Portadown timeline



Portadown within the CUA

The Craigavon Urban Area settlement development limits are shown below with Portadown in purple and the dotted line outlining the town centre.

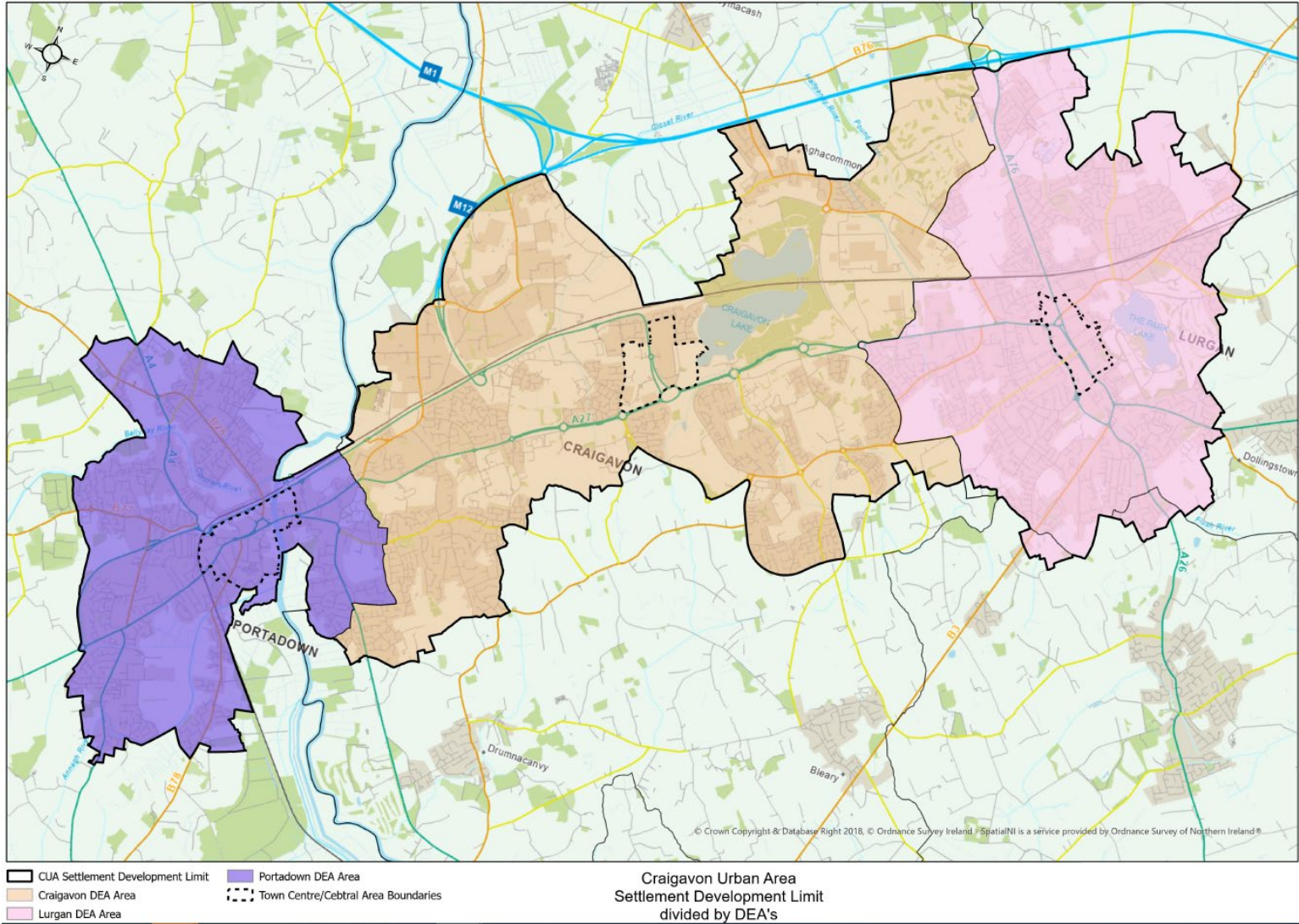


Figure 55: Map- Portadown in the CUA



The town centre boundary map below taken from the 'Craigavon Town Centre Boundaries and Retail Designations Plan 2010'. The town centres provide a broad range of retail, service and other facilities, and are the focus for community and public transport. Within these centres, retail development and other uses that generate significant numbers of people will be encouraged and promoted as the most sustainable locations with optimum accessibility by a range of means of travel. The town centres provide the main opportunity for further commercial expansion. Primary Retail Cores (PRCs) normally contain the traditional concentration of retailing and other town centre functions. There is a Primary Retail Frontages (PRFs) in Portadown town centres that should be retained in retail use to ensure the maintenance of a compact shopping environment.

Bars, cafes and restaurants complement the primary shopping function of town centres by contributing to the range and choice of facilities available to residents and visitors. They also contribute to the evening economy and support tourism. Such uses will normally be expected to locate outside primary retail frontages.

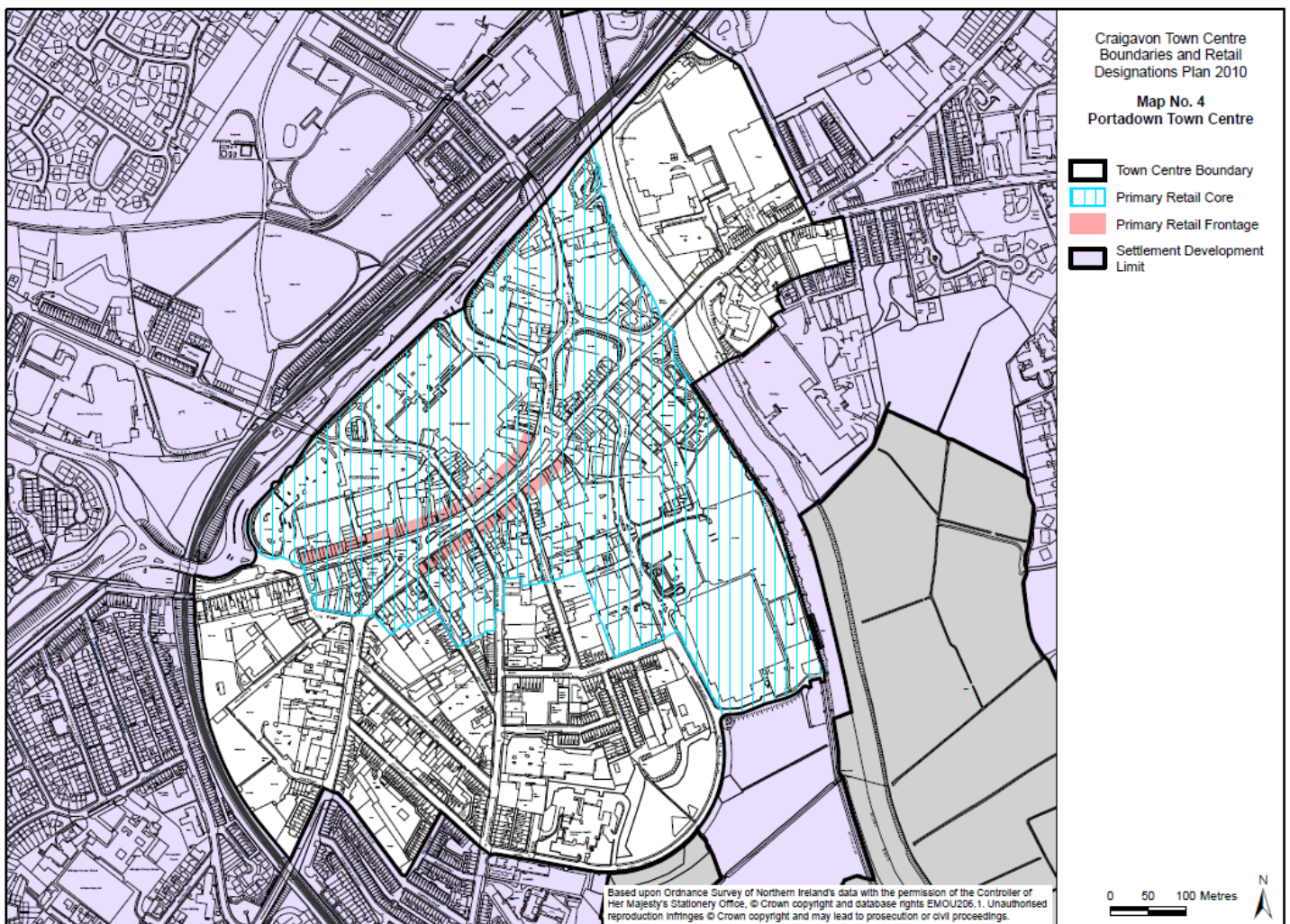


Figure 56: Map- Portadown Town Centre Boundary Designation



Listed Buildings in the Portadown Area

	Portadown	Craigavon Urban Area
Bank/former Banks	7	11
Church	6	15
Court House		1
Demolished		8
Entertainment Building		2
Factory	1	3
Fountain		1
Gates / Screens / Lodges		3
Hall	4	7
Hotel		1
Hospital Building	1	1
House	20	47
House - Terrace		23
Library	1	2
Memorial	2	5
Office	5	9
Post Box		1
Public House	2	3
Recreational Club		1
School	1	5
Shop	4	10
Store	1	2
Town Hall	1	2
Warehouse	1	1
	57	164

Table 37: Listed buildings within Craigavon Urban Area and Portadown.



The map below shows the historical environmental destinations in Portadown. The area in yellow shows the area of townscape character, the green shows the historic park and demesne while the blue shows the local landscape policy area.

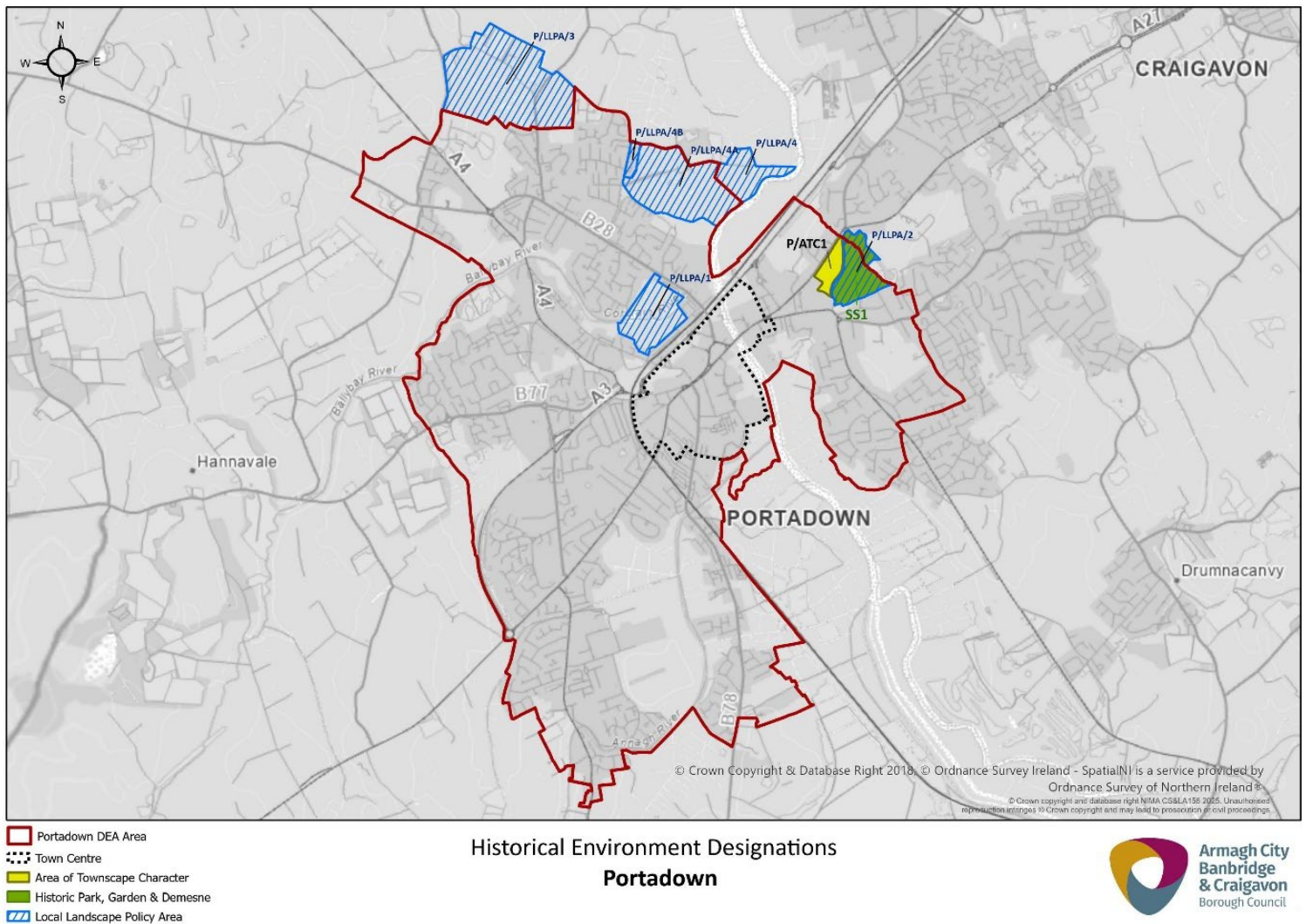


Figure 58: Map-Portadown Historical Environment Designation

Newry Canal and the Bann Boulevard

In November 2017 Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council (ABC Council) appointed Wallace Consulting to undertake a stakeholder consultation to inform future strategy and action planning for the Newry Canal and Towpath to incorporate the Bann Boulevard, Portadown. To which one key objective was to develop ‘destination hubs’ to improve visitor offering. Extract below is from the study.

“The Newry Canal was built to link the coalfields in County Tyrone, via Lough Neagh and the River Bann, to the Irish Sea at Carlingford Lough near Newry. It was the first summit level canal to be built in Ireland or Great Britain and was publicly funded. It opened in 1742, but there were issues with the lock construction, the width of the summit level and the water supply. Below Newry, a ship canal was opened in 1769 and the canal flourished.

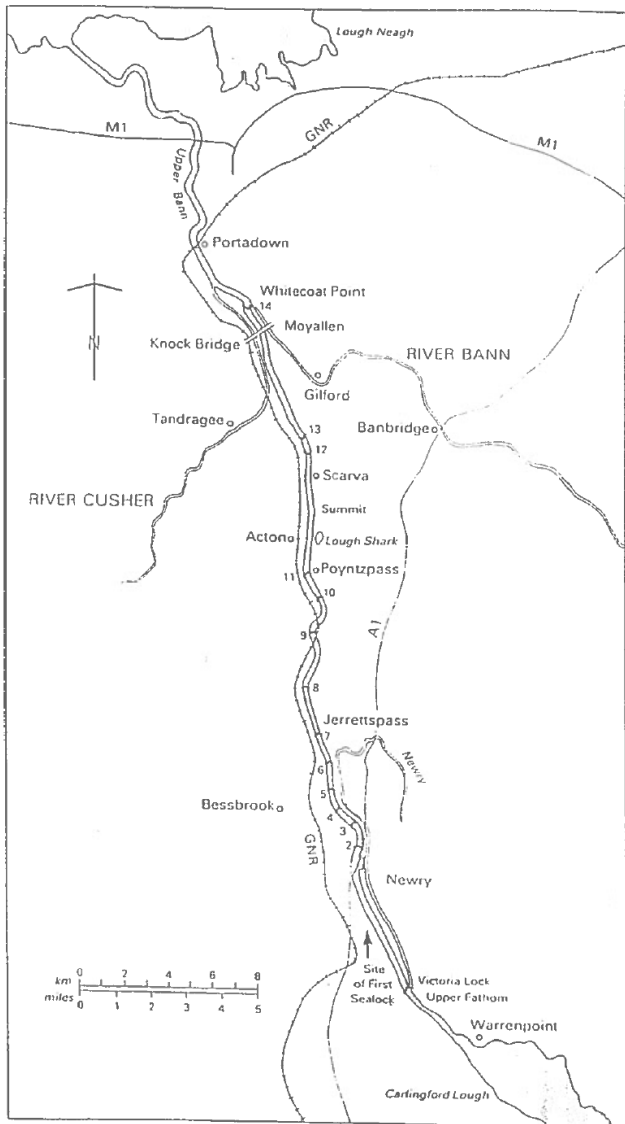


Figure 59: Map River Bann- Canal Locks

By 1800, the canal was in a poor condition and in 1829, both canals were transferred to a private company. The ship canal was enlarged in 1884, to allow ships of 5,000 tons to reach Newry. It reverted to public ownership in 1901, when the Newry Port and Harbour Authority was created. The canal closed in 1936 and most of it was officially abandoned in 1949, with some in 1956. The ship canal closed in 1966, and the Authority was wound up in 1974”.

Built and Natural Heritage

Access to the towpath can be found at various locations along the canal with designated car parking at six locations. These are Shillington’s Quay, Portadown Boat Club, Knock Bridge, Madden Bridge, Terryhoogan Lock, Scarva Visitor Centre, Poyntzpass and Gambles Bridge. Limited access can be obtained at Acton and Horse Shoe Lane level crossings.

One mile along the Bann Boulevard, the Point of Whitecoat, marks where the canal and the River Bann and River Cusher meet.

The entire canal and towpath are scheduled by DOE under Article 3 of the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995. Scheduled

Monument Consent is required prior to any proposed restoration works on the canal structures.

The canal and river are a haven for wildlife. Wildflowers and plants thrive in the area, backing onto Brackagh Bog nature reserve where unique species of plants, 19 species of butterflies, damsel flies and dragonflies unique to this area can be found.



The Bann Boulevard

The Bann Boulevard is the perfect place for a short walk or as a starting point for a much longer linear walk. The wide tarmac surface makes the path suitable for all users. The towpath is a shared use path and can be busy at times.



Figure 60: Map- The Bann Boulevard Portadown



Portadown Town Trail

During the discovery phase, the Portadown Town Trail was identified which is important for demonstrating the unique heritage of the town, the guide was first developed in 1997 by the Craigavon Historical Society, but today it is no longer actively promoted.

The trail brochure provides an insight into the River Bann, the bridges, Portadown foundry, Shillingtons, Obins Castle, linen businesses, the Town Hall, market day, various churches as well as notable people and families of the place, and much more.



Figure 61: The Portadown Trail

This trail will be important in further engagement walks and also has a role to play in promoting visitor activities. This trail could be updated, reprinted and converted into an e-trail, but most certainly brought back into use. It presents opportunities of importance to future development, sense of belonging and funding opportunities to help sustain the town.



Car Parks and Government Owned Lands

Car Parks

The following is a list of Council owned car parks

- Riverbank, Meadow Lane, BT62 1JA, 38 spaces (Free parking)
- Meadow Lane East, BT62 3NJ, 108 spaces (Free parking)
- Foundry Lane, BT63 5AA, 71 spaces (Free parking)
- Castle Street, BT62 1BF, 80 spaces (Free parking)
- Fairgreen, Duke Street, BT62 3EX, Spaces 160 (Free parking)
- Magowan Buildings, West Street, BT62 1BH, 412 spaces (Pay TL4)
- Marley Street, Bridge Street, BT62 1BD, 36 spaces (Pay TL4)
- Meadow Lane West, BT62 3NH, 118 spaces (Pay TL4)
- West Street, BT62 3JQ, 41 spaces (Pay TS3)
- William Street, BT62 3NE, 58 spaces (Pay TS3)

Government Owned

Within the project boundary there are Government owned pieces of land which includes:
(Government Owned property was sourced from Open Data NI August 2025)

- Probation Board for Northern Ireland, 12 Church Street Portadown.
- Storage Container, Portadown, Crown buildings, 140 Jervis Street, Portadown
- Former Henry Denny & Sons Ltd, Former DAERA Veterinary Services Office, 75-85 Obins Street, Portadown
- DAERA - Fisheries Division, Portadown Fisheries Offices, 1 Mahon Road, Portadown

Outside the Portadown Sector (DEA), but within the project boundary is College Land - Plot 4, Southern Regional College - Portadown Campus, 44b Lurgan Road, Portadown (showing bordering Edenvilla Park)

Just abutting the settlement development limit (project boundary) is the Brackagh Bog Nature Reserve, Brackagh Moss Road, Portadown



Portadown Open Spaces



Figure 62: Map- Portadown Open Spaces- Source-
<https://outdoorrecreni.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d1b8e59f7842408cb869648fcc28eac8>

Portadown boasts a variety of parks and open spaces that cater to the needs of its residents and visitors alike, each with their own unique offering.

The following areas of existing open space are identified in Portadown and are protected as stated in the Craigavon Area Plan 2010.

- Peoples Park (11.14ha)
- Edenvilla Park (8.9ha)
- Brownstone Park (4.48ha)
- Bann Boulevard and Pleasure Gardens (2.92ha)
- Land at Churchill Road (3.76ha)
- Meadow Lane (1.72ha)
- Riverside Parkway (1.2ha) and
- Corcrain Open Space (1.12ha).

People's Park and Edenvilla Park are also designated as Local Landscape Policy Areas, (see Designation P/LLPA 1 and Designation P/LLPA 2). (Craigavon Area Plan 2010 pg136)

Open Space Zonings

19.7 hectares of land are zoned for open space to the south and west of the centre of Portadown, and at Corcrain and Edenvilla as an extension to the existing open space:

- Corcrain (an additional 8.1 ha)
- Bann Meadows (5.6 ha)



- Rectory Park (2.4ha)
- Edenvilla (an additional 1.9ha) and
- Meadow Lane (1.7 ha)

Development Opportunity

In the Craigavon Area Plan 2010 page 142, it references and identifies six development opportunities sites, refer to the stars in the map below.

- Designation P1 Watson St/Bridge St
- Designation P2 Foundry St/Watson St
- Designation P3 Wilson St/ Castle St
- Designation P4 Castle Street Development Site
- Designation P5 Little West Street/Shillington Street
- Designation P2 Curran Street



Figure 63: Map- Development Opportunity Sites for Portadown taken from Map 5 Craigavon Urban Area 2010

Whilst these opportunity sites have been formally recognised in the Craigavon Area Plan 2010 for Portadown, there are other notable gap sites, derelict industrial lands and long term vacant premises (listed and non-listed buildings) dotted within the project boundary, that could serve as key developments and regeneration for the place.

To name a few; the former Denny's Site, former Cascades site, former Calvins Mill, Water Street properties and the old merchant's buildings on Thomas St.



Freedom Foods Pantry Portadown

Freedom Foods Pantry in Portadown is a Social Supermarket located within the Emmanuel Church in Portadown Town Centre. The Social Supermarket is a shop for members that provides food and essential goods to support people facing financial difficulties. Members pay a small weekly fee and in return can choose from fresh, refrigerated, frozen and long-life foods.

There are also wraparound services offered such as a drop-in centre, English lessons and coffee and chat which enables the support staff to link those in need to other services that may help alleviate their financial distress, for example, Community Advice ABC.

While food poverty remains a wider societal issue, Social Supermarkets are creating places where people can begin to transition out of food poverty, hopefully for the long-term.

Investment in Portadown

ABC Council and other stakeholders (DfC, EA, Invest NI and DfI) have invested in capital and revenue projects over the last number of years to improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of Portadown for its residents and visitors. The list below is a synopsis of some of the completed and ongoing investment by Council and Statutory Bodies.

The following outlines investment information collected to date; however, it should not be considered as a definitive list.

	Portadown Projects
2015	Peoples Park redevelopment
2015	Old Town Quay pontoon and environmental improvements
2016	Portadown Pump House restoration and site works.
2017- 2018	Portadown Linkages Public Realm, including junction works and resurfacing at Meadows Lane
2018	Carriageway resurfacing scheme on Bridge St, Castle St, Mill Av and Woodhouse St
2018-2020	Portadown Railway and Calvins Mill shrouding enhancement
2018-2020	Portadown Gateway Sign
2020	Woodhouse Street EI Scheme Portadown
2019/ 2020	Park Ranger training and volunteering activities
2019-2020	Portadown Riversides Phase 1 lighting and boundary treatment
Jun-21	Edward St EI Scheme
Oct-21	DFI lighting upgrade scheme
Jul-22	Edenvilla Park - New Bird Trail
Oct-23	New Play Park - The Birches and Mahon Road
Mar-22	Chatty Benche(s) in Edenvilla Park
Mar-24	Spring into our Towns Event
Ongoing	Promotion & Marketing of Portadown via Urban ABC and Food Heartland
Ongoing	Invest NI assistance to businesses
Ongoing	Education Authority School Enhancement Programme



2015 onwards	Building Sustainable Communities - NR area
Jul-25	Road improvement scheme for Charles Street and Dungannon Road, Portadown

	Borough Wide Projects
2016-2019	Shop Front Grant schemes 2016 /2019
2018-2020	ABC Revitalisation projects 2018/2020
2020-2022	Covid revitalisation business grants and projects
2020-2022	Brand identity creation and merchandise
Annual	Christmas light switch Ons (annual)
Ongoing	Fit for Future projects
Ongoing	Empty to Occupied projects
Ongoing	ABC Protecting & Enhancing our Investment
Ongoing	Business support programmes, Go Succeed, Digital Transformation and Labour Market Partnership

Table 38: Portadown Projects & Borough Wide Projects



Future Possible Investment

Recent engagement with stakeholders and businesses in the area also highlighted significant levels of community and private investment in the area, ranging from industrial expansion plans at Mahon Road and Mayfair Business Centre, new businesses moving in, development of a sporting centre of excellence, private housing development and sustainable energy investment onto business properties. There is growth and expansion in warehousing and logistics businesses who operate on a global stage, along with a focus on how they impact the environment and can make a difference to reducing the carbon footprint. This includes purchasing energy from windfarms in Northern Ireland. Many local businesses work closely with Further Education and Universities on skills shortages and there is a focus on retaining local talent as they progress through education.

Planning applications

In 2022-23 there was a total of 26 planning applications decided between Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown Town Centres. All of the applications were local and so were mainly residential and minor commercial applications.

Portadown town centre had the highest number of applications decided at 12 which included 4 mixed use, 5 change of use, one residential, one other and one commercial application in Portadown

Business demography

Portadown has a similar profile to the Borough with Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing accounting for the largest share of businesses at 22%. Like the Borough, this is followed by Construction and Retail Trades at 10.3% respectively. For all other business types, except Information and Communication and Education, Portadown has a higher percentage share than the Borough overall.

	Armagh	Banbridge	Craigavon	Cusher	Lagan River	Lurgan	Portadown	ABC Borough
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	30.2%	27.7%	11.5%	41.3%	30.6%	10.1%	22.0%	26.7%
Production	6.4%	5.3%	12.1%	8.1%	7.2%	9.0%	7.0%	7.4%
Construction	14.9%	15.1%	17.8%	12.9%	15.3%	16.1%	10.3%	14.3%
Motor Trades	4.6%	4.1%	4.5%	4.2%	5.0%	3.5%	4.8%	4.4%
Wholesale Trades	4.1%	4.1%	4.5%	3.9%	5.9%	4.5%	5.5%	4.6%
Retail Trades	8.2%	8.5%	7.6%	5.5%	5.9%	11.6%	10.3%	8.1%
Transport and storage	4.9%	5.0%	5.7%	5.2%	3.6%	5.0%	7.7%	5.4%
Accommodation and food service activities	3.6%	4.4%	4.5%	2.6%	2.7%	8.0%	5.5%	4.3%
Information and communication	1.3%	1.9%	3.2%	1.3%	1.8%	2.5%	1.5%	1.8%
Financial and insurance activities	0.8%	0.9%	1.9%	1.0%	1.4%	1.0%	2.2%	1.2%
Property	2.8%	3.5%	4.5%	1.6%	2.3%	2.0%	3.3%	2.8%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	6.2%	7.5%	6.4%	4.8%	7.7%	8.0%	7.0%	6.7%



Business administration and support services	3.1%	3.1%	5.1%	2.3%	4.1%	5.0%	4.0%	3.6%
Education	0.8%	0.6%	1.3%	0.3%	0.5%	1.0%	0.7%	0.8%
Human health and social work activities	2.6%	2.5%	2.5%	1.9%	2.3%	4.5%	2.9%	2.7%
Arts, entertainment, recreation and other services	4.9%	6.0%	6.4%	3.2%	3.6%	8.5%	5.9%	5.3%
Total Number of VAT and/or PAYE Registered Businesses	1,940	1,590	785	1,550	1,110	995	1,365	9,330

Table 39: Broad industry group of VAT and / or PAYE registered businesses in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough, March 2024. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA.

In Portadown town centre, wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles again accounts for the largest share of businesses (32%). Accommodation and food services activities; professional, scientific and technical activities and other service activities are the next highest groupings in Portadown town centre with each accounting for 11% of all businesses. Financial and insurance activities and human health and social work activities are also a more common business type in Portadown with a total of 55 businesses engaged in these activities which accounts for 8% and 7% of all businesses respectively.

Industry Section	Craigavon		Lurgan		Portadown	
	No. of Businesses	% of All Businesses	No. of Businesses	% of All Businesses	No. of Businesses	% of All Businesses
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*	*
Mining And Quarrying	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Manufacturing	N/A	N/A	10	4%	5	1%
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply	N/A	N/A	*	*	N/A	N/A
Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*	*
Construction	N/A	N/A	5	2%	10	3%
Wholesale And Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles And Motorcycles	45	56%	95	35%	115	32%
Transportation And Storage	*	*	*	*	5	1%
Accommodation And Food Service Activities	10	13%	30	11%	40	11%
Information And Communication	N/A	N/A	*	*	*	*
Financial And Insurance Activities	*	*	10	4%	30	8%
Real Estate Activities	*	*	5	2%	15	4%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	*	*	30	11%	40	11%
Administrative And Support Service Activities	5	6%	15	6%	15	4%
Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	*	*	*	*	*	*
Education	N/A	N/A	*	*	10	3%
Human Health and Social Work Activities	*	*	15	6%	25	7%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	N/A	N/A	10	4%	15	4%
Other Service Activities	*	*	35	13%	40	11%
Total	80		270		365	

Table 40: Business Demography in Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown Town Centres, 2023. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities.



Business Turnover and Size

Portadown has the highest proportion of businesses with a turnover less than £50,000, however, at 20.9% this is below the average for the Borough of 23.3%. In Portadown DEA, the proportion of businesses with a turnover of £1m or more (13.2%) is also above the average for the Borough.

	Turnover Size Band (£ Thousands)							Total
	0-49	50-99	100-249	250-499	500-999	1,000-4,999	5,000+	
Armagh	23.7%	18.0%	23.7%	12.4%	8.5%	10.1%	3.6%	1,940
Banbridge	24.2%	18.2%	25.2%	13.2%	9.1%	8.8%	1.3%	1,590
Craigavon	17.2%	15.3%	26.1%	12.7%	8.3%	11.5%	8.9%	785
Cusher	29.4%	18.1%	23.2%	11.9%	8.7%	7.4%	1.9%	1,550
Lagan River	26.6%	18.9%	25.2%	12.2%	8.6%	6.8%	2.3%	1,110
Lurgan	15.6%	18.1%	28.1%	16.1%	10.6%	8.5%	3.0%	995
Portadown	20.9%	14.7%	27.1%	14.7%	9.5%	10.3%	2.9%	1,365
ABC Total	23.3%	17.4%	25.2%	13.2%	8.9%	8.9%	3.1%	9,330

Table 41: Business Turnover and size in Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown Town Centres, 2023. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities.



Portadown and Lurgan both have a higher percentage share of businesses employing between 10 and 49 staff when compared the Borough average of 7.7%.

District Electoral Area	Employee Size Band				Total
	0-9	10-49	50-249	250+	
Armagh	89.9%	8.2%	1.5%	*	1,940
Banbridge	91.8%	7.2%	0.9%	*	1,590
Craigavon	81.5%	12.1%	3.8%	1.9%	785
Cusher	93.9%	5.2%	1.0%	*	1,550
Lagan River	94.1%	5.0%	0.9%	*	1,110
Lurgan	88.9%	9.0%	1.0%	0.5%	995
Portadown	89.0%	9.2%	1.8%	*	1,365
ABC Total	90.5%	7.7%	1.4%	0.4%	9,330

Table 42: Number of Businesses in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council Area by District Electoral Area and Employee Size Band, March 2024. Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, NISRA. Please note, IDBR figures are rounded to the nearest 5

Portadown, accommodation and food service activities accounted for 12% of all businesses and 19% of total turnover. Another important point to note is that Portadown had the largest number of total businesses in 2021 with a total of 390 businesses in the town centre (Lurgan had 295 while Craigavon had 95). Despite this, the total turnover for Portadown town centre is lower than that of Craigavon and Lurgan with a total turnover of £129.01m recorded in Portadown town centre compared to £215.91 in Lurgan and £154.43 in Craigavon (Care should be taken when interpreting these figures as they relate to a period when a lot of businesses were adversely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic)

Employee Jobs

Portadown had the most businesses in the town centre, it also has the most employee jobs with an estimated 3,283 persons employed in Portadown town centre. The proportion of employees is much the same as the proportion of businesses for most industry sections except other service activities and professional, scientific and technical activities where the number of employees accounts for a lower proportion than the number of businesses and in human health and social work activities where the number of employees accounts for a greater proportion than the number of businesses.

Industry Section	Craigavon		Lurgan		Portadown	
	Employee Jobs	% of Total Employees	Employee Jobs	% of Total Employees	Employee Jobs	% of Total Employees
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mining and Quarrying	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Manufacturing	N/A	N/A	148	8%	*	*
Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*	*



	Craigavon		Lurgan		Portadown	
Construction	*	*	N/A	N/A	*	*
Wholesale And Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	1,184	62%	743	38%	1,001	30%
Transportation And Storage	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	*	*
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	258	14%	193	10%	375	11%
Information and Communication	N/A	N/A	*	*	*	*
Financial and Insurance Activities	*	*	115	6%	203	6%
Real Estate Activities	*	*	*	*	89	3%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	*	*	124	6%	173	5%
Administrative and Support Service Activities	46	2%	57	3%	*	*
Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	*	*	*	*	*	*
Education	N/A	N/A	*	*	90	3%
Human Health and Social Work Activities	*	*	170	9%	407	12%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	N/A	N/A	44	2%	78	2%
Other Service Activities	*	*	117	6%	125	4%
	1,898		1,937		3,283	

Table 43: Employee Jobs in Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown Town Centre, 2022. Source: Business Register and Employment Survey, NISRA Economic and Labour Market Statistics Branch via Town Centre Database, Department for Communities

Business Networks

Portadown benefits from a wide-ranging business industry who can gain support from various networks and organisations. Mayfair Business Centre located at Garvaghy Road, Portadown, serves as the town’s Enterprise Centre, providing workspace and business advice. Complementing these efforts, the Portadown Chamber of Commerce, acts as the voice of the town centre business community. It promotes economic development, organises networking events, and supports initiatives that celebrate and strengthen local enterprise, such as the recent “Saturday Mic Live” series.



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
and picturesque surroundings, People's Park in Portadown is a must-visit location for anyone seeking a fulfilling walking or running experience. (ref: People's Park in Portadown Map and Routes)	
Approximately 57 listed building and monuments which include halls, office, library, the town hall, churches, public houses, bank buildings and a warehouse. (source: Historic Environment Division, DfC 2024 & HED Map Viewer-Historic Buildings) (See Appendix 1- Listed Buildings- CUA Stat Profile- page 100)	There are opportunities to examine town centre living opportunities above shops as well as in properties formerly occupied by banks many of whom have withdrawn from high street. There are opportunities to repurpose these significant buildings. There could be opportunities to enhance aspects of heritage in the area in line with re-use and regeneration in the future, aligned to carbon reduction goals.
Approximately 53 industrial heritage sites which include bridges, level crossing & mile posts, factories, mills, station buildings and yards, warehousing, saw mill, gasworks, kiln & store and brick hole. (Ref: HED Map Viewer- Industrial Heritage sites)	The Portadown Town Trail shows 37 sites of interest. The Trail was designed in 1997 by the Craigavon Historical Society. It is not promoted and has no online presence post reform of public administration. While some buildings have been lost through redevelopment for the most part, the essential character and attractiveness of Portadown's streetscape has been preserved. Further updates and promotion are required and should include town centre signposting to promote exploration, walking tours and locals' knowledge of the rich local heritage in Portadown.
Approximately eight defence heritage sites which include pillbox, army camp and fallout shelters.	The potential for heritage walking tours to include these sites and others outside of Portadown offer tourism potential and ways of attracting footfall into the town using its transport connectivity. Passengers docking in Belfast from Cruise liners are now exploring Brownlow Castle and other sites in the area, to which joint promotion and opportunities could be accommodated.
Currently four heritage properties at risk include, two of which are in Thomas Street at the old Methodist Manse, Mahon House, 138 Gilford Road and Westlawn 38 Killycomaine Road. (HED Map Viewer-Heritage at Risk)	19 Old Lurgan Road, Bocombra was at risk but has been demolished. Opportunities to protect through redevelopment schemes requires consideration by Council and partners, along with local developers/investors/owners.
One historic garden and demesnes which includes Edenvilla exists in the Portadown area.	Edenvilla Park occupies some nine hectares of the designed parkland setting of an 18th Century residence which has long been demolished, and this mature planned landscape is highly valued by local residents. A review and/or further implementation of its masterplan review 2018 could bring additional future value to the area and promotion of its heritage. It would be beneficial to connect in with Heritage Lottery for funding opportunities for Historic Parks.
River Bann Local Landscape and planned alleviation works presents a significant project of protection for the town and its future environmental challenges on the River Bann riverside. The Bann Boulevard/Pleasure Gardens offer pedestrian access only to walking/cycling alongside the Bann.	The River Bann Local Landscape site is part of the River Bann floodplain and is important for the long distant views of and from the riverbank. Signage from the town centre and further business opportunities maximising the river frontage when the flood alleviation works are complete will bring footfall, activities and add value to events calendars.
Togetherness, Collaboration and Living Well	
Good educational offering with secondary school and grammar school (Clounagh JH, Craigavon SH, Killicomaine JH, Portadown College, St John the Baptist College), seven primary schools (Hart Memorial, Edenderry, Millington, Ballyronan,	Opportunities to enhance education also include new school build investment (potential equal to funds for Primary £10 - £20m; Post Primary £30 - £40 million; SEN-£40-50m) in Portadown College and Portadown Integrated Primary School (PIPS). The School Enhancement Programme (SEP) has also recently approved or completed works to



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
St John the Baptist, Presentation Primary School, Portadown Integrated) and three nursery schools (Edenderry, Millington, St John the Baptist Nursery School)	the value of up to £4.5million in Clounagh Junior High Portadown, Hart Memorial and Presentation Primary School.
Portadown Library & Digital Hub located at 24-26 Church Street a welcoming neutral space for all	The local library presents many community opportunities for learning/working to promote togetherness and collaboration. Services include borrowing books, exhibition space and an extensive events and activities schedule. This includes knit and natter, mindful colouring, tea and newspapers, junior reading groups, cryptic corner, rhythm & rhyme, teen reading groups, Lego club etc
People's Park, Brownstown Park, Bann Boulevard, Brackagh Bog, Edenvilla Park offer local walking routes, as well as the Newry Canal Way which including cycle and walking opportunities.	Getting active and being outdoors promotes opportunities for living well, togetherness and helps develop opportunities for community to engage in activities to assist with potential to live well and stay active. Greater promotion of walking groups and running clubs could further improve opportunities to use local natural assets. Greater promotion of websites promoting activities in ABC area could further raise the awareness locally and for visitors from outside the area.
There are nine play parks locally which are known as Abercorn, Ashgrove, Brownstown, Drumilly Green, Edenvilla, Edgarstown, Peoples, Mahon Road, Killicomaine Community Centre and Play Park. Edenvilla Park also has a chatty bench location.	Play parks provide excellent communal space where people of all ages can gather, interact, and build relationships. This helps create a sense of belonging and community, encourages collaboration, promotes inclusiveness and improves quality of life through these safe spaces. The chatty bench concept helps with isolation and presents opportunities for friendship and connections with the community. More chatty benches in strategic locations even within the town centre could improve opportunities for engagement with all age groups. i.e.getactiveabc.com
Portadown has a variety community organisations, groups and charities within the town. ABC Community Network has over 240 groups registered from across the local area. It is located on Thomas Street and has an active social media following	Additional funding for engagement and projects which focus on togetherness, collaboration and living well could provide further improvement opportunities. Supporting volunteers is vital to maintain local support within the communities across the diverse population.
Portadown has a diverse range of sports clubs, within the town that focus on togetherness, collaboration and living well.	There is a strong and active sporting heritage across multiple sporting disciplines in the Portadown area. In the heart of the town is the Portadown Boat Club (Rowing). These clubs and organisations should continue to be supported and avail of funding opportunities and grants for development. There are opportunities to improve pitches and facilities across a range of Clubs and Council provision in the area. The recent investment (£10m) in the GAA County Armagh Centre of Excellence presents improved opportunities for the place and its circular economy.
There are four MUGAS (People's Park, Brownstown Park, Churchill Park, Killicomaine Community Centre) for multi sports. There are also other activity offerings in fishing points (Points of White Coats) on the River Bann, tennis courts at Eden Villa etc	A variety of outdoor leisure opportunities linked to Parks and the natural environment which provide opportunities for all. Investment and improvement to support these facilities and protect the natural environment is needed, along with promotion aligned to communities most in need to improve togetherness, collaboration and living well in Portadown.



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
Community Centres & The Town Hall	<p>Council managed community facilities include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ashgrove Community Centre • Brownstown Park Jubilee Community Centre • Killicomaine Jubilee Community Centres. • Portadown Town Hall <p>These facilities serve as community hubs for activities and events all year round. Currently the Town Hall provides space for a broad range of community initiatives, including healthy living programmes, senior citizens groups, and pre-school playgroups. The town hall also serves as a venue for public events and performances. There is also scope for improvement such as accessibility including the backstage area. The Town Hall presents an opportunity to enhance evening entertainment offerings and contribute to the growth of the evening and night time economy.</p>
<p>Neighbourhood Renewal (NR) area statistics - North West Portadown-3,105 population in North West Portadown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burglary- 80% decrease between 2003 and 2021 • Anti-Social Behaviour- 8% decrease between 2008 and 2021 • Theft- 63% decrease between 2003 and 2021 • Recorded Crime- 22% decrease between 2003 and 2021 • Criminal Damage- 43% decrease between 2003, and 2021 • Drug Offences- % of drug offences increased by more than 5 times between 2003 and 2021 • Violence, sexual offences & Robbery- 11% increase between 2003 and 2021 • Domestic Abuse- 79% increase between 2005 and 2021 	Continued focus on NR areas and inclusion through investment schemes and team in the area is vital to ensure no one is left behind.
Poverty - Social supermarket (SSM)	Ensuring DFC funding for SSM, Council and local collaborators, volunteer groups work together to address the need for food, fuel and wrap around services like advice on finance continue to be supported collectively and that these services are accessible. While food poverty remains a wider societal issue, Social Supermarkets are creating places where people can begin to transition out of food poverty, hopefully for the long-term.
Being Safe & Welcoming	
Public realm in the town centre makes the town feel fresh and inviting with heritage and open spaces linking old and new areas of the town effectively however there are damaged planters in town, some littering on the Bann Boulevard and Woodhouse Street and the trees/vegetation at the tunnel leading to the Train station – needs a tidy up generally.	<p>Addressing retail challenges in partnership and engaging property owners, addressing dereliction in the town and seeking solutions through schemes to support heritage are needed to improve the brand name of Portadown.</p> <p>Developing the Portadown brand, enables its strengths through its unique character and positioning along with effective signposting and promotion, in town and online are essential to improve its opportunities. Addressing the lack of cleanliness through tidy up Council-backed campaigns like the Big Spring Clean, Adopt-a-Street, and Clean Neighbourhoods Service, Local retailer involvement, with shops organising their own clean-up drives and Volunteers and informal action, though less formally organised, demonstrating</p>



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
	community concern and willingness to engage. Will search further enhance a sense of pride in the town.
Interfaces overseen/managed by DOJ Portadown has two remaining interfaces. Location 1, Charles Street, Corcraun RD/Craigwell Avenue Location 2, Corcraun Road/Obins Avenue Water Street Interface structure removed January 2025.	Community engagement on-going for location 1, positive collaboration.
Levels of cleanliness & graffiti is a challenge in and around the town centre	Active engagement programmes which encourage anti-graffiti activity and promote pride and confidence in place is needed to bring about meaningful improvements with the community. Swift removal by owners/Council will also improve appearance and has been known to stop repeat behaviour.
Crime recorded in town 858 (12% of SDL), ASB in town centre 270 (11% of SDL) (PSNI stats, via Town Centre Database, DfC, 2022).	CCTV monitoring and expansion to other areas of town could provide improvement along with active PCSP projects and PSNI initiatives to engage active groups and reduce ASB, graffiti in the town centre.
Multi-layered Purpose and Meaning	
Daytime and Evening/Night time economy In Portadown accommodation and food service activities accounted for 12% of all businesses and 19% of total turnover. Portadown had the largest number of total businesses in 2021 with a total of 390 businesses in the town centre (Lurgan had 295 while Craigavon had 95). Despite this, the total turnover for Portadown town centre is lower than that of Craigavon and Lurgan with a total turnover of £129.01m recorded in Portadown town centre compared to £215.91 in Lurgan and £154.43 in Craigavon (Care should be taken when interpreting these figures as they relate to a period when a lot of businesses were adversely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic)	Daytime retail offering in town requires support, collaboration and partnerships to improve challenges of online shopping, out of town shopping experiences and impacts of small family run businesses unable to compete with large high street chains. Portadown does have a unique attraction in its evening and night time economy offering which has grown recently around the Mandeville St area, but it is limited to weekends currently. Additional arts, music and a calendar of ongoing performance could help improve the offering year-round. The Seagoe hotel hosts regular concerts, performers and musicians.
Encouraging dwell time in Portadown through markets, sporting events and the spaces in town like the plaza e.g. (2nd Mic Live event at the weekend with the Artisan Market, a real success)	Many people use Portadown for its transport links from the train station. With a significant reliance on the car as a mode of transport, traffic congestion and lack of transport across the rural hinterland, greater promotional efforts and reasons to dwell are required to keep people longer, such as café, restaurants, unique and niche shopping opportunities and or essential professional services.
Art Centre and cultural offerings at the Millennium Court and Arts Centre and Portadown Town Hall	Millennium Court offers an excellent day time shared space offering a range of creative workshops and activities relating most to practical arts creation. There are a number of small business and corporate tenants too. Exhibitions and hosting of events through room hire are also provided. Some local businesses are also tenants within the facility. People, community and businesses are linked within the space, but funding shortages and support are needed to maximise potential. Portadown Town Hall offers a staged space, which is less frequently used, and traditionally used by the speech and drama groups.
Adaptable Buildings and Spaces	
Vacancy rates in the town Portadown vacancy rate is 20.6% (NI average 23%) according to land and property services town centre database, DfC (30/4/25).	Town Centre management are working closely with local businesses continue to meet and seek solutions proactively together. Proposed ideas of different quarters are under development to help grow and promote areas of the town effectively. Better signposting in town is required to connect the river, station, retail and leisure offerings.



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
	Engagement with estate agents, landowners and property owners would be beneficial.
Parking challenges in town around the plaza and station are ongoing	Addressing parking through signage and active travel schemes to change a Northern Ireland mind set of parking at the front door is required.
Housing capacity within the town	Portadown has a mixed and expanding housing market and growing provision needs. Making living on the high street a viable option requires incentives, affordability, transport frequency, reduced ASB and crime statistics in town and accessibility to services. A mix of tenure would support sustainable communities. Portadown has 340 social housing needs. There are a variety of schemes under development or with approved application for housing development in Bocombra Park (12), Roslyn Avenue (24 x social houses), Church/Lurgan Road mixed-use (53) and Bracken Meadows Phase 4 (197) in progress. Collaboration between government departments/Council planners and developers/property owners is essential to progress housing opportunities. Increasing town-centre living in places like Portadown requires a mix of practical incentives, placemaking, and storytelling, positioning it as a lifestyle choice with clear social, economic, and environmental benefits. By promoting accessibility and convenience—being close to shops, schools, healthcare, leisure, transport, and culture—alongside the appeal of walkability through “10-minute living,” residents can enjoy a vibrant, connected lifestyle without long commutes. The social aspect is equally powerful, with opportunities for stronger community ties, local vibrancy, and supporting nearby businesses. Through campaigns, storytelling, and real-life testimonials, the unique benefits of town-centre living can be brought to life and made more attractive to potential residents.
Enterprise and industry units within Portadown such as Mahon Road Industrial Park, James Park and Mayfair Business Park. 365 businesses in town, 3283 employee jobs in the area, 1,365 (14.6% of ABC Borough) VAT registered/or PAYE registered Businesses (9330 in total ABC Borough) including significant food, logistics, retail businesses.	Many larger businesses have shift work patterns which operate around the clock 24/7. Provision to accommodate out of hours needs and services are future considerations as growth continues. There are concerns for electricity and waste water services in future development for enterprise and industry in the area. The local enterprise centres have expansion plans in the pipeline to enable growth. In April 2025, Council have developed a Flexi Hub located in Portadown Town Hall, to support new businesses and collaborative or flexi workspace solutions.
Well Serviced & Connected	
Transport hub	Currently the Dublin- Belfast Enterprise Service stops at Portadown. Following the release of the All-Island Strategic Rail Review (2024), Portadown is projected to become a major interchange hub Portadown-Armagh Line Reinstatement (2030-40, North-West Connectivity via Portadown (2040-50) (£-3 billions).
Traffic & parking	A heavy reliance on the car is still existent. There are a variety of car parks in Portadown. The train station car parking has high demand and traffic congestion is daily with one-way systems causing delays into the town centre. There is ample parking in and around Portadown in multiple car parking areas.



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
Retail offering	Weekly footfall 17,370(Springboard, w/c 23 Jun 2025). The main retail and services are located on Market Street, Magowan West, High Street Mall and the Meadows Shopping Centre.
Areas of activity and interest in town	Early-stage Chamber of Commerce ideas and concept of promoting the town into distinct quarters, such as Riverside, Mandeville, Railway and Historic Quarters, offers unique opportunities for development, regeneration and promotion. Each quarter would have its own characteristics and potential, which can be maximized to create a vibrant and engaging environment that attracts both residents and visitors.
Being Sustainable - Social, Environmental and Economic	
Flood alleviation works	Flood Alleviation Scheme (full scheme 9km est. £28m (potential £50m-2025-28). This will provide riverside opportunities and future protection and sustainability for improved tourism, business and wellbeing activities for the town and its connections on the River Bann and in the flood zones.
Sustainable opportunities	Portadown offers a wide range of opportunities for sustainable improvements, particularly in the restoration of existing buildings. This is crucial for addressing the embodied carbon in these structures, adopting net zero carbon approaches for new developments, and utilising sustainable construction methods for both new and existing environments. Local businesses are also planting trees and creating green forested areas to protect the environment but also create public accessible walk areas.
Active Travel routes are at present, in some places disjointed.	<p>Connection from Edenvilla Park to Portadown Rail Station constrained by mixed facilities and interfaces with commercial streets/ A27 high volume traffic route.</p> <p>A review of wayfinding found evidence of frequent directional signage along the route, but some were obstructed by foliage, defaced with graffiti, and failed to include the destination, distance, or route number.</p> <p>Gaps in signage provision were also noted along the route, most notably between Portadown Train Station and beginning of the greenway at Edenvilla Park and around the North Lake.</p> <p>A potential solution to improve the cycling environment on Carrickblacker Road through extend the footway width into the area currently occupied by the advisory lanes.</p> <p>Seagoe Road provides alternate route but is steeper, higher traffic volumes and suffers from the same blockages of advisory cycle lane. Provision of a signalised pedestrian crossing point on the Garvaghy Road would offer a safe facility for cyclists and pedestrians to gain access to/ from the rail station.</p> <p>Maximise the potential of active travel between the Bann Boulevard – Newry Canal Towpath and the Carlingford Greenway</p>
Future investment potential	There are a number of key sites and projects such as: Denny site, Cascades site, Pleasure Gardens and Play Park, West Street Footbridge, Railway Hub and future Portadown Armagh opportunities, Water Street redevelopment, Sporting Centre of Excellence, Commercial and Industrial developers and land owners with ambition for Office, Logistics, Transport, Conference and Hotel asset development.



MAG Essential Qualities for our Living High Streets	
Health Check	Opportunity for Improvement
	Many businesses and land owners are positive about the future opportunities, but wish to engage, develop relationships and retain communications with Council and local government including overcoming environmental, electrical and water waste limitations on services.

Table 44: Portadown MAG Health Check



Shaping the Future of Portadown

The table below shows a SWOT analysis of Portadown following engagement with key stakeholders across the town and site walk through the place. The following is indicative of what has been raised to date, but it is not an exhaustive list.

Strengths	Gaps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area of Townscape Character Bachelors Walk • Access to M1 via junction 12 (Dungannon Road) • Area of town landscape character at Bachelors Walk • Community Centres and Play Parks • Good Schools • Health Centres • Hospitality offering in town • Millennium Court Arts Centre • Peoples Park & proximity to station & town centre • Range of services in town e.g hair, beauty, legal, insurance, accounting etc • River Bann & Riverside • Town Centre Public realm • Train Station • Transport connectivity • Variety of independent retail shops • Victorian Heritage • Weekend night time economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Travel • Addressing poverty in disadvantaged areas • ASB & crime in the park • Attracting people into the town centre • Attracting train users to stop and spend • Get home safe bus • Hinterland transport to rural not great • Identity link with Heritage • Improve active travel • Improve bus/train timetables • Loss of Banks • Newcomers 'inclusion and celebration of their culture • Outdoor leisure pitches inc 4g pitches • Skills shortages • Underuse of Town Plaza area
Opportunities	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate Victorian Heritage • Derelict site opportunities e.g. Cascades, Calvins Mill & Denny site • Development of quarters- Riverside, Mandeville, Railway, Historic etc • Flood alleviation project • Living over the shops (LOTS) • Market • Night time economy growth by private owners • Overnight visitors participating in sporting competitions accommodation • Partnership & engagement with large businesses • Portadown-Newry Canal – Carlingford Greenway • Redevelopment of Water Street; Flats on Thomas Street; Edward Street old PSNI building; Former bank buildings • Relooking of land zoning via LDP • Removal of interfaces • Riverside development & regeneration • Town Hall- heritage rebrand, evening programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-Social Behaviour & Graffiti • Bus Stops in town centre (traffic) • Deprivation • Dereliction • Diversity and inclusion of all communities • Flooding • Future of High Street Mall • Parking at station • People leaving town for activities, leisure etc • Poor quality of River Bann water • Vacancy rates

Table 45: SWOT Analysis of Portadown



Key findings & recommendations for Portadown

The early-stage discovery work for Portadown highlights the following key findings and recommendations, which can be further tested and explored in the next stage of the place plan development through targeted stakeholder engagement, site visits, analysis, spatial and community workshops.

FINDING 1 - VACANCY

Portadown has a vacancy rate of 20.6%, which is slightly below the Northern Ireland average of 23%. Portadown has the highest vacancy rate in the Craigavon Urban Area, and 2nd highest in the borough.

FINDING 1 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

The growing strength of professional services such as insurance, legal, accounting, dentistry, digital/information technology support and health care providers in Portadown could help strengthen office vacancy rates. There are large employers in the area seeking new spaces which can benefit from the town's strategic location and available office spaces.

- **Engagement** is required to discuss with land and property owners, estate agents and potential investors to understand the barriers and challenges to vacancy in Portadown, the challenges to improving the building stock, but also to understand the needs of investors and those businesses who would be keen to do business here.
- **Reducing office vacancy:** Capitalise on the growing strength of service businesses in the Portadown area by promoting available office spaces to employers seeking new locations. Highlight the town's strategic location, transport connectivity and available amenities to attract businesses looking for office space. This can help reduce office vacancy rates and contribute to the town's economic growth.
- **Incorporating sustainable development:** Adopt sustainable construction methods and net zero carbon approaches in the development plans to enhance the built environment while addressing environmental concerns. This could link with bringing buildings back into use and possible heritage type schemes to revitalise the town centre offerings for the future.

FINDING 2 - THE FLOOD ALLEVIATION PROJECT

The Flood Alleviation project is a significant initiative aimed at protecting Portadown from the adverse effects of flooding, particularly along the River Bann.

FINDING 2 – IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

The project involves a comprehensive scheme estimated to cover 9km and cost around £28 million, with potential to reach £50 million by 2025-2028. This project is crucial for safeguarding the town's infrastructure, properties, and residents from flood risks. (Reference: <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/public-information-events-be-held-proposed-portadown-flood-alleviation-scheme>)

The Flood Alleviation Project presents opportunities for future riverside development and regeneration, enhancing the town's attractiveness and sustainability. Early engagement with key investors and stakeholders in the area and collaborative partnerships to help shape future riverside opportunities should link to environmental considerations, regeneration of existing assets and future sustainability.

FINDING 3 - RIVER BANN UNDERDEVELOPED AND UNDER USED



The role of the River Bann in the development of the town and its future potential presents many exciting opportunities for economic and community engagement. The river is used often by the Portadown Boat club with annual regattas and training.

FINDING 3 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

Whilst there has been significant regeneration around the Old Town Quay and the former Pump House, there are other opportunities to make the most of this important asset.

- **Riverside Development:** Explore opportunities for riverside development, such as creating pedestrian-friendly walkways, recreational areas, and waterfront dining options. Provision of signage which connects the riverside and other quarters for pedestrians and traffic into the town will increase awareness.
- **Leveraging riverside development opportunities:** Future completion of flood alleviation works along the River Bann, presents significant opportunities for riverside development. Encourage investment in waterfront businesses such as restaurants, cafes and shops that can benefit from the scenic river views. Additionally, promote tourism opportunities like scenic cruises, water sports and riverside dining to attract visitors and increase dwell time in the town.
- **Development of a Canal Destination Hub at Bann Boulevard**
Users of the Newry – Portadown Canal towpath already contribute to the local economy in Portadown. However, maximising visitor spend and length of stay has not received particularly focused effort. The numbers of people regularly using the route suggests untapped potential in earlier research and could be further explored.
Further collaboration with Louth County Council and Newry and Mourne District Council would be beneficial, as the greenway has been extended to Carlingford, therefore the active travel route now extends from Portadown to Carlingford. This is untapped visitor potential, given that the infrastructure is already in place.
- **Bring the Bann Boulevard to Life.**
Eco-cruises, wildlife tours, boat hire, paddleboarding, kayaking and even sustainable floating cafés could tap into green tourism and attract higher-value visitors through a distinct niche.
It is strengthened by Newry Canal and its neighbourhood Councils and Council in the Republic of Ireland via their increased investment and promotion for green/blue outdoor leisure tourism destinations and activities.

FINDING 4 - ENHANCING DWELL TIME AND CREATING A RESILIENT FUTURE MARKET STREET AND TOWN CENTRE

Many people use Portadown primarily for its transport links and do not spend much time in the town itself. This presents a challenge but also an opportunity to create more reasons for people to *dwell* in the town through the development of attractive offerings such as restaurants, coffee shops, and other niche businesses.

FINDING 4 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

- **Encouraging the development of unique and niche businesses:** Promote the establishment of unique and niche businesses which is different to the out-of-town shopping centre that offer specialised products or services not readily available elsewhere in the CUA. This could attract visitors looking for distinctive shopping experiences.
- **Encourage more service retailing;** The growing strength of professional services such as insurance, legal, accounting, dentistry, digital/information technology support and health care providers in Portadown could help strengthen vacancy rates, as well as hair and beauty. There are large employers in the area actively seeking new spaces due to town's strategic location.



- **Further develop a vibrant food and beverage scene** within the town centre: Invest in the establishment of diverse dining options, including restaurants, coffee shops and cafes, that cater to different tastes, food trends and preferences. This can create a welcoming atmosphere for commuters and travellers to spend more time in the town. Promotion via Food Heartland Network.
- **Enhancing signposting and wayfinding** to Improve the connectivity between the railway station, bus stops, parking facilities and key attractions in the town. This will make it easier for commuters and travellers to navigate and explore the town.
- **Pilot new initiatives:** The Artisan Market and Saturday Mic Live were launched in 2025 to celebrate local produce, craft and talent. These two events attracted people into the town and encouraged them to stay longer. Delivering similar events going forward could range from cultural and heritage festivals to food markets and live performances in the safe public spaces available.
- **Utilising the current space**, there are keys spaces in the town centre that could be maximised and promoted more. There may be renovation works required for some of these spaces in order to be in a position to improve their offering. From discussions so far, it has been indicated that more ticketed shows, arts, drama, music and comedy events would be of interest.

The key spaces are; Millennium Arts Centre, Portadown Town Hall, Town Centre Plaza, Peoples Park, Edenvilla Park, the Library and the Riverside area.

FINDING 5 - EVENING AND NIGHT TIME ECONOMY (ENTE)

The Mandeville St area of Portadown town has significantly changed the evening offering in recent times but there is more potential for development across the town centre, to enhance the evening and night-time economy, ENTE activities.

An improved ENTE offering will attract new customers to town in the evenings and retain current customers. There is a trend whereby people tend to use Portadown bars as a meeting point, before jumping on the train to Belfast for the night.

FINDING 5 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

Develop and promote a range of evening and night-time activities, including dining, entertainment, and cultural events.

This may include;

- Continued support to existing local businesses, encouraging new ventures, and events that attract both locals and visitors.
- Maximising the offer at venues such as Millenium Arts Centre, Portadown Town Hall and the Seagoe Hotel
- Exploring the “NightMover” model (Translink) and wider calls for better late-night transport.
- Linking with drama and arts activities, as well as cultural-led regeneration.
- An opportunity to leverage community wealth-building models to reinvest evening economy gains into local businesses and public realm improvements and inclusion
- Other ideas such as guided tours, talks, light displays and or industrial-heritage storytelling with a variety of stops at local cafes, restaurants or food/drinks catering businesses, could be delivered day or night time.

In tandem points from other recommendations such as **enhancing dwell time and the Power of 10+ will have a positive contribution to these finding ideas.**



FINDING 6 - THE "POWER OF 10+" AND PROMOTION OF PLACE

The Power of 10 concept demonstrates the importance of creating multiple reasons for people to visit and engage with a place. For Portadown, this means identifying and building on at least ten unique attractions or activities that can draw people to the town. Portadown, as part of the Craigavon Urban Area (CUA).

The discovery phase highlighted several key areas where Portadown can leverage on its strengths, including its Victorian heritage, the River Bann and riverside, the rail review opportunities, and various parks and green spaces.

FINDING 6 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

The discovery phase highlighted several key areas where Portadown can leverage its strengths, including its Victorian heritage, the River Bann, the railway station, and various parks and green spaces. By focusing on these areas, Portadown can create a vibrant and engaging environment that attracts both residents and visitors.

- **Updating and maximising an online footprint** e.g. Tripadvisor for Portadown businesses and venues would reiterate what's currently happening in the town centre and surrounds, to enable visitors to make local choices. The use of social media networks can also assist in growing partnerships and attracting local employee, commuters and travellers.
- **Grow collaborative partnerships:** Grow and strengthen partnerships between local businesses (i.e. The Chamber of Commerce), community groups Council and Community Planning Partners to create a cohesive and attractive place which aligns with the needs and aspirations of the community encourages investment and promotion.
- **Quarter concepts,** the early-stage Chamber of Commerce ideas and concept of promoting the town into distinct quarters, such as Riverside, Mandeville and Railway. These should be explored further through engagement with the local people.
- Get involved with **Urban ABC platform** as it could evolve as an important part of a the polycentric CUA model.

FINDING 7 - HERITAGE

Portadown, has a rich heritage and unique cultural identities that are integral to its character.

There are many elements to Portadown's heritage such as the railway, the canal, linen and ironwork industries, and the Victorian architecture in the streetscape.

The Portadown Town Trail although in need of a refresh, articulates the heritage story and showcases the town's unique heritage and presents opportunities for future development and community engagement.

FINDING 7 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

Portadown could celebrate and build on its unique heritage, in efforts to create a vibrant, resilient, and attractive urban area with a strong sense of community and belonging.

A few suggestions follow:

- **Built heritage restoration and reuse:** this involves not only preserving and restoring existing historical sites but by restoring and reusing sustainable construction methods and adopting net zero carbon approaches. Portadown could enhance its built environment while addressing environmental concerns.



Heritage buildings being brought back to use will support tackling vacancy and enable the owners and people to preserve the heritage fabric as well as the untold stories.

- **Cultural-Led Regeneration:** Integrate cultural elements into the development plans, such as public art installations, heritage trails, and cultural festivals using the new and existing diverse population and communities who live in Portadown.
- **Heritage assets,** develop further the opportunities for visitor and tourism attractors to town by utilising the heritage assets of the place, such as the Newry – Portadown Canal Towpath, Edenvilla Historic Park, linen and industrial sites and the notable places identified in the trail below. Invest in the preservation and promotion of Portadown's Victorian heritage.
- **Portadown Town Trail update and relaunch.** This trail is an important asset for demonstrating the unique heritage of the town. However, it is currently a dated guide that requires a refresh. Despite its age, the trail presents significant opportunities for future development, fostering a sense of belonging, and securing funding to help sustain the town. The trail showcases 37 sites of interest, designed in 1997 by the Craigavon Historical Society. While some buildings have been lost through redevelopment, the essential character and attractiveness of Portadown's streetscape have been preserved and should be promoted.

By updating and promoting the Portadown Town Trail, the town could enhance its heritage tourism, foster a sense of community, and attract more visitors, ultimately contributing to the town's economic and social well-being now and in the future.

- **Social Heritage Connections:** Engage with local community groups, historical societies to bring the heritage stories to life, contributing to the development of talks, walks and seminars. There is ongoing research into the benefits of 'health and heritage'.

FINDING 8 - RAIL OPPORTUNITIES

The railway has been part of Portadown's heritage since the 1800's and remains today as a key transport network.

FINDING 8 - IDEAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

The Railway Station in Portadown serves local routes as well as the cross-border Enterprise Train Service and is located at the bottom of Woodhouse Street a short stroll up to Market Street, it is also adjacent to the People's Park.

- **Attract rail visitors,** the Enterprise train service between Belfast and Dublin now stops in Portadown on an hourly basis. There is an opportunity to collaborate with the rail users and Translink to promote Portadown and the wider Craigavon Urban Area as day trip destination, this station is a key arrival point to the 'Food Heartland'.
- **All Island Strategic Rail Review 2024** identified several opportunities in Northern Ireland where rail is well-placed to improve connectivity, two of which are applicable to Portadown. The review further set out plausible roadmaps to support implementation.
 - Restoring the rail line between Derry-Londonderry and Portadown. This would link the large towns of Strabane, Omagh, and Dungannon to the rail network and greatly improve intercity connectivity between Derry-Londonderry and both Dublin and Belfast.
 - Reinstating the railway from Portadown to Armagh, Cavan, and Mullingar. This would reconnect many towns to the network and boost connectivity between Northern Ireland, the Midlands, and the West.

Further engagement with both governments and relevant stakeholders would be most beneficial.

Table 46: Key findings & recommendations for Portadown



Appendix 1- New Town Case Study: Milton Keynes

Introduction

Milton Keynes in England and Craigavon in Northern Ireland were both developed during the mid-20th century as part of the UK government's New Town programme, yet their trajectories reveal contrasting outcomes in urban planning, growth, and community development.

Conceived to address overcrowding in existing cities and to promote balanced regional development, both towns were designed with ambitious visions of modern living, green spaces, and innovative transport systems.

Milton Keynes has largely been regarded as a success story in terms of population growth, economic activity and adaptability.



Figure 65: Image Milton Keynes

Factors Contributing to Population Growth & Success of Milton Keynes

- **New Town Status:** Established in 1967 as a New Town, Milton Keynes benefitted from a clear masterplan which supported structured urban growth and major infrastructure investment.
- **Economic Growth:** The area has attracted a wide range of businesses and industries, fostering job creation and positioning Milton Keynes as an important regional economic hub.
- **Affordable Housing:** Housing provision has been more affordable compared to much of the South East, encouraging young families and professionals to settle in the town.
- **Educational Institutions:** The presence of the Open University and other colleges has brought in a large student population and boosted the town's knowledge economy.
- **Transport Connections:** Strong transport links via the M1 motorway, a well-planned road network, and direct rail services to London have made Milton Keynes a highly accessible commuter town.
- **Quality of Life:** The integration of extensive green spaces, leisure facilities, and modern urban design has promoted a high standard of living for residents.



Milton Keynes- SWOT

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose-built New Town with a flexible grid system supporting organised growth. • Extensive Redway network promoting sustainable transport and active lifestyles. • Strong economy with national and international business investment. • Affordable housing attracting families and professionals. • Excellent transport links (M1 motorway, East–West Rail in development, fast rail to London). • High quality of life with green spaces, lakes, and leisure facilities. • Presence of the Open University and other educational institutions supporting a knowledge economy. 	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued growth as a strategic regional hub within the Oxford–Cambridge Arc. • Expansion of sustainable development initiatives, including smart city technologies. • Potential to strengthen public transport and reduce car dependency. • Growing cultural and creative industries alongside leisure and retail sectors. • Attracting further inward investment due to location and economic strength.
<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapid population growth can strain infrastructure and public services. • Reliance on car travel remains high despite the Redway system, leading to congestion. • Town lacks the historic character and architectural heritage of older cities. • Some areas experience social inequality and pockets of deprivation. • Grid road system can be confusing for newcomers and visitors. 	<p>Gaps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large logistics hubs attract lower paid wages • Pressure on housing demand may lead to affordability issues in the future. • Environmental challenges from expansion, including loss of greenfield sites. • Competition from other regional centres for investment and talent. • Risk of social divisions if growth is not inclusive and evenly distributed.

Table 47: SWOT of Milton Keynes

Milton Keynes is often cited as one of the most successful examples of the UK’s New Town programme, largely due to its **strategic focus on long-term sustainable growth**. From its inception, the town was designed with green spaces, extensive parklands, and energy-efficient planning principles that have continued to shape its development. This emphasis on **sustainability** has not only supported a healthier environment but also created a distinctive identity for the town, making it an attractive location for residents who value a balance between urban living and access to nature.

In addition, Milton Keynes has actively encouraged **economic growth** through the attraction of national and international businesses, resulting in strong job creation across a variety of sectors. This economic vibrancy has been supported by significant **investment in**



infrastructure, including excellent road and rail connections, modern housing provision, and expanding public services. Alongside these, **community well-being** has remained a priority, with high-quality health, education, and recreational facilities integrated into the urban fabric. The presence of institutions such as the **Open University**, together with leisure amenities and cultural venues, has further enhanced the town’s quality of life, securing its reputation as a thriving, sustainable, and forward-looking urban centre.

Exploring new town challenges

At a basic level a comparison was carried out looking at economic, social, growth and design challenges across a range of new towns from around the same time in England, all with mixed success in their development.

New Towns	Economic Challenges	Social Challenges	Growth Challenges	Design Challenges
Milton Keynes	Ensuring social equity and managing growth sustainably	Balancing growth with social needs	Extensive use of grid roads leading to isolated areas	Maintaining extensive green spaces & well-planned infrastructure
Craigavon	No traditional town centre, multifunctional town	Division, anti-social behaviour & crime	Balancing modern growth needs with green preservation	Signposting to a town centre with a different feel to traditional ones
Harlow	Struggled to maintain vibrant & attractive town centre	Economic decline and social issues	Engaging the community in redevelopment efforts	Underused and neglected pedestrian areas due to separation of traffic
Peterborough	Economic growth supported by good connections	Balancing community integration	Significant growth and development	Ensuring sustainable development
Cumbernauld	Economic decline & lack of local businesses	Social isolation & crime	Ongoing debate over redevelopment	Poor design & maintenance of town centre
Stevenage	Economic decline & social problems	Social isolation due to design	Addressing local needs and preferences	Underused & neglected pedestrian areas due to separation of traffic

Table 48: New Town Comparison of Challenges



Trails and Paths

The Redway system in Milton Keynes represents one of the most innovative and enduring features of its New Town planning. Established as a network of over 200 miles of shared-use paths, the Redways provide safe, mostly off-road routes for pedestrians and cyclists, linking residential neighbourhoods with schools, shopping centres, parks, and employment areas.

This system reflects a deliberate design philosophy that prioritised sustainable movement and accessibility, ensuring that key facilities such as neighbourhood centres and primary schools were within walking or cycling distance of every household. The integration of the Redways into the town's open space network, along with external connections through subways, trails, and links to surrounding communities, has ensured the long-term success of this model. To this day, the Redways continue to be maintained and promoted through initiatives such as interactive maps, guided walks, and cycle route planning provided by organisations like, The Parks Trust, encouraging active travel and healthy lifestyles across the city.

Below is a map demonstrating the format of red paths across Milton Keynes. These connect both the new town and old towns providing strengths of character, bringing value to the circular economy and connecting natural and build heritage in a unique manner.

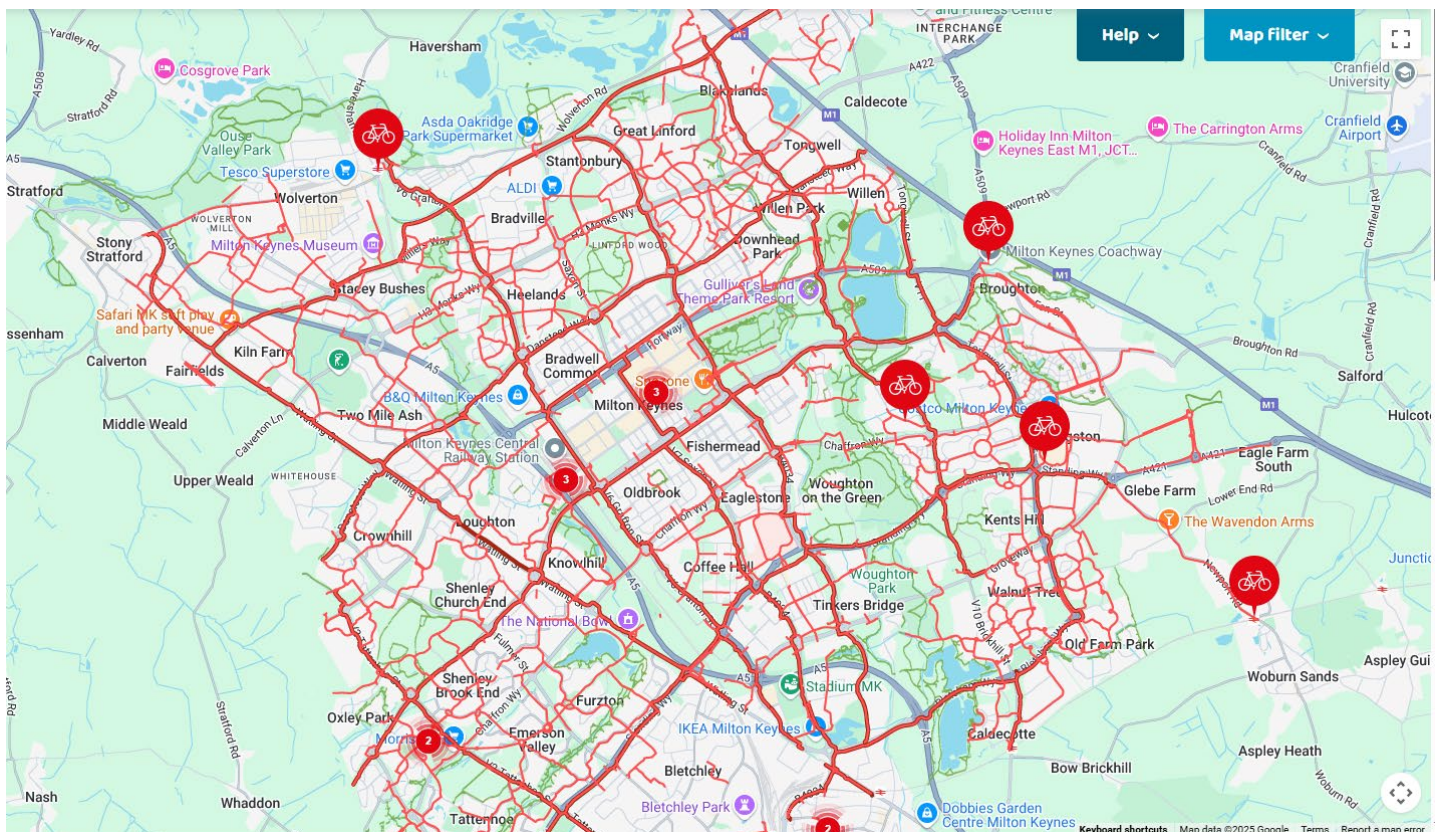


Figure 66: Map of Red Paths in Milton Keynes



Key Features

- **Redway System:** The Redway system is a network of over 200 miles of shared-use paths for pedestrians and cyclists. These paths are mostly off-road and provide safe routes connecting residential areas, schools, shopping centres and parks
- **Design and Access:** The pedestrian and cycle inter-connectivity is a key aim of the movement strategy in Milton Keynes. Connections are provided through the network of open spaces, ensuring that the development is fully permeable for pedestrians and cyclists. Principal footway/cycleway routes and connectivity to external areas ensuring direct connections between residential areas and local facilities
- **Accessibility:** The design philosophy includes ensuring that all facilities are accessible by foot and cycle. For example, the Neighbourhood Centre is within 1,200 meters of all development areas, which is around a 15-minute walk. The primary school is centrally located to maximise walking and cycling trips within its catchment area, with all development within 1,000 meters of the school
- **External Connections:** External pedestrian and cycle connections are facilitated at several locations, including connections to existing routes and subways beneath major roads. Connections to nearby residential areas and recreational routes are also provided, enhancing the overall connectivity of the city
- **Trails and Walks:** Milton Keynes offers a variety of trails and walks that connect shops, attractions, cultural sites, and transport hubs. This network of trails and paths encourages exploration of the city on foot or by bicycle
- **Interactive Maps and Guides:** The Parks Trust and other local organisations provide self-guided walks and rides, as well as interactive maps to help plan routes and explore the extensive network of paths

In summary

The future of Milton Keynes, as set out in its masterplan, is strongly rooted in the principles of place shaping- creating a city that is not only functional but also distinctive, inclusive and sustainable. The vision looks beyond simply accommodating growth, aiming instead to shape Milton Keynes into a city of over 500,000 people where communities are well-designed, connected, and supported by high-quality public spaces. The focus is on developing new neighbourhoods that foster identity and belonging, while strengthening the character of existing areas through investment in housing, infrastructure, and community assets. Place shaping also underpins the town's ambitions for economic, social, and environmental resilience. By positioning itself as a central hub within the Oxford–Cambridge Arc, Milton Keynes seeks to attract innovative industries and create opportunities that benefit the whole community. At the same time, sustainability and liveability remain key, with the protection of green spaces, investment in walking and cycling networks, and a strong emphasis on digital and “smart city” technologies. The masterplan envisions a city where growth is managed in a way that enhances quality of life, strengthens civic pride, and ensures Milton Keynes continues to stand out as a model for modern urban development.



Appendix 2- CUA MAP

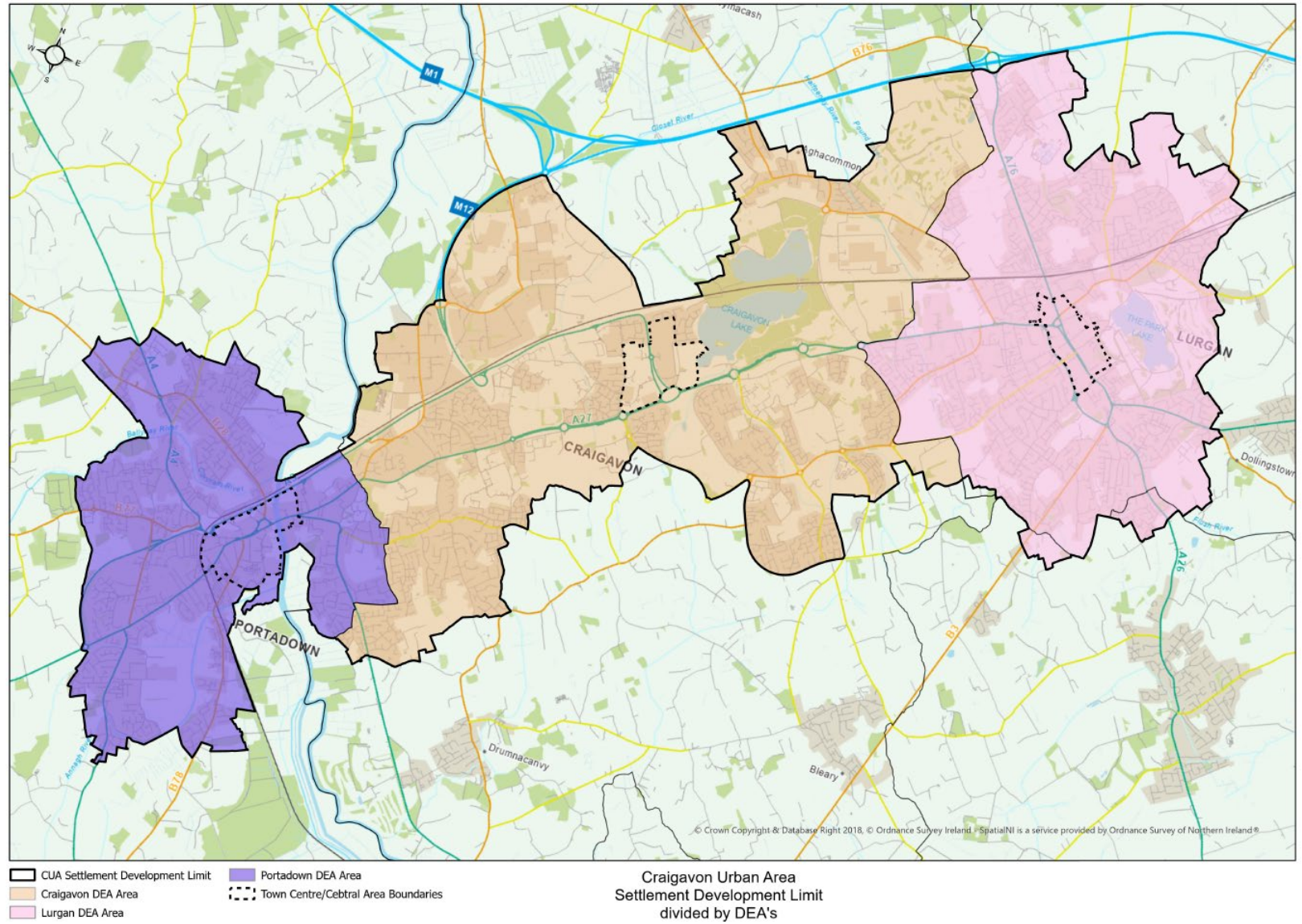


Figure 67: Map of the CUA- Settlement Development Limit divided by DEAs



Your Discovery notes & working document additions: