

Armagh City, Banbridge &
Craigavon Borough Council

Local Development Plan 2035

Draft Plan Strategy

Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report

September 2026



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Armagh City
Banbridge
& Craigavon
Borough Council

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This Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report has been prepared by Shared Environmental Service in conjunction with Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

Have your say

Public consultation on the draft Plan Strategy will begin on **13 October 2026 at 5pm** and will be open for a period of 8 weeks, ending on **8 December 2026 at 5pm**.

Availability of the draft Plan Strategy

The draft Plan Strategy document and supporting documentation, including the Sustainability Appraisal Report, will be available on the Council's website: www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

The draft Plan Strategy document is also available in hard copy to view during office hours at the following locations:

- **Planning Office** – Banbridge Civic Building, Downshire Road, Banbridge, BT32 3JY
- **Craigavon Civic and Conference Centre** - 66 Lakeview Road, Craigavon, BT64 1AL
- **Palace Buildings** – The Palace Demesne, Friary Road, Armagh, BT60 4EL

Your comments on the draft Plan Strategy document and supporting information can be submitted by the various means below:

By email: ldp@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk

By post: Planning LDP Team
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
Banbridge Civic Building
Downshire Road
Banbridge,
BT32 3YJ

Online Questionnaire: <https://armaghbanbridgecraigavon.citizenspace.com/>

The closing date for the receipt of comments is: **8 December 2026 at 5pm**.

How the Council will process your comments

Following the twelve-week consultation period, there will be a further eight-week period to facilitate counter representations.

All representations and counter-representations will be analysed by our Local Development Plan Team, and a Public Consultation Report will be prepared and presented to elected members. This may result in amendments in the draft Plan Strategy, before its formal submission to the Department for Infrastructure, in advance of Independent Examination. It should be noted that your responses are public documents that will be made available for public inspection and Independent Examination. All responses will therefore be held on a database in accordance with the provisions of the UK GDPR.

The draft Plan Strategy and supporting documents can be made available on request in other formats, and alternative languages where possible, by contacting the Council's Planning Office:

By telephone: 0300 200 7830 (NI General Planning Line);
0300 0300 900 (Main Council Line)

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NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council Local Development Plan

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough (ACBCBC) extends to an area of approximately 554 square miles and adjoins the boundary of five neighbouring Council areas: Mid Ulster District Council, Newry Mourne and Down District Council, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council (by Lough Neagh) and Monaghan County Council in the Republic of Ireland.

Population projections estimate that the population of the Borough is expected to grow from 218,656 in 2021, to 241,823 in 2035, which is a projected increase of approximately C 10.6%. The Borough currently has 104 designated settlements, the three hubs together accommodate almost half of the Boroughs population, Craigavon Urban Area (33.3%), Armagh City (7.5%) and Banbridge town (7.9%). Approximately 23% of the Boroughs population live in the rural area (outside of settlements).

The Council has a key role in meeting the needs of citizens who live and work in the Borough through the provision of services directly, or with other partners. *The Councils Corporate Plan 2023-2027 'Our People, Our Place, Our Future' has a vision to create 'a happy, health and connected community, a vibrant and sustainable economy and appealing places for living, working and learning'.*

The primary aim of the Regional Development Strategy (RDS), the Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS2) is to further sustainable development. The LDP is required to 'take account' of the regional policy context. Therefore, it is vital that the LDP facilitates development in a manner that enables our social and economic priorities to be pursued, whilst ensuring that our built and natural environment is appropriately managed, both now and into the future.

What is Sustainability Appraisal?

A Sustainability Appraisal is being carried out alongside preparation of the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council LDP. Local Planning Authorities use Sustainability Appraisal to identify the relative environmental, social and economic performance of possible strategic, policy and site-specific options, and to evaluate which of these may be more sustainable. Sustainability Appraisal is a statutory process incorporating the requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment.

What is the purpose of this document?

The purpose of this Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report is to:

- Identify other policies, plans, programmes and sustainability objectives of relevance to our LDP.
- Collect relevant baseline information about the environmental, social and economic conditions in the Borough, and consider how these might change in the future.
- Identify sustainability issues and challenges which could affect or be addressed by our LDP.
- Develop the Sustainability Appraisal Framework, consisting of sustainability objectives and appraisal prompts which will form the basis for assessment of our LDP.
- Invite comment on the scope and method of the Sustainability Appraisal.

Sustainability Appraisal Objectives for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

A total of fourteen social, economic and environmental topics were identified. For each topic sustainability objectives were identified by considering the wider strategic and policy context and reviewing baseline information for our council and any evidence of trends and issues. The objectives follow with a short rationale and description of what each seeks to achieve.

The objectives for sustainable development for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council are to:

1.... improve health and well-being.

Public policy seeks to increase healthy life expectancy, reduce preventable deaths, improve mental health and reduce health inequalities. Evidence shows that there is a need to address obesity, increase physical activity and reduce inequalities in health. It is also necessary to provide for the needs of an ageing population and minimise the detrimental impacts of noise. This can be achieved by creating an environment that is clean and attractive; encourages healthy lifestyles and enables access to health care facilities for all.

2.... strengthen society.

Regional policy is directed towards improving community relations and creating a safe society which is more united. Success will be represented by places which are inclusive, respect culture and identity, promote social integration and create a sense of pride. They will also be designed to feel safe and to reduce opportunity for crime or anti-social behaviour.

3.... provide good quality, sustainable housing.

The population is growing and therefore there is ongoing need for new housing in locations that meet regional policy, are accessible and balance the needs of society and the environment. The make-up of households is changing therefore design needs to meet long-term requirements with good quality build to be sustainable. This objective should reduce homelessness and ensure decent, affordable homes with a mix of types.

4.... enable access to high quality education.

Good education improves opportunities for employment and also contributes to the avoidance of poverty and healthier lifestyles. The provision of suitable accommodation for educational establishments in appropriate, accessible locations should play a part in making them more sustainable and reducing inequalities in education.

5.... enable sustainable economic growth.

Regional policy seeks to develop a strong, competitive and regionally balanced economy. It is necessary to provide suitable locations for employment, with flexibility where necessary, to reflect current and future distribution of jobs across sectors, encourage new business start-ups, facilitate innovation, regenerate areas, attract investment and make employment as accessible as possible for all. This will reduce unemployment and poverty by helping more people to earn a living and increase their income.

6.... manage material assets sustainably.

Material assets such as infrastructure and sources of energy production are essential for society and the economy but need careful planning to ensure that they are designed for efficiency and to minimise adverse impacts. The concept of the circular economy treats waste as resource which should be managed sustainably to reduce production and increase recovery, recycling and composting rates; new or adapted facilities may be required.

7.... protect physical resources and use sustainably.

Land, minerals, geological features, geothermal energy and soil are resources which require protection from degradation and safeguarding for future use. Sustainable agriculture, sustainable tourism and the sustainable use of minerals, geological features, and geothermal energy can help to support the economy.

8.... encourage active and sustainable travel.

There is a common goal to reduce traffic emissions and congestion, which means reducing single-occupancy car use and increasing use of other forms of transport, especially at peak times. The location

of housing and key services can facilitate better access to public transport. Opportunities for active travel make travel more affordable and may bring added health benefits, while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Measures to manage car demand, such as parking and re-allocation of road space, which encourage a shift from car to public transport, walking and cycling will contribute to this goal.

9.... improve air quality.

Air pollution has serious impacts on human health as well as degrading the natural environment. This objective can be achieved through reducing sources of air pollution. Where air pollution cannot be totally excluded, careful siting of development should avoid impacts on sensitive receptors.

10.... reduce causes of and adapt to climate change.

International commitments require greenhouse gas emissions to be reduced to decrease their effects on climate. Measures that help reduce energy consumption and enable renewable energy help mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, however, climate change adaptation planning and implementation is essential to managing the resilience of our society and natural environment to an uncertain future, as well as for the known current and projected impacts of a changing climate.

11.... protect, manage and use water resources sustainably.

This objective encompasses reducing levels of water pollution, sustainable use of water resources, improving the physical state of the water environment and reducing the risk of flooding, now and in the future. It meets the requirements of Northern Ireland legislation, strategies and plans in support of the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations and other legislation that relates to water, and it takes account of the future impacts of climate change.

12.... protect natural resources and enhance biodiversity.

International obligations which are adopted in Northern Ireland legislation, along with national legislation and policies, require the protection of biodiversity including flora, fauna and habitats. This is for their intrinsic value and for the wider services that they provide to people, the economy and the environment - for example, as carbon stores which can mitigate the effects of climate change. This objective includes protecting and enhancing biodiversity including in coastal and marine areas, as well as protection of green and blue infrastructure to enhance the services that natural resources provide.

13.... maintain and enhance landscape character.

International and national policies seek to conserve the natural character and landscape of the coast and countryside and protect them from excessive, inappropriate or obtrusive development. This objective seeks to maintain the character and distinctiveness of the area's landscapes and to protect and enhance open spaces and the setting of prominent features, settlements and transport corridors.

14.... protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage.

The historic environment and cultural heritage are resources that inform our history and bring character and sense of place. They also attract visitors and contribute to the economy and bring vibrancy to the places where we live, work and relax. This can be achieved by protecting and enhancing Conservation Areas, townscapes and other sites of historic and cultural value including their setting.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAP	Area(s) of Archaeological Potential
ACBCBC	Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
AoHSV	Area of High Scenic Value
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
ASAI	Area(s) of Significant Archaeological Interest
ASQ	Area of High Scenic Quality
ASSI	Area of Special Scientific Interest
ATC	Area(s) of Townscape Character
AVC	Area(s) of Village Character
AWB	Artificial Waterbody
BEIS	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
BHARNI	Built Heritage at Risk in Northern Ireland
BRES	Business Register and Employment Survey
CCC	Committee on Climate Change
COE	Council of Europe
cSAC	Candidate Special Areas of Conservation
DAERA	The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DCCAE	Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment
DE	The Department of Education
DEA	District Electoral Area
DECC	Department of Energy and Climate Change
DETI	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
DfC	Department for Communities
DfE	Department for the Economy
DfI	Department for Infrastructure
DOE	Department of the Environment
DoH	Department of Health
DoJ	Department of Justice
PFG	Programme for Government
EA	Education Authority
EAPP	Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes
EC	European Commission
EO	The Executive Office
ESCR	Earth Science Conservation Review site
Four Nations	Devolved Administrations and English Government (NI Lead Department indicated in brackets)
FRMP	Flood Risk Management Plan
GEP	Good Ecological Potential
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GHQ12	12 Item General Health Questionnaire
HED	Historic Environment Division
HMWB	Heavily Modified Waterbody
HSCB	Health and Social Care Board
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LCA	Landscape Character Area
LDP	Local Development Plan
LGD	Local Government District
LLPA	Local Landscape Policy Area
NA	Not Applicable
NAP	National Adaptation Programme
NBRBD	Neagh Bann River Basin District
NCN	National Cycle Network
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NERBD	North Eastern River Basin District

NI	Northern Ireland
NIEA	Northern Ireland Environment Agency
NIFRS	NI Fire and Rescue Service
NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
NINIS	Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service
NIRLCA	Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
NIW	Northern Ireland Water
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
ONS	Office of National Statistics
PfG	Programme for Government
PFRA	Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for NI
POP	Preferred Options Paper
PPS	Planning Policy Statement
pSPA	Proposed SPA
QOF	Quality and Outcomes Framework
RBD	River Basin District
RDS	Regional Development Strategy
ROI	Republic of Ireland
ROMPs	Review of Old Mineral Permissions
RPA	Review of Public Administration
SA	Sustainability appraisal
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation
SAR	Standardised Admissions Rate
SCA	Smoke Control Area
SCI	Sites of Community Importance
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SFRA	Significant Flood Risk Area
SHSCT	Southern Health and Social Care Trust
SIR	Standardised Incidence Rate
SLNCI	Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance
SOA	Super Output Area
SONI	System Operator for Northern Ireland
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPPS2	Strategic Planning Policy Statement
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems
SWaMP	Southern Waste Management Group
TPO	Tree Preservation Order
UK	United Kingdom
UK Gov.	UK Government
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WANE	Wildlife and Natural Environment Act
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WMU	Water Management Unit
WTW	Water Treatment Works
WwTW	Waste Water Treatment Works

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of this Scoping Report

The scoping report is the second formal output of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process for the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council Local Development Plan (LDP). It updates and builds on the Scoping Report prepared alongside the Preferred Options Paper (POP), published in May 2018. It presents information about the SA methodology and the topics being assessed under the SA, which incorporates Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The Scoping Report will be updated throughout the Plan preparation and will be included with all SA Reports published as part of the consultation process for the LDP.

1.2 Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council Local Development Plan

The current LDP timetable was published in June 2026. It sets out indicative timeframes for the key stages in the production of the LDP. Section 3 of this report describes the approach we are taking to plan preparation in more detail and provides an overview Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough. The Borough Council shares a boundary with neighbouring Councils Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, Mid Ulster and Newry, Mourne and Down and Antrim and Newtownabbey (by Lough Neagh). It also shares a boundary with county Monaghan in Ireland.

1.3 Sustainable Development

The Northern Ireland Sustainable Development Strategy - *'Everyone's Involved'*¹, states that sustainability policy *"is driven by intergenerational equity; to secure a quality of life for present and future generations that is positive and rewarding"*.

Achieving sustainable development is a requirement set out in Provision 25 of The Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006. This requires all Departments and Councils in Northern Ireland, in exercising their functions, to act in the way they consider best calculated to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. In doing this they must have regard to any strategy or guidance relating to sustainable development published by Northern Ireland departments.

Within planning legislation, Section 5 of The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (as amended) requires those who exercise any function in relation to Local Development Plans to do so with the objective of furthering sustainable development.

Sustainability Appraisal is the approach used to promote sustainable development within LDPs by evaluating the social, environmental and economic effects of all aspects of the LDP throughout its preparation.

The Sustainable Development Strategy identifies 32 strategic objectives in the following Priority Areas:

- Building a dynamic, innovative economy that delivers the prosperity required to tackle disadvantage and lift communities out of poverty.
- Strengthening society so that it is more tolerant, inclusive and stable and permits positive progress in quality of life for everyone.
- Driving sustainable, long-term investment in key infrastructure to support economic and social development.

¹ NI Executive (2010) Everyone's Involved - Sustainable Development Strategy

- Striking an appropriate balance between the responsible use and protection of natural resources in support of a better quality of life and a better-quality environment.
- Ensuring reliable, affordable and sustainable energy provision and reducing our carbon footprint.
- Ensuring the existence of a policy environment which supports the overall advancement of sustainable development in and beyond Government.

1.4 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a systematic process for assessing potential effects of proposed plans or programmes to ensure that significant environmental impacts are considered from the earliest opportunity and addressed in decision making. It was originally introduced by the European Directive 2001/42/EC 'On the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment' ('the SEA Directive'). In Northern Ireland the SEA Directive's requirements are currently taken forward through The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (EAPP) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004. The EAPP (NI) Regulations set out more detailed requirements for the process and content of the environmental assessment of plans and programmes. Appendix 1 records how these regulations are being complied with.

1.5 Integrated Sustainability Appraisal

Section 25 of The Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 requires that all NI Departments and councils, in exercising their functions, act in the way they consider best calculated to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Section 5 of The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 ('the 2011 Act') requires those who exercise any function in relation to LDPs to do so with the objective of furthering sustainable development. In addition, Sections 8(6) and 9(7) of the 2011 Act requires an appraisal of sustainability to be carried out for the Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan, respectively.

The approach in this report is informed by Development Plan Practice Note 04: 'Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment'¹. Sustainability Appraisal therefore refers to an integrated approach which fully incorporates Strategic Environmental Assessment and fulfils the requirements for both Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment.

1.6 Stages in Sustainability Appraisal

The key stages of Sustainability Appraisal are summarised below with their location. Those areas shaded in grey will be reported on at a later stage.

Table 1: Stages of Sustainability Appraisal

Stage	Description	Location
Stage A (1) Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report	Identify other relevant policies, plans, programmes and Sustainability Objectives.	Appendix 4 of this report.
	Collect baseline information	Chapter 4 & 5 of this report.
	Consult the Consultation Body on the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal Report.	Prior to publishing the POP, the Council consulted Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) SEA Team 17/10/17, their response was received on 15/11/17.

¹ DOE (2015) Development Plan Practice Note 04: Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment

Stage	Description	Location
		DAERA was re-consulted on 20/01/2026 on the SA Scoping for the draft Plan Strategy stage and their response was received on 23/02/2026. Where applicable recommendations are incorporated into the SA (refer to Appendix 6)
	Identify environmental issues and challenges	Chapter 5 of this report.
	Develop the Sustainability Appraisal Framework	Chapter 6 of this report.
	Produce draft Scoping Report and share with stakeholders	Section 2.3 of this report.
Stage A (2) Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report	Publication of Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report, assessment of reasonable alternatives against agreed Sustainability Appraisal framework and undertaking public consultation along with the Preferred Options Paper (POP).	Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report published with POP in March 2018
Stage B	Assessment of alternatives and any likely significant effects on the draft plan against Sustainability Appraisal framework, taking into account the evidence base and where necessary, proposing mitigation measures for alleviating any adverse effects.	Section 3 and Appendix 4 of the SA Report. Strategic alternatives were also appraised in the SA Interim Report, published with the POP in March 2018.
Stage C	Sustainability Appraisal Report to document the appraisal process and findings.	The Sustainability Appraisal Report, which will be published with the dPS
Stage D	Consultation with the public, environmental authorities and any EU member state affected on the Sustainability Appraisal Report and draft plan.	The SA Report will be forwarded to the Consultation body under Reg. 12(2) and transboundary consultation carried out under Reg.13 if applicable. The SA Report will be published along with the draft Plan Strategy for public consultation.
Stage E	Sustainability Appraisal Statement to show how the Sustainability Appraisal and opinions/consultations have been taken into account, the reasons for choosing the plan as adopted and the proposed measures to monitor the plan.	Not at this stage - a SA Adoption Statement will be prepared following Independent Examination once the Plan Strategy is ready to be adopted.

Stage	Description	Location
Stage F	Monitoring: Establishing arrangements to monitor the significant effects of the implementation of the plan, to identify unforeseen adverse effects and undertake appropriate remedial action.	Not at this stage - a preliminary framework for potential monitoring is included in Section 5 of the SA Report.

1.7 Other Assessments

1.7.1 Habitats Regulations Assessment

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is a provision of The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended). The regulations require assessment of possible adverse effects on the integrity of European sites (Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas) as a result of plans and policies in the Local Development Plan, this is also carried out for Ramsar sites (wetlands of international importance designated under the provisions of the Ramsar Convention). A draft HRA has been published for consultation with the Draft Plan Strategy and an updated version will be prepared for the Draft Local Policies Plan. A final HRA will be published when each of these are adopted.

1.7.2 Rural Proofing

The Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016, which came in to force on 1 June 2017, applies to NI Government Departments and Councils. It states that: *“A public authority must have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans.”* Public authorities must report annually on how they have implemented this requirement.

The approach to considering rural needs is called ‘rural proofing’. DAERA has provided guidance on carrying it out in its publications *‘Thinking Rural: The Essential Guide to Rural Proofing’*¹ and *‘A Guide to the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 for Public Authorities (Revised)’*². Rural proofing is the process by which all major policies and strategies are assessed to determine whether they have a differential impact on rural areas. Where appropriate, adjustments are made to take account of particular rural circumstances. The Council has reported on rural proofing in their Draft Plan Strategy Rural Needs Impact Assessment, which has been published alongside the draft Plan Strategy.

This Scoping Report considers rural populations and how the LDP could affect them in the evidence base for the ‘community’ topic. Data on rural populations, where available, is also included under other topics, for example health, education and infrastructure. Key sustainability issues for the Borough include some that are specific to rural communities. The appraisal prompts include questions about how a proposal will meet the needs of rural populations or would potentially have a disproportionate adverse impact.

1.8 Scoping Report Structure

Chapter 2 of this report details the proposed approach to Sustainability Appraisal while Chapter 3 provides an overview of Plan preparation. Chapter 4 gives an overview of the baseline information and each topic is reported on in Chapter 5 with the context, relevant baseline information, trends, key issues and the implications for the LDP. Chapter 6 presents the Sustainability Framework and outlines the next steps in the Sustainability Appraisal.

¹ DAERA (2015) Thinking Rural: The Essential Guide to Rural Proofing

² DAERA (2017) A guide to the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 - May 2017

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL: THE APPROACH

2.1 Introduction

This Chapter describes the overall approach taken to Sustainability Appraisal throughout the LDP preparation process. Chapters 4 to 6 are the application of this approach for the Scoping Report for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council's LDP.

2.2 Principles

The Sustainability Appraisal process is carried out under the following principles:

Role

Sustainability Appraisal is a tool to aid Plan-making which identifies potential effects of options, how these may be mitigated with a view to informing the most appropriate option. It does not, however, give a 'right' answer and is not the decision-making mechanism.

Integrated

Sustainability Appraisal is an essential part of the Plan-making process. It is integral to, and carried out through, the whole of plan preparation and subsequent monitoring. It helps to test the effects of options and inform the selection of proposals. It will provide evidence of the decision-making process and any changes brought about to ensure sustainability of the LDP.

Shared Information

Where appropriate, data collected for other purposes such as LDP Preparatory Papers or Community Planning has been used for evidence or for future monitoring.

Relevant

The Sustainability Appraisal focuses on context and data that is relevant to the plan. It will not detail issues that cannot be addressed within the remit of the LDP.

Connected

The LDP may be influenced by or have an impact on neighbouring areas. The Sustainability Appraisal considers strategies and plans beyond the Borough, where there is potential for significant positive or negative effects. Neighbouring councils were invited to comment on the POP-stage Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report and Interim Sustainability Appraisal Report when these were published in March 2018. They will also be invited to comment on the Sustainability Appraisal Report for the draft Plan Strategy. It is also acknowledged that the Borough has indirect connectivity with the marine area through its watercourses and river systems.

Proportionate

The Sustainability Appraisal aims to avoid duplication. Therefore, for example, international strategies may not be included where they have been given effect in a national or regional strategy. Where more detailed information is available in another document, the essentials are included here and a link provided to that document.

Up-to-date

The Sustainability Appraisal Reports Report will be updated during Plan preparation to ensure that current policies, plans and programmes are reflected, and recent baseline data are used.

Future proof

Potential future changes within and beyond the life of the plan are considered to anticipate needs and to try to maintain opportunities for long-term sustainable development.

2.3 Involving Others

Informal and formal consultation with stakeholders and the public is an essential part of Sustainability Appraisal, to ensure that the topics and issues have been fully considered. The first formal consultation

required on the Scoping Report was with the Statutory Consultation Body. The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) acts as the lead for the Consultation Body (DAERA) and was consulted on the outline of this Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report in October 2017 and again during the preparation of the draft PS in January 2026. The NIEA's comments have been incorporated, where appropriate, in this report and will further inform future updates to the Scoping Report and Appraisal Reports.

Statutory consultees were also invited to comment on the Sustainability Appraisal reports published at POP stage in March 2018.

Where possible, experts with general and local knowledge of all topics have been consulted to inform the preparatory studies papers and Chapter 5. Statutory consultees will be invited to comment on the Sustainability Appraisal Reports. A register of consultation responses is being maintained and will be provided in a future version of this report.

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council adjoins Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council and Mid Ulster District Council. It also shares a boundary with Antrim, Newtownabbey Borough Council in Lough Neagh. These Councils, along with other statutory consultees, including DAERA, will be invited to comment on the draft Plan Strategy and Sustainability Appraisal Reports.

The public was formally consulted on the Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report, together with this Scoping Report, during consultation on the Preferred Options Paper. There will also be public consultation on the Sustainability Appraisal Reports which will accompany the Draft Plan Strategy and Draft Local Policies Plan. Representations at public consultation that are relevant to the Sustainability Appraisal will be reviewed. Where necessary, the Sustainability Appraisal Reports will be revised in response to representations and to any changes to the Plan Strategy or Local Policies Plan.

2.4 The Evidence Base

The evidence base is arranged according to a number of topics. For each topic, a consistent approach to reporting is followed. The approach is described in more detail in Chapter 4 and the evidence base is presented in Chapter 5.

The evidence base was prepared using all information sources available at the time of writing. Every effort has been made to ensure that the document refers to the most recent information available. However, the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report is an evolving document and will be reviewed and, where necessary, updated at each stage of the LDP.

2.5 The Sustainability Appraisal Framework

The purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal Framework is to provide a means of ensuring that the social, environmental and economic needs of the area are considered in plan preparation. It enables the effects of plan proposals to be described, analysed and compared. It also helps identify measures to minimise negative effects and enhance positive effects.

The Sustainability Appraisal Framework consists of Sustainability Objectives with prompts which are used to assess plan proposals against the baseline. All stages of plan-making will be assessed using the Framework which may be updated as further information becomes available. The Sustainability Appraisal Report to accompany the Plan Strategy include draft proposed indicators for monitoring any significant effects of delivery of the LDP in relation to the Sustainability Objectives.

2.6 Significant Effects

The Sustainability Appraisal will assess the significant effects of options both positive and negative. There is no single definition of a significant effect, therefore assessment is a matter of judgement taking account of the extent of the effect spatially and in time.

2.7 Assessment Method

The key stages of the Sustainability Appraisal are the appraisal of strategic options and reasonable alternatives for:

- the Preferred Options Paper;
- the Plan Strategy; and
- the Local Policies Plan.

The method for the appraisal of this stage of the LDP is summarised in the following section.

2.8 Appraisal of reasonable alternatives for the draft Plan Strategy

In the draft Plan Strategy, policy options are presented at a strategic and operational level. In some cases, more than one policy option has been assessed, however only 'reasonable' alternatives are considered. A description of how 'reasonable' alternatives are identified is provided in Chapter 2 of the Sustainability Appraisal Report. The Sustainability Appraisal Report accompanying the draft Plan Strategy evaluates all policy options using the appraisal matrix shown in Table 2 below. The matrix includes:

- The Plan topic and delivery options to be assessed
- A score indicating the nature of the effect for each option in the short, medium and long term with an explanation of why the score was given.
- A summary comparing the options and identifying the most sustainable approach. If significant negative effects have been indicated, mitigation will be identified in this section. Potential measures to address minor negative effects and to enhance positive effects may also be identified, where appropriate.

Table 2: Outline Sustainability Appraisal Matrix

ISSUE												
OPTIONS	Option 1:				Option 2:				Option 3:			
Sustainability Objective	ST	MT	LT	Explanation	ST	MT	LT	Explanation	ST	MT	LT	Explanation
1. Sustainability Objective												
2. Sustainability Objective												
3. Sustainability Objective, etc.												
▪ Summary and comparison of alternative options against the sustainability objectives. ▪ Identification of the most sustainable option. ▪ Identification of the preferred option. ▪ Summary of what, if any, significant effects are envisaged with the preferred option. ▪ Summary of mitigation measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and/or offset as fully as possible any significant adverse effects of the preferred option. ▪ Summary of possible measures to reduce negative effects and promote positive effects.												

Table 3: Scores and definitions for Sustainability Appraisal Matrix

Rating		Description
++	Significant Positive	Policy/ proposal would greatly help to achieve the objective
+	Minor Positive	Policy/ proposal would slightly help to achieve the objective
0	Neutral / no effect	Policy/ proposal would have no overall effect
-	Minor Negative	Policy/ proposal would slightly conflict with the objective
--	Significant Negative	Policy/ proposal would greatly conflict with the objective
?	Uncertain	The effect cannot be predicted because 1. the approach has an uncertain relationship to the objective; or 2. the relationship is dependent on the way in which the approach is implemented; or 3. insufficient information may be available to enable an appraisal to be made.
ST	Short Term	Up to five years
MT	Medium Term	Five to 15 years
LT	Long term	Over 15 years

Key:	++ Significant positive	+ Minor positive	0 No overall effect	- Minor negative	-- Significant negative	? Uncertain
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2.9 Plan Strategy

The proposals in the draft Plan Strategy will be reviewed and the Scoping Report and Sustainability Appraisal updated to reflect any changes from the previous stage. The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report and Sustainability Appraisal Report will be published as part of the consultation on the draft Plan Strategy.

2.10 Local Policies Plan

In advance of preparation of the Local Policies Plan, criteria will be developed to help guide the appraisal of sites. The proposals in the Local Policies Plan will be appraised using the Sustainability Appraisal Framework and a Sustainability Appraisal Report will be published as part of the consultation on this stage of the Plan.

2.11 Cumulative Effects

Consideration will be given to any cumulative effects of proposals at each stage of plan preparation. These will include potential cumulative effects within the plan and effects in combination with other relevant plans and strategies. A section on cumulative effects has been included in the Sustainability Appraisal Report to accompany the draft Plan Strategy.

3.1 Context – Requirement to Prepare a Local Development Plan

Part 2 of The Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 provides for the preparation of a Local Development Plan (LDP) by a Council for its district, which will (when adopted) replace current development plans. The Local Development Plan will comprise two development plan documents.

- The Plan Strategy (PS); and
- The Local Policies Plan (LPP).

The LDP should fulfil the following functions:

- provide a 15-year plan framework to support the economic and social needs of a council's district in line with regional strategies and policies, while providing for the delivery of sustainable development;
- facilitate sustainable growth by co-ordinating public and private investment to encourage development where it can be of most benefit to the well-being of the community;
- allocate sufficient land to meet society's needs;
- provide an opportunity for all stakeholders, including the public, to have a say about where and how development within their local area should take place;
- provide a plan-led framework for rational and consistent decision-making by the public, private and community sectors and those affected by development proposals; and
- deliver the spatial aspects of a council's current community plan.

3.2 What is the Local Development Plan?

The purpose of the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council LDP is to inform the public, statutory authorities, developers and other interested parties of the policy framework and land use proposals that will implement the strategic objectives of the Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS) (DRD, 2012) and guide development decisions within the Borough up to 2035.

The new LDP will be prepared within the context of the Council's Corporate Plan and will take account of the Council's Community Plan to enable us to plan positively for the future of the Borough. It will ensure that land is appropriately zoned and that our infrastructure is enhanced to develop the Borough for future generations.

The LDP must also take account of the regional policy context set by the Northern Ireland Executive and Central Government Departments. This includes, amongst others, the Sustainable Development Strategy, the Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS)¹, Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS2)² and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs)³ in addition to the UK Marine Policy Statement and, when adopted, the Marine Plan for Northern Ireland. The new LDP will replace the four Area Plans and one Town Centre Plan that are the current statutory development Plans which to the Borough.

3.3 Overview of Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council

The Borough extends to an area of approximately 1,440 square km and borders adjoining council areas of Mid-Ulster; Newry, Mourne and Down; Lisburn and Castlereagh; Antrim and Newtownabbey and Monaghan County Council in the Republic of Ireland.

¹ DRD (2012) Regional Development Strategy 2035

² DfI (2025) Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS22) Planning for Sustainable Development

³ Planning NI Planning Policy Statements and Supplementary Planning Guidance

https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/policy/planning_statements_and_supplementary_planning_guidance.htm

In 2016 the population of Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council area was estimated at 210,260 (Mid-2016 Population Estimates, published 22nd June 2017 for Northern Ireland)¹. 104,323 (49.6%) males and 105,937 (50.4%) females. This was made up of the following age groups:

- 46,804 children aged 0-15 years (22.3% of total);
- 65,612 aged 16-39 years (31.2% of total);
- 66,161 aged 40-64 years (31.5% of total); and
- 31,683 aged 65 years and older (15.0% of total).

From the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) 2018-based population projections² it is estimated that the population of the Borough is expected to grow from 218,656 in 2021³ to 241,823 in 2035 which is a projected population increase of 23,167 (10.6 %). This is projected to be the largest growth in population of all 11 NI Council areas.

The 2021⁴ Census data show that the Borough is made up of 86,642 households. 42,779 (49.4%) of these households are located within the Hubs of Armagh City, Banbridge Town and Craigavon Urban Area. 8,180 (9.4%) within local towns, approximately 16,629 (19.2%) in villages and small settlements and 19,054 (22%) in the countryside.

Figure 1 shows the Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council area within its wider context, highlighting the main settlements and key transport routes.

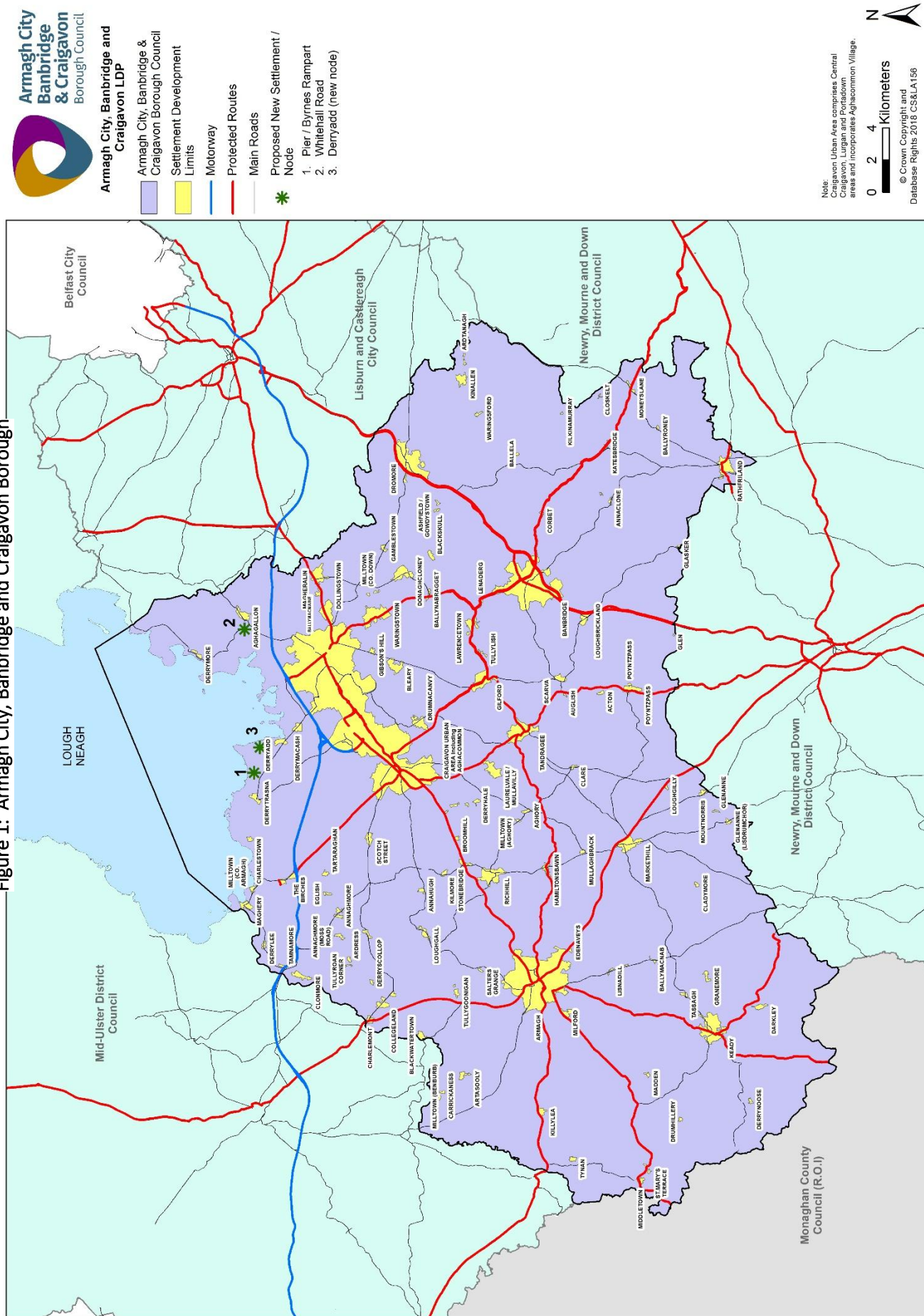
¹ NISRA 2016 Mid Year Population Estimates for Northern Ireland (Published 22 June 2017)

² 2018 -2043 NISRA popn projections LGD 2014. <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/2018-based-population-projections-areas-within-northern-ireland>

³ 2021 usual resident popn: A:16438 B:17248 CUA:72721. ABC:218656. <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/ct0116-usual-resident-population-local-government-district-and-urban-status>

⁴ 2021 usual resident popn: A:16438 B:17248 CUA:72721. ABC:218656. <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/ct0116-usual-resident-population-local-government-district-and-urban-status>

Figure 1: Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough –



OVERVIEW OF THE BASELINE EVIDENCE

4.1 Presentation of Baseline Evidence

The baseline evidence is presented in Chapter 5 for fourteen topics, which span the social, economic and environmental themes. Objectives 1 to 3 are social topics, 4 to 6 relate to economy and the remaining topics are primarily environmental, although they also contribute to the social and economic themes. Many topics overlap, therefore Table 3 presents an outline scope for each topic to clarify where the information is presented.

Table 4: Scope of Sustainability Topics

Topic	Includes
1. Health and Well-being	Health profile, physical activity, access to health care, access to open space and recreation, quiet areas and noise.
2. Community	Community identity, shared space, social inclusion, crime prevention and safety, deprivation and good relations.
3. Housing	Housing, urban capacity and settlements.
4. Education and Skills	Primary through to third level and apprenticeships.
5. Economy and Employment	Employment, economic growth, investment, tourism, industry and commerce, town centres and retailing.
6. Material Assets	Infrastructure relating to energy / heat generation and distribution, telecommunications, waste management and pipelines; derelict and contaminated land; manufactured goods; renewable energy and cemeteries.
7. Physical Resources	Earth science, minerals, land and soil (including land use) and geothermal energy.
8. Transport and Accessibility	Public, private transport, traffic and efficient movement, walking and cycling.
9. Air	Air quality and short-term changes (aspects relating to climate are covered in Climate Change).
10. Climate Change	Northern Ireland in global context of climate change; greenhouse gas emissions; implications of climate change, mitigation and adaptation.
11. Water	Water quality and resources, water levels (flood risk).
12. Natural Resources	Biodiversity, fauna, flora, designated sites, green and blue infrastructure, ecosystems services.
13. Landscape	Landscape and countryside/rural area.
14. Historic Environment and Cultural heritage	Historic environment, archaeology including built heritage, industrial, townscape and cultural heritage assets.

Each topic is presented using the same structure with the general headings set out below:

- Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies
- Baseline Information
- Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan
- Key Sustainability Issues

4.2 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

The Sustainability Appraisal must include a review of other policies, plans, programmes and strategies that have an influence on the content of the LDP. The aims of this review are:

- to identify all external social, economic and environmental objectives which have a bearing on the Sustainability Appraisal of the LDP;
- to reflect sustainability themes contained in regional policies and strategies;
- to identify any other sustainability issues that might influence the preparation of the plan;
- to highlight whether other policies, plans or programmes might give rise to cumulative effects when combined with the LDP.

Consideration of this context also helps ensure that the LDP will deliver obligations for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council which are within the scope of the LDP. Appendix 4 presents the strategies, policies, programmes and plans that have been considered with their key objectives and implications for the LDP. This will be updated throughout plan preparation.

4.3 Strategic Context

The following regional strategies are overarching and form a backdrop to the LDP. Each is introduced here and key relevant aspects are described in more detail under each topic in Chapter 5.

4.3.1 Regional Development Strategy

The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) provides a strategic and long-term perspective on the future development of Northern Ireland up to 2035 to deliver the spatial aspects of the Programme for Government. It contains regional guidance to provide policy direction in relation to the economy, society and environment. It complements the Sustainable Development Strategy and sets the context for policy and development decisions in order to achieve sustainable development throughout the region.

The RDS sets out a strategic, long-term vision on the future development of NI up to 2035. It provides an overarching strategic planning framework and influences the future distribution of development throughout NI. The RDS contains strategic regional guidance which provides policy direction in relation to economic, social and environmental matters aimed at achieving sustainable development and social cohesion.

The RDS recognises the important role of Belfast in generating regional prosperity and that Londonderry is the focus for economic growth in the Northwest. It recognises that Craigavon Urban Area performs a strong sub-regional function, offering a wide range of services and facilities, including an acute hospital. However, to ensure all areas benefit from economic growth, it also reflects the Programme for Government approach of balanced sub-regional growth and recognises the importance of key settlements as centres for growth and prosperity.

The RDS has a statutory basis, is material to decisions on individual planning applications and appeals, and Councils must take account of the RDS when drawing up their LDPs.

4.3.2 Strategic Planning Policy Statement

The Strategic Planning Policy Statement 2nd Edition 2025 (SPPS2) provides an overarching statement of the general regional planning principles underlying the reformed plan led system. It provides a planning policy framework which must be taken into account in the preparation of LDPs and the provisions are also material to all decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.

The SPPS2 outlines a number of core principles underpinning the reformed planning system in Northern Ireland. These are:

- improving health and well-being;
- creating and enhancing shared space;
- supporting the economy;
- supporting good design and positive place-making;

- preserving and improving the built and natural environment.

The Republic of Ireland also has its own National Planning Framework First Revision 2025 (NPF, Project Ireland 2040), and an Eastern & Midlands Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES, 2019). The NPF and RSES establishes a policy framework that supports joined-up approaches and the mechanisms to deliver co-ordinated growth in the border region.

4.3.3 Sustainable Development Strategy

The Sustainable Development Strategy identifies 32 strategic objectives in the following Priority Areas:

- Building a dynamic, innovative economy that delivers the prosperity required to tackle disadvantage and lift communities out of poverty.
- Strengthening society so that it is more tolerant, inclusive and stable and permits positive progress in quality of life for everyone.
- Driving sustainable, long-term investment in key infrastructure to support economic and social development.
- Striking an appropriate balance between the responsible use and protection of natural resources in support of a better quality of life and a better quality environment.
- Ensuring reliable, affordable and sustainable energy provision and reducing our carbon footprint.
- Ensuring the existence of a policy environment which supports the overall advancement of sustainable development in and beyond Government.

The strategic objectives that are key are highlighted under the relevant topic.

4.3.4 Programme for Government (PfG) 2024-2027 'Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most' (2025, Northern Ireland Executive)

The Programme for Government (PfG) 'Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most' is the highest-level strategic document of the Northern Ireland Executive.

The PfG outlines the NI Executives priorities for making a real difference to the lives of everyone living and working in Northern Ireland. It sets out three long term Missions- People, Planet and Prosperity- which are underpinned by a cross-cutting commitment to Peace, through which improved wellbeing, long term sustainability, and a thriving economy will be delivered.

The priorities highlighted in the PfG touch on every aspect of government. They include priorities for health, education and young people, housing, economic success and safe communities. The outcomes are intended to meet statutory obligations and to make real improvements to the quality of life of citizens

4.3.5 UK Marine Policy Statement and Marine Plan for Northern Ireland

The UK Marine Policy Statement (MPS), the UK Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA) and the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 provide the policy and legislative framework for the management of the marine area in Northern Ireland. The UK vision for the marine environment, set out in the MPS, is the attainment of 'clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas'. The draft Marine Plan for Northern Ireland provides a framework of policies to be considered by public authorities taking decisions which affect or might affect the marine area through decision making processes. It is a material consideration in this regard.

While Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough does not have direct connectivity with the marine area, it has indirect connectivity via its watercourses and river systems.

4.3.6 Community Planning

Community Planning is a process whereby Councils, statutory bodies and the community work together to develop and implement a shared vision for promoting the well-being of their area and pave the way for the most efficient use of scarce resources. It involves everyone working together to make life better for

local people and deliver real improvements. It means planning ahead to improve the big issues that matter to people like health, education, employment, safety and the environment.

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council's Community Plan, entitled '*Connected*,' sets out the future direction of the Borough and aims to shape the areas in which people live, work and visit from now until 2030.

The Council has led on the community planning process for the Borough and has worked collaboratively with a wide range of partners and residents including representatives from statutory, business, education, health, community and voluntary sectors to develop our first plan. As partners we are all committed to our Vision for the Borough:

'We have a happy, healthy and connected community, a vibrant and sustainable economy and appealing places for living, working and learning.'

It is our aim to deliver on this vision through ongoing collaboration, review, development and delivery of more integrated people centred public services. To help us achieve this we have agreed nine joint long-term outcomes:

Confident Community - 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.

Healthy Community - People are making positive lifestyle choices. They are more resilient and better equipped to cope with life's challenges.

Welcoming Community - Our Borough is a safe, inclusive, respectful and peaceful place.

Enterprising Economy - Our Borough is a centre of excellence for entrepreneurship, innovation and investment.

Inclusive Economy - Everyone has a decent minimum living standard.

Skilled Economy - People are better equipped to take full advantage of the opportunities provided by the dynamic economy.

Creative Place - Our Borough is an inspirational and creative place offering quality, inclusive arts, cultural and heritage experiences.

Revitalised Place - Our distinctive, inclusive and vibrant urban and rural areas are at the heart of community and economic life.

Sustainable Place - We value and protect our climate, biodiversity and natural assets. People understand the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change and our Borough is on track to become net zero by 2050.

4.3.7 Corporate Plan

The Councils Corporate Plan 2023-2027 'Our People, Our Place, Our Future' has a vision to create 'a happy, health and connected community, a vibrant and sustainable economy and appealing places for living, working and learning'.

4.3.8 Place Plans and Masterplans

The Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Community Planning Partnership, of which Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council was the lead partner, launched the Armagh and Banbridge and Dromore Place Plans in 2022, 2024 and 2025 respectively. The Place Plans were developed to align key messages from the Council's Community Plan 'Connected – A Community Plan', and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (2015) which identifies 'supporting good design and positive place making' as one its five core planning principles and what these may mean for local places. The Place Plans

supersede all previous Masterplans for Armagh, Banbridge and Dromore and will be used as catalysts for future improvements to enhance spaces and places within the Borough.

4.4 Baseline Information

A desk-based review has been undertaken to identify baseline conditions in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon. Each sustainability topic is presented in Chapter 5 with a review of relevant current information available. Where it has not been possible to provide specific information at local council level, information for Northern Ireland has been used and where there are critical data gaps, these have been identified.

Information sources include data collected for LDP Technical Supplements and for the preparation and monitoring of the Community Plan.

Additional comment

The Community Plan was developed with engagement through six thematic working groups:

- Health and Well-being
- Communities
- Physical and Environmental Regeneration
- Competition/Education and Employment Skills
- Infrastructure, Energy and Transport
- Tourism, Arts and Culture

In 2015 a Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) statistician was procured to provide a comprehensive baseline statistical report for the Borough. The reports provide a robust overview of the demography of the area as well as key statistics, grouped under each of the thematic working groups.

The baseline topics for the Sustainability Appraisal have a wider scope than the LDP evidence gathering requirements. Data sources in 'Local Development Plans: DAERA Environmental Evidence and Information'¹ have been referred to as well as the 'Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Reports'².

In addition to the LDP and Community Plan evidence, we have used data collected by NISRA. NISRA is the principal source of official statistics and social research on Northern Ireland. Much of the data at Council or sub-Council level was sourced from the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service (NINIS) website. NINIS is a sub-section of NISRA which aims to make small area information held within Central Government and Non-Departmental Public Bodies available to as wide an audience as possible. The NINIS website contains datasets on a range of socio-economic themes at small-area statistical geographies. Super Output Areas (SOA) are statistical geography boundaries created by NISRA to allow the reporting of small area statistics. These are frequently referred to within this Scoping Report. There are 890 SOAs in NI and 87 of these are located within the Borough.

4.5 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

This section highlights trends in the baseline information and describes how the baseline might evolve without the LDP. This also helps identify key issues for each topic and identifies potential sustainability problems or opportunities that could be addressed through the LDP.

Our Borough was included within four previous Area Plans and one Town Centre Plan prior to April 2015:

- Armagh Area Plan (AAP) 2004 & AAP 2004 Alteration No. 1: Armagh Countryside Proposals
- Craigavon Area Plan (CAP) 2010
- Craigavon Town Centre Boundaries and Retail Designation Plan (CTCBRDP) 2010
- Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan (BNMAP) 2015

¹ DAERA (2017) Local Development Plans: DAERA Environmental Evidence and Information

² DAERA [online] Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report (found at (<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/northern-ireland-environmental-statistics-report>)(accessed 06/10/2022))

- Dungannon & South Tyrone Area Plan (DSTAP) 2010

These Plans have been prepared across a broad timescale and do not reflect the new Council, nor our Community Plan, *'Connected'*.

4.6 Key Sustainability Issues

Drawing on the policies, plans, programmes and strategies review, the baseline information and the likely evolution of the baseline without the LDP, Key Sustainability Issues are set out for each topic. These reflect the local area and are mainly issues that are relevant to and may be influenced by the LDP. These Key Sustainability Issues will also identify the potential for cumulative effects which should be considered in preparation of the LDP. Key Sustainability Issues will be reviewed and, where necessary, updated at the main stages of Plan preparation.

4.7 Proposed Sustainability Objectives

The key sustainability issues inform the sustainability objectives. These are presented in Chapter 6 with a short rationale and description of what each objective seeks to achieve. There are several overlaps between objectives which support each other.

THE EVIDENCE BASE

5.1 Health and Well-being

5.1.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

This topic considers the health profile for the Borough, needs for and access to health care, physical activity and the effects of noise. It overlaps with many of the other topics, for example where they shape the environment in which we live, interactions with others and opportunities for employment and education. It also overlaps with the natural heritage topic which considers open space.

The common thread of relevant policies is that actions should improve the outcomes for everyone's mental and physical health and well-being. Policy measures seek to prolong healthy life and reduce preventable deaths. Contributors to this include improving health in pregnancy and improving mental health, which can have long term effects on healthy life. They also acknowledge that the health conditions of those who are most deprived are significantly worse. Consequently, programmes have been developed such as 'Delivering Social Change', an Executive programme that seeks to reduce inequalities. Northern Ireland health-related strategies are supportive of international strategies and the Sustainable Development Strategy.

Part of supporting good health is encouraging physical activity. There are several strategies and initiatives for this purpose including 'Sport Matters', 'A Fitter Future for All', the 'Outdoor Recreation Action Plan', and 'Exercise, Explore, Enjoy: A Strategic Plan for Greenways'. These include creating the environment and specific facilities to encourage increased physical activity, including active transport.

One of the three long term missions of the Programme for Government (PfG) 2024-2027 'Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most' (2025, Northern Ireland Executive) is to 'support everyone at all stages of their life to ensure they have the chance to succeed by improving life opportunities'. Key priority areas, aimed at delivering the PfG missions include cutting health waiting times, safer communities and ending violence against women and girls. The PfG sets out a broad range of actions aimed at addressing the above priorities, including investment in primary, social and community care.

The 'Transforming your Care: Strategic Implementation Plan' and the 'Southern Health and Social Care Trust Population Plan' inform infrastructure requirements for health care. 'Making Life Better' is a ten-year strategic framework for public health launched in 2014. It provides direction for policies and actions to improve the health and well-being of the people of Northern Ireland and reduce inequalities in health. Outcome 12 of this framework 'Making the Most of the Physical Environment' is highly relevant to the LDP. Actions can be grouped into the following general themes:

- To improve and maintain the environment in terms of air quality, water quality, waste management and environmental noise;
- To enhance the capacity of our physical infrastructure to protect, support and provide access to healthy and active living and well-being through, for example, creating environments that promote social interaction and mental well-being, are safe for all ages and incentivise physical activity.

The SPPS2 reflects this, in particular through six regional strategic objectives that require provision of and accessibility for all to open space with high standards of design.

The Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 locally implement the European Noise Directive (END), the aim of which is to avoid, prevent or reduce on a prioritised basis the harmful effects, including annoyance, of exposure to environmental noise. The Regulations apply to noise from major road, railway, airport and industrial sources. These existing sources are not subject to planning control but may be considered in the context of proposed development which could be affected by environmental noise. A range of legislation is in place to establish permitted noise levels and manage noise emissions from domestic, industrial and commercial sources. The 2014 Noise Policy Statement for Northern Ireland provides clarity on current noise policies and practices.

The Councils Corporate Plan 2023-2027 'Our People, Our Place, Our Future' sets out the Councils commitment to uphold the highest standards of service delivery, facilities, projects, and programmes for the benefit of our people, our place and our future. The Vision of the Corporate Plan is to create *"a happy, healthy and connected community, a vibrant and sustainable economy and appealing places for living, working and learning"* aligning with the aspirations of the Community Plan. One of the five Key Priorities of the Corporate Plan is 'Community Well-being', which sets out the following commitments:

- Encourage participation in arts, culture, heritage and physical activity;
- Provide opportunities which improve quality of life and wellbeing for our communities and staff; and
- Support and empower communities.

One of the three themes of 'Connected', our Community Plan 2017-2030, is a 'Healthy Community,' through which it hopes to achieve the following short-term outcomes:

- People have a greater understanding of the benefits of adopting healthy lifestyle choices and how to protect, manage and improve their physical health;
- People feel more comfortable talking about mental health and understand the importance of achieving emotional well-being and positive mental health throughout their lifetime; and
- The adoption of a more collaborative approach, centred on community knowledge, skills and resources has increased our understanding of health in disadvantaged populations to focus our resources where they are most needed.

These priorities will be delivered through programmes and projects in partnership with other agencies and the wider community; implementing the Council's environmental health enforcement duties and public awareness raising; enabling access to leisure facilities and the outdoors through placement of access paths, signage, trails and interpretation information; and developing and implementing existing anti-poverty and health and well-being strategies.

5.1.2 Baseline Information

A detailed baseline of information is presented in the Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Community Planning (CP) Baseline Report for Health and Well-being. Data has also been sourced from the Community Plan and Local Development Plan Technical Supplements.

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) is the principal source of official statistics and social research on Northern Ireland. The Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Inequalities Monitoring System (HSCIMS) enables the examination of health inequalities within sub-regions of Northern Ireland and includes a comparison between the average and the most deprived areas in each geographical area. This topic overlaps with the Community, Housing, Transport and Accessibility, Air Quality, Climate Change, Water, Natural Resources and Historic Environment topics.

Overview

In addition to providing high quality opportunities for physical activity and sports participation through the public, private and voluntary sectors, the area delivers quality healthcare provision for residents through the Craigavon Area Hospital, Lurgan hospital, Armagh Community Hospital and St Luke's Hospital, Armagh.

Of the 32 health outcome indicators analysed at a regional level by the Information Analysis Directorate¹ for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon residents, none were worse than the NI average, 20 were similar to the NI average, and 12 were better than the NI average.

¹ Health Inequalities Annual Report 2024, Public Health Information & Research Branch, Information Analysis Directorate

Population profile

The future population profile is relevant as it informs health care needs. From the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) 2018-based population projections¹ it is estimated that the population of the Borough is expected to grow from 218,656 in 2021² to 241,823 in 2035 which is a projected population increase of 23,167 (10.6 %). This is projected to be the largest growth in population of all 11 NI Council areas. As with NI as a whole, the Borough has both a growing and an ageing population. The Health and Well-being CP Baseline Report notes that in addition to above average increases in the number of children in the Borough over and beyond the LDP period, there will be significant increases (+21,365, 62.5%) in the population of the Borough aged over 65. This growth of the older age groups will increase the requirement for late and end-of-life care.

Live birth rate data for the LGD boundaries have shown a decrease in the birth rate for Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council from around 2,920 in 2014 to 2,353 in 2024. Teenage birth rates in are lower than average in ACBCBC at 1.92 per 1000 for under 17s (NI 2.02) and 11.51 per 1000³ for under 20s (NI 11.58). However, the <17 birth rate is 102% higher and the <20 rate 82% higher in the most deprived area than the average for ACBCBC. This is a high inequality gap which has fluctuated significantly (up to 20%) in the past 10 years.

Life expectancy

The life expectancy at birth in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough is higher than Northern Ireland for both males and females. In 2021-23 male life expectancy at birth in the borough was 79.2 years compared to 78.8 years for Northern Ireland. Female life expectancy at birth is even higher at 83 years for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough, above the Northern Ireland figure of 82.5 years. Male life expectancy at birth in the Borough and Northern Ireland has increased by 0.7 years and 0.8 years respectively from 2011-13 to 2021-23. Female life expectancy at birth in the Borough has increased by 0.3 years and 0.2 years respectively from 2011-13 to 2021-23⁴.

The life expectancy at age 65 in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough is also higher than Northern Ireland for both males and females. Male life expectancy at age 65 in the Borough is 18.9 years for 2021-23 compared to 18.5 years in Northern Ireland. Female life expectancy at age 65 is higher at 21.1 years in the Borough and 20.7 years in Northern Ireland.

The standardised death rate for those aged under 75 (all causes) was 336 per 100,000 population in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough in 2019-23 and 361 in Northern Ireland during the same period. The death rate per 100,000 population had decreased in the Borough since 2009-13 from 376 to 331 in 2015-19 and 2016-20 but has remained above these low levels since. The rate in Northern Ireland has also decreased from 388 in 2009-13 to 361 and despite a small increase between 2016-20 and 2017-21, it has fallen again and remained at 361 for the last two periods.

Avoidable deaths are those that are defined as preventable, amenable (treatable) or both. The standardised avoidable death rate per 100,000 population in 2019-23 was 238 in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough which is a fall of 2 since 2018-22 after three consecutive years of increasing. In Northern Ireland overall the avoidable death rate has also fallen for the first time in 3 years.

¹ 2018 -2043 NISRA popn projections LGD 2014. <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/2018-based-population-projections-areas-within-northern-ireland>

² 2021 usual resident popn: A:16438 B:17248 CUA:72721. ABC:218656. <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/ct0116-usual-resident-population-local-government-district-and-urban-status>

³ Registrar General Annual Report 2024 Births | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
Birth Statistics | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

⁴ Source: Health Inequalities Annual Report 2025, Department of Health, Northern Ireland.

Causes of Death

As depicted in table 5, below, deaths due to malignant neoplasms and circulatory diseases, were the two most prominent causes for death within the Borough in 2019, both of which were marginally above the Northern Ireland average.

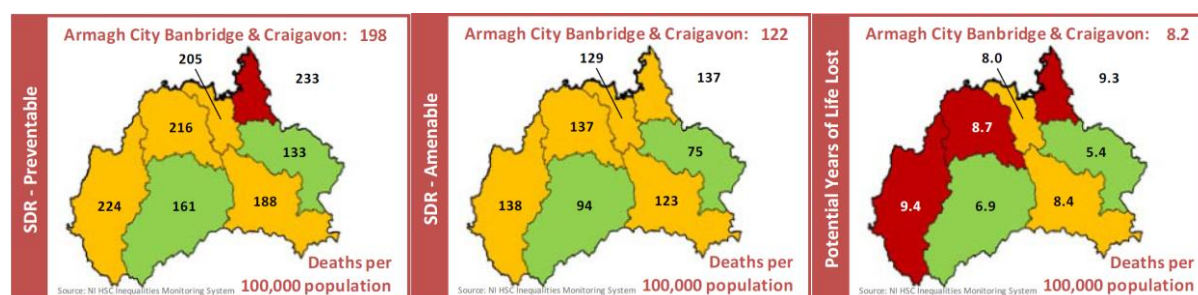
Table 5: Deaths by Cause (2019)

	Deaths (2019)	Deaths due to Malignant Neoplasms (%)	Deaths due to Circulatory Diseases (%)	Deaths due to Respiratory Diseases (%)	Deaths due to External Causes (%)	Deaths from suicide and undetermined intent (%)
Northern Ireland	15,758	28.41	23.39	12.50	5.89	1.33
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough	1,503	30.14	24.22	10.25	5.85	1.33

The Health Inequalities Sub-Regional Report also publishes ‘Potential Years of Life Lost’ (PYLL) – This is a summary measure of premature mortality which provides an explicit way of weighting deaths occurring at younger ages due to preventable or amenable causes.

In ACBCBC for 2010-2014 this was 8.2 years lost per 100 persons, 4% lower than the NI average (8.5 years) and the rate has been improving over the past 10 years. However, the figure for the most deprived DEA in ACBCBC was 12.3 years, a difference of 49%. This inequality gap is shown in the report to have fluctuated over the past ten years.

Figure 2: SDR due to Preventable and Amenable Causes and Potential Years of Life Lost for ACBCBC District Electoral Areas



DEA **better than**, **similar to** or **worse than** the Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council average.

Source: Information Analysis Directorate Health Inequalities Sub-Regional Report 2017

The CP Baseline Report notes that in 2014 ACBCBC had the second highest number of alcohol-related deaths (20) after Belfast.

Admission Rates

The standardised number of admissions per 100,000 people in 2023/24 was 18,624 in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough compared to 20,695 in Northern Ireland¹. Admissions have been higher in the Borough than in Northern Ireland for just three of the eleven years presented below. In Northern Ireland overall, the number of admissions was in steady decline between 2013/14 and 2019/20 while in the borough in 2016/17 there was a sharp increase in the number of admissions after which they fell again. The number of admissions fell sharply in 2020/21 in the Borough and Northern Ireland which is

¹ Source: Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Inequalities Monitoring System, Department of Health.

likely an effect of restrictions placed on hospitals due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Admissions have been increasing since in both the Borough and Northern Ireland overall.

Emergency Admissions

An emergency admission is one where ‘a patient for whom admission is unpredictable and at short notice because of clinical need. All non-elective acute admissions excluding maternity, other and not known’. The standardised rate of emergency admissions per 100,000 population in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough was lower than Northern Ireland in 2023/24 with rates of 6,922 and 7,568 respectively, making the gap bigger than the previous year.

Physical Health¹

A person is described as having a limiting long term health problem if they have a health problem or disability that limits their daily activities and which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months.

In the 2021 Census 80% of the usually resident population described themselves as having ‘good’ or ‘very good’ general health, with 50% of those aged 65 years describing themselves as ‘good’ or ‘very good.’

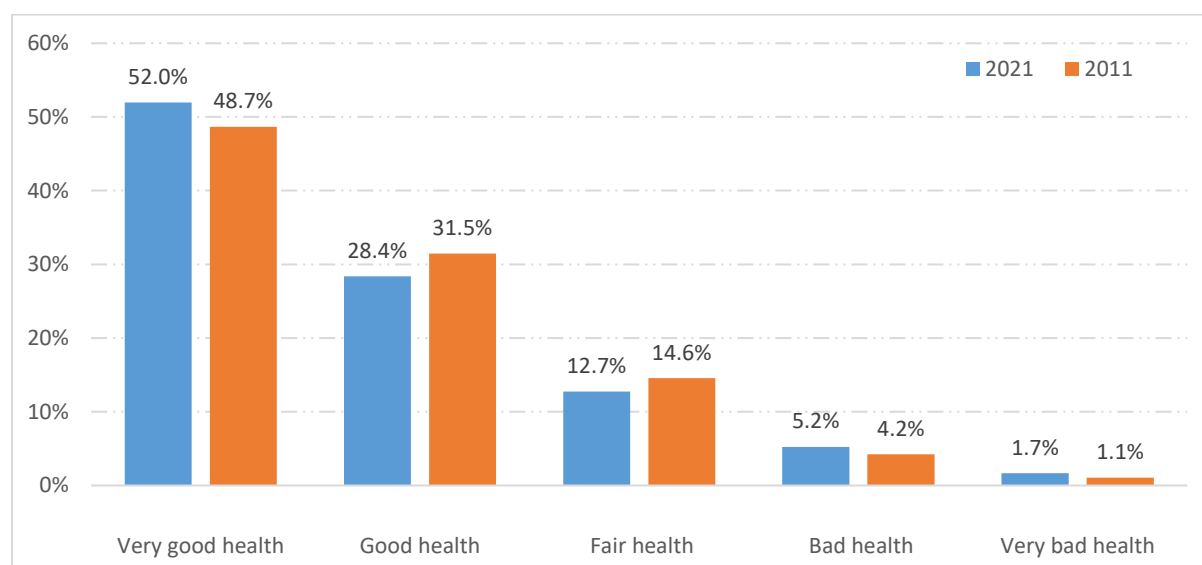


Figure 3: General health of the usually resident population, 2011 and 2021, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon. Source: Census 2011 & Table MS-D01, 2021.

Approximately 28,000 (12.8%) of the usually resident population reported they were of ‘fair’ general health while over 15,000 (6.9%) reported they had ‘bad or very bad’ general health. This proportion has increased from the 5.3% who indicated they had bad or very bad general health on Census Day 2011.

The standard of general health falls with age. Just 0.6% of people aged 0-14 had ‘Bad or very bad’ general health compared to 16.9% of people aged 65 and over. Conversely, 97.2% of people aged 0-14 had ‘Good or very good’ general health compared to just 50.4% of people aged 65 and over.

Over one fifth (22%) of the usually resident population, reported that their day-to-day activities are limited by a health problem or disability, with 10% describing their day-to-day activities as ‘limited a lot’ and 12% describing their day-to-day activities as ‘limited a little’.

Census 2021 also provides information on the number of residents in a household with a limiting long-term health problem or disability. In Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough there are approximately 84,600 households of which approximately 11% have two or more residents with a limiting long-term

¹ Census 2021 main statistics health, disability and unpaid care tables | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

health problem or disability while 32% have one resident with a limiting long-term health problem or disability.

On Census Day 2021, an estimated 69,000 (31.6%) residents in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon borough reported that they had a long-term health condition. Of those, 16.8% has one long-term health condition while 3.7% had 4 or more long-term health conditions.

The most common conditions reported by residents were 'Long-term pain or discomfort' (10.76%) and 'A mobility or dexterity difficulty' (10.03%), followed by 'shortness of breath or difficulty breathing' (9.37%). These were similar to the levels for NI overall (11.58%, 10.91% and 10.29% respectively).

The most common disease in the southern trust in 2023/24 was hypertension, followed by asthma, diabetes and kidney disease¹.

Providing Care

At the 2021 census, 24,700 (12%) people aged 5 years and over, stated that they provided unpaid care to family, friends, neighbours or others in association with a long-term physical or mental health problem, or old age. This included 1% of those aged 5 to 14 years and 20% of those aged 40 to 60 years providing unpaid care within the Borough.

At February 2024², there were 2,940 people under 16 years of age claiming Disability Living Allowance in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough. There were also 8,240 people claiming Carers Allowance and 6,380 people claiming Attendance Allowance. This information is helpful in assessing the distribution of services and facilities and the future needs of the less able bodied, particularly those on lower incomes.

Physical Activity

The Continuous Household Survey (CHS)³ is designed to provide a regular source of information on a variety of issues relevant to Northern Ireland including participation in sports. The findings of the survey show that participation in sport by adults in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough was similar to that for Northern Ireland overall most years. After reaching a high of 61% participation in 2019/20, in 2021/22, participation in sport by adults in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough fell to just 40% which was 5 percentage points below the Northern Ireland average.

By 2023/24, participation had increased to 57% in the Borough which is six percentage points above the Northern Ireland average of 51%. In 2023/24 in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough, 50% of respondents participated in sport (excludes walking) in the previous 4 weeks compared to 44% in Northern Ireland overall.

In the Borough and Northern Ireland overall the proportion of respondents who normally participate in sport on at least one day per week has fallen slightly since 2019/20. In Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon, 54% of respondents stated that they normally participate in sport on at least one day per week compared to 48% in Northern Ireland overall.

¹ 2023/24 raw disease prevalence data for northern Ireland (doh statistics and research) 2004/05 to 2023/24 raw disease prevalence data for northern Ireland | department of health

² benefits statistics summary publication (national statistics) - February 2024 | department for communities

³ <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/central-survey-unit/continuous-household-survey>

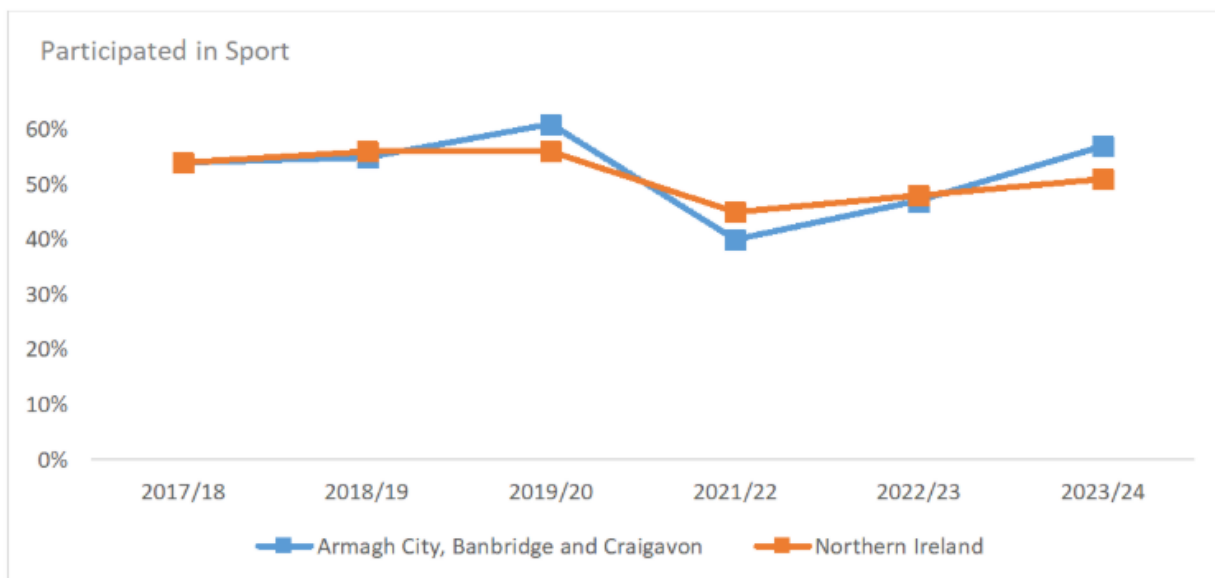


Figure 4- Participation in sport by adults in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland 2017/18 – 2023/24. Source: Continuous Household Survey, Department for Communities.

There are many sports grounds, parks and open spaces, footpaths and cycle routes, and other recreational assets in the Borough, including many of its tourism assets. Opportunities also exist in the Borough for water-based sports such as canoeing, boating, water-skiing, kayaking and jet-skiing.

Children and Physical Activity

ARK (Access Research Knowledge - a joint initiative between Queens University and the University of Ulster) carries out an annual survey of P7-aged children and 16-year-olds in NI. Commencing in 2015, ARK has been commissioned by Sport NI to include questions on sport and physical activity in the surveys, to provide a baseline and allow policy progress to be measured^{1,2}.

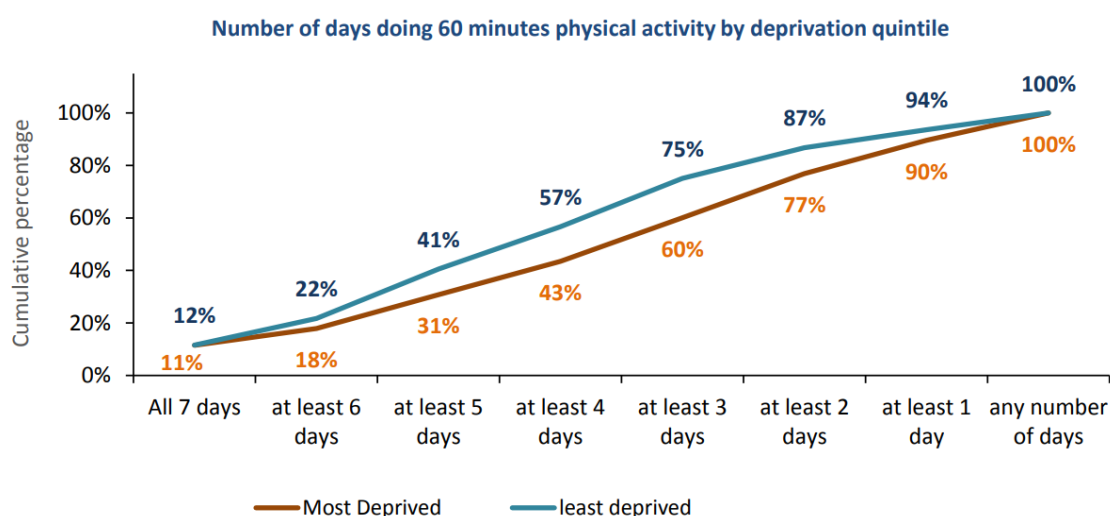
The surveys found that around half (49%) of P7 children and four out of ten 42% 16-year-olds reported that they walked or cycled to and from school. However, only a third (32%) of P7 children and less than one in ten (8%) 16-year-olds met the United Kingdom (UK) guideline target of a minimum 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Large proportions of children are therefore not engaging regularly in physical activity. One in ten children felt they could not play freely with their friends in their community and children reported being able to play more freely with friends in school (84%), compared with being able to play with friends when in their communities or homes (77%). Children reported feeling safer when playing in school (89%), compared with feeling safe when playing in their communities or homes (73%). This reflects the findings of several UK studies³ which found, among other things, that a fifth of children did not play outside at all on an average day and less than one in ten children regularly played in wild spaces compared to half of children a generation ago.

¹ Schubotz, D., Lloyd, K. & McKnight, M. (2016) 'A Question of Sport - Perspectives of Children and Young People' ARK Research Update 107.

² McQuade, L., Kehoe, S. & Emerson, L. (2015) 'Are children getting the opportunities to realise their right to play?' ARK Research Update 98

³ The Guardian, 25th March 2016 'Three-quarters of UK children spend less time outdoors than prison inmates – survey' (accessed 28.11.17)

Figure 5: 5-18 year olds participating in physical activity by deprivation quintile (NI)



Source: Information Analysis Directorate's Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitude Survey 2016 (Health Modules) p20.

The Information Analysis Directorate's Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitude Survey 2016 (Health Modules) found that 8% of children and young people aged 5-18 do not achieve 60 minutes of moderate physical activity even one day a week. As shown in Figure 5 the survey also found that although the number of children achieving 7 days of physical exercise is similar between the most deprived and least deprived quintiles, there are a quarter fewer from the most deprived areas achieving 4 days or more (43%) compared with the least deprived (57%). Boys (17%) are twice as likely as girls (8%) to achieve 60 minutes every day.

Infant and Child Health

Infant mortality rates within the Borough (2009-2013) were slightly better than average at 4.5 per 1,000 (NI: 4.7) but worse in 2010-14 (5.02, NI 4.63). The rate of infant mortality in NI is higher than in the rest of the UK and in 2014 and 2015 was one of the highest rates in Europe.

The State of Child Health Report 2017¹ found that breastfeeding levels in NI remain the lowest in the UK, with less than 28 per cent of babies receiving breastmilk at 6 weeks. The report also highlights that in the UK, socio-economic status is strongly associated with infant mortality, with increasing risk associated with higher levels of maternal deprivation. There is a higher incidence of poor ante-natal health among expectant mothers in deprived areas, with smoking in pregnancy linked to low birth weights. Conditions related to preterm birth are the most common causes of death in infancy. Deprivation is also linked with higher rates of avoidable deaths in infants such as poisoning, blind cord-related fatalities, drownings and infant co-sleeping deaths.

The death rate in NI for older children aged 10-19 is also higher at 26.2 per 100,000 population than in England and Wales (16.7 per 100,000). Suicide, injuries /violence and road traffic deaths are among the main causes of death in teenagers with the risk of dying for young men is notably higher than for young women. Deprivation and mental health problems were noted to increase the risk of death throughout adolescence.

Diet

Health Survey Northern Ireland data² suggests that overall trends in diet have remained fairly consistent for the period 2010 to 2016 and that foods high in sugar and/or fat remain popular. For example, 51% of respondents eat biscuits, 29% have sugary fizzy drinks and 28% eat confectionery on most days of the week.

¹ Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (2017) State of Child Health

² Health Survey Northern Ireland: First Results 2016/17: Health Survey NI Trend Tables (Date published: 24 October 2017)

The consumption of processed meats and foods high in sugar and/or fat is linked to deprivation, with greater proportions of persons living in the most deprived quintiles consuming processed meat, chips/roast potatoes, confectionary, sugary fizzy drinks and savoury snacks on most days of the week than those in the least deprived quintiles. The consumption of fruit and vegetables on most days of the week is also linked with deprivation, with the least deprived areas having a greater proportion of persons consuming fruit and vegetable on most days of the week. Only 33% of respondents in the most deprived quintile met the recommended '5 a day' guideline for fruit and vegetables compared with 48% in the least deprived quintile.

Obesity

The Health and Well-being CP Baseline Report includes selected information on obesity at NI and Health and Social Care Trust level. In 2014/15 in NI a quarter of adults (25%) were obese with a further 35% classed as overweight. The proportion of adults classed as overweight or obese (60%) has remained relatively constant since 2005/06. Males and those in older age groups were more likely to be obese. Levels in the Southern HSCT (59% overweight or obese) were similar to NI.

Mental Health

The Health Survey NI 2024/25 reported that across NI one in six respondents (18%) scored highly on the GHQ12¹ (General Health Questionnaire) suggesting they may have a possible mental health problem. The proportion of females indicating a possible mental health remained at 20%% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. The findings for males dropped from 18% in 2023/2024 to 15% in 2024/25 indicating a potential recent improvement in male mental health. Respondents in the most deprived areas (24%) were twice as likely to record a high GHQ12 score as those in the least deprived areas (14%).

Mental health baseline data for ACBCBC is presented in the CP Baseline Report for Health and Well-being (p28). Levels of well-being surveyed in the adult population measured through the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale have little variation across NI's Health Trusts. The Southern Health and Social Care Trust score is 51 (out of 70) which is equal to the NI average and comparable to Scotland (50) and England (50.8).

The CP Baseline Report notes that in ACBCBC many of the indicators for mental health appear to show a lower than average quality of mental health. The Council has the third highest prescription rate among LGDs for anxiety and mood drugs and anti-depressants, with deprived areas having prescription rates one third higher than that of the overall Borough.

As discussed under 'admission rates' above, ACBCBC also had the second highest number of hospital admissions for self-harm in 2013/2014. The crude suicide death rate in the Borough of 14.5 per 100,000 in 2010-2014 was slightly below the NI average (15.9), but the rate for males (23.1) was almost four times that for females (6.1). The suicide rate for the 20% most deprived areas in the Borough was almost double the Borough's overall rate.

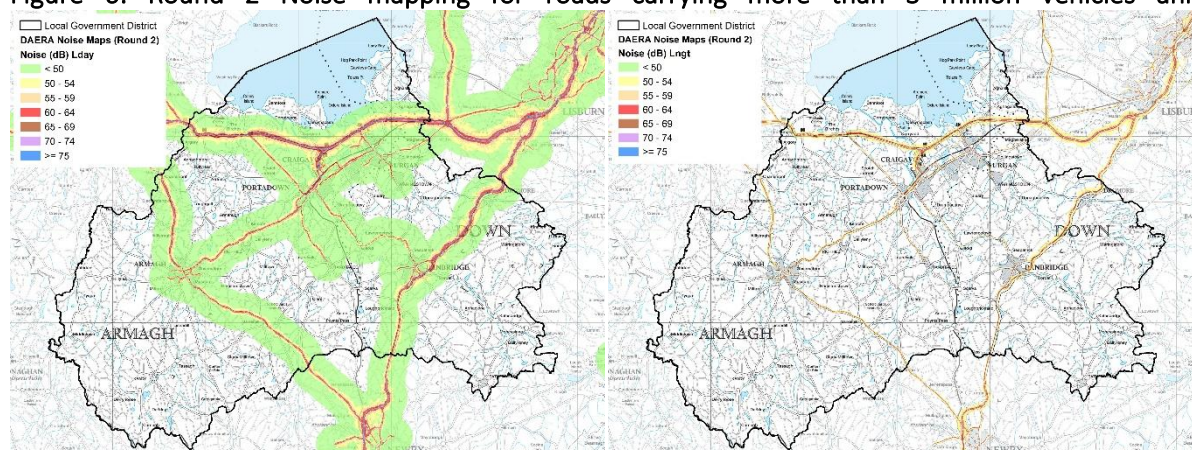
Noise

In accordance with the Environmental Noise Directive, noise modelling and mapping has been carried out over two stages for major roads (roads with more than 3 million vehicle passages annually), major railways (railways with more than 30,000 train passages annually), major airports (airports with more than 50,000 movements annually) and agglomerations (urban areas with more than 100,000 inhabitants), taking into account the above sources and additionally, other roads, railways, aircraft movements and industrial premises. There are no agglomerations, airports or railways that meet the thresholds for noise mapping within ACBCBC, however noise modelling has been carried out within the Borough for a number of major roads including the M1 and M12 motorways and the A1 & A3 roads (see Figure 6).

The noise mapping shows that the major roads can be significant sources of environmental noise and has allowed areas where people or properties may be exposed to adverse levels of noise to be identified. There are two Candidate Noise Management Areas (CNMAs) in the Borough, both in Armagh City. The END also places a requirement to identify 'Quiet Areas' within agglomerations, however none have been identified to date within ACBCBC.

¹ The General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) 12 is a screening device for identifying minor psychiatric disorders in the general population and within community or non-psychiatric clinical settings.

Figure 6: Round 2 Noise mapping for roads carrying more than 3 million vehicles annually



'Lday' is the L_{Aeq} over the period 0700 – 1900, local time (for strategic noise mapping this is an annual average).

'Lnight' is the L_{Aeq} over the period 2300 – 0700, local time (for strategic noise mapping this is an annual average).

Source: Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs - Air and Environmental Quality Unit via OpenData NI

Within ACBCBC, the majority of noise complaints (78.8%) in 2015 were in relation to domestic noise, with the two leading reasons being loud music/TV/parties and animal noise. Industrial noise, including agriculture and single wind turbines in addition to industry/manufacturing accounted for 8% of complaints. Construction noise was the basis of 3.9% of complaints. Commercial and leisure premises account for 3.6% of complaints, as does noise in the street, the main source of which is anti-social behaviour. Transport only accounted for 1.2% of complaints and there were no complaints in regards to aircraft or train noise.

Health Care Facilities and Ambulance Response Times

The Borough is part of the Southern Health and Social Care Trust (SHSCTS), who together with the Department of Health have responsibility for health and social care services within the Borough.

There are currently four hospitals within the Borough. Armagh Community Hospital only provides services for outpatients.

- Craigavon Area Hospital
- Lurgan Hospital
- St Lukes Hospital, Armagh
- Armagh Community Hospital

Acute services are carried out at Craigavon Area Hospital and mental health care is primarily carried out at St Luke's Hospital, Armagh.

A full description of the services provided by each hospital is included in the 'Health, Education and Community Uses' technical supplement. This document also includes details of average journey times to A&E services and minor injury units from within the three legacy Council areas. The average ambulance response time for ACBCBC in 2013 was 7 minutes 28 seconds, ranking 7th place overall out of the 11 Councils, but was more the NI average of 6 minutes 48 seconds. In rural locations for all of NI the median ambulance response time has increased from under 12 minutes in 2011 to over 15 minutes in 2015. Peripheral areas of the Borough (such as Maghera, Derrynoose, Middletown, Mountnorris, Moneyslane and Derrymore) are likely to have significantly higher travel times than the district average.

There are additional provisions for emergency response which are not accounted for in these figures. These are Rapid Response Vehicles and paramedics and Community First Responders who may be the first person

to arrive on the scene in rural areas and are trained to provide life-saving treatment while waiting on an ambulance or rapid response vehicle.

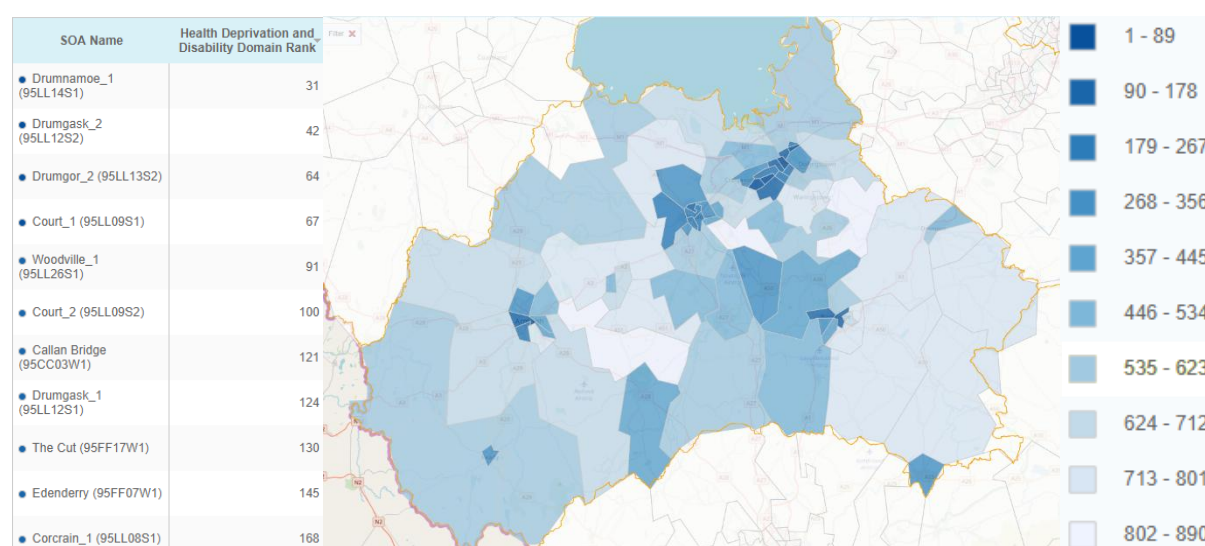
As discussed GP surgeries in ACBCBC are largely centred within the main hubs of Armagh, Portadown, Lurgan and Banbridge. Information on care providers for elderly/vulnerable persons and Special Education Centres for Physical and Learning Disabilities within the Borough is also provided within this report. A Community Treatment and Care Centre exists at Portadown and there are future plans to build two further new centres at Lurgan and Armagh.

Inequalities

Health inequalities are the differences in health that occur within a population which is a direct result of their social circumstance. There are many social causes to health inequalities that may include where someone is born, lives or works.

New statistics measuring the geographical distribution of deprivation or disadvantage were published by NISRA in November 2017. The updated Multiple Deprivation Measures (NIMDM2017) replace the NIMDM 2010, however the older NIMDM2010 has been used for the Health Inequalities Report discussed below. Those Super Output Areas¹ (SOAs) which are in the 20% most deprived areas (ranked 1-178) in terms of health and disability are shown on the left side of Figure 7. It can be seen that the highest ranked (most deprived) SOAs are clustered within the settlements of Armagh City, Banbridge, Lurgan and Portadown.

Figure 7: Health Deprivation and Disability Domain Rank 2017 from NIMDM2017.



Source: NINIS Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2017, Health Deprivation and Disability Domain.

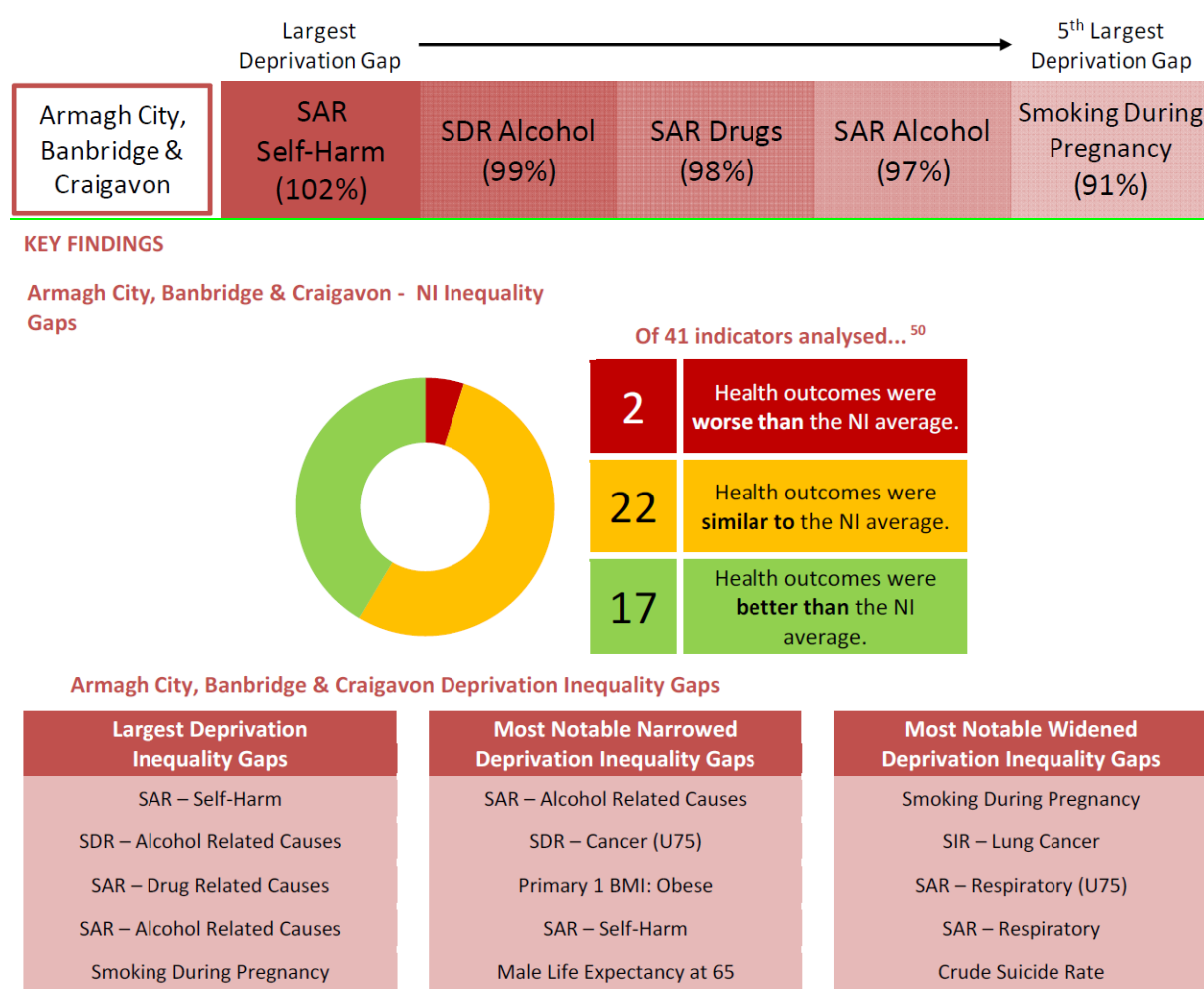
The Health Inequalities Sub-Regional Report 2017 compares trends in indicators of health across deprivation levels within the five HSC Trust areas and the eleven LGD areas. In addition to an analysis of gaps between the Trust/LGD and its most deprived areas, an assessment of the gap between the Trust/LGD and NI is also presented as contextual information. In that report, 'inequality gaps' refer to:

- The difference between health outcomes for the 20% most deprived Super Output Areas (SOA) within an area (as defined using the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2010) and the area's average.
- The Trust or LGD and the regional average.

The report found that from the previous year's average, inequality gaps in ACBCBC have narrowed for four of the indicators, remained unchanged or were fluctuating for 31 indicators and have widened for five indicators. The five health indicators with the widest inequality gap are shown on the graphic in Figure 8.

¹ Super Output Areas are statistical geography boundaries created by NISRA to allow the reporting of small area statistics.

Figure 8: Key Findings of Health Inequalities Sub-regional Report for ACBCBC



⁵⁰ The under 75 drug related mortality rate was not robust for comparison with NI, due to small numbers in Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon.

Source: Health Inequalities Sub-Regional Report 2017, p94.

Health Survey Northern Ireland

'Health Survey Northern Ireland' is a Department of Health survey that has run annually since 2010. Results are based on survey responses from 4,144 individuals and therefore are not able to be broken down to LGD level. The survey report focuses on differences that are statistically significant, and the most recently published results are in the 'Health Survey NI First Results 2016/17'. In this, nearly three-quarters of respondents (73%) described their health as being good or very good, an increase from the 70% reported the previous year. The prevalence of cigarette smoking has fallen to 20%, from the 22% reported in 2015/16, however smoking prevalence in the most deprived areas (32%) continues to be around three times that in the least deprived areas (11%).

Respondents living in urban areas and those in the most deprived areas were more likely to report signs of loneliness than those in rural areas and the least deprived areas respectively. There was no discernible trend when considering sex or age-group.

Safety

The Borough is under the Southern Area command of the NI Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS) with area headquarters based in Portadown. There are stations at Lurgan, Dromore, Banbridge, Armagh, Keady and Rathfriland. The CP Communities Baseline Report notes that From April 2012 - March 2015 there were 334 dwelling fires and 151 fires in other buildings attended by NIFRS in the Borough, both are the third highest number of incidents after Belfast and Derry City and Strabane. Looking at special service calls over the same time period, there were 260 Road Traffic Collision incidents attended by NIFRS in the Borough, the highest of all the Council areas.

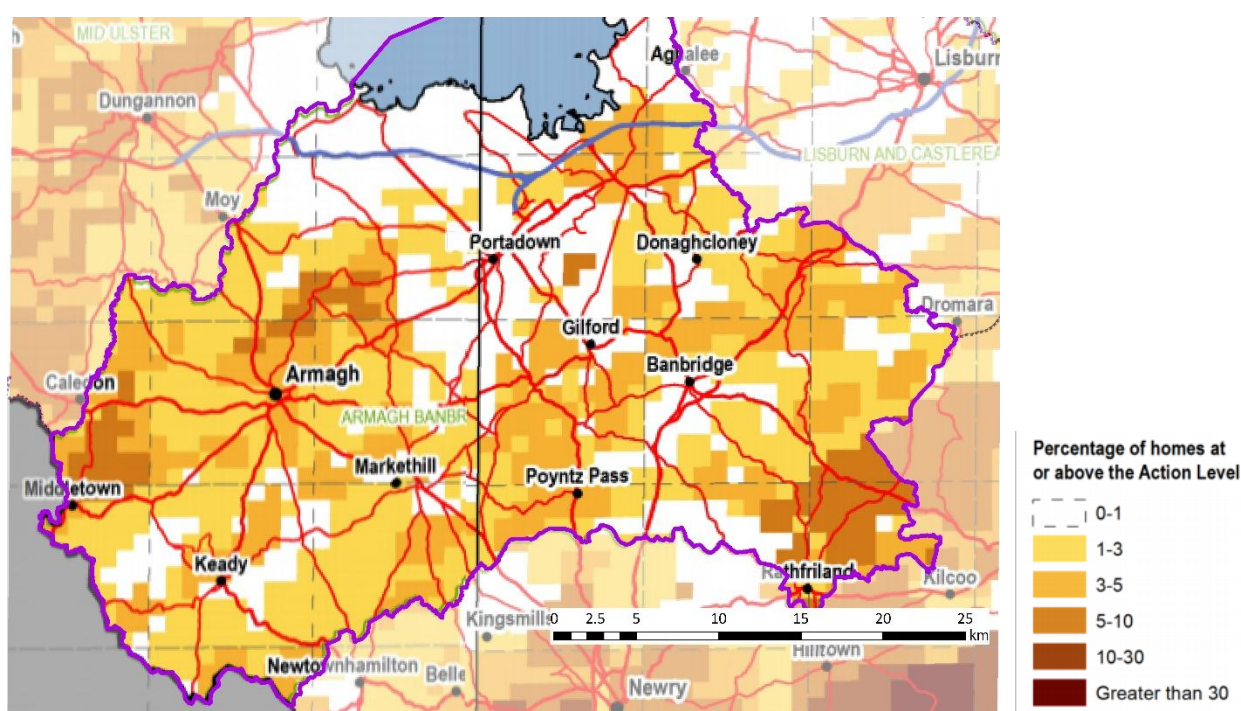
The total number of road traffic collisions with police-recorded injuries in the Borough in 2023-24 was 1660. Of these road traffic collisions 199 resulted in driver or passenger(s) being killed or seriously injured¹.

Radon

Radon is a natural radioactive gas that occurs at low levels outside but which can become concentrated in enclosed places, such as houses, workplaces and other buildings. Long-term exposure to radon increases the risk of lung cancer, particularly in smokers. After smoking, radon exposure is the second greatest cause of lung cancer. It is estimated to cause 30 deaths per year in NI.

An indicative atlas of Radon levels in homes throughout Northern Ireland has been published by Public Health England with the Geological Survey. An extract from this atlas is shown below in Figure 9. The darker colours on the radon map indicate a greater probability of high radon levels in a building. The government has recommended that householders take action to reduce their radon levels where they exceed the 'action level' of 200 Becquerels per cubic metre.

Figure 9: Extract from 'Radon in Northern Ireland: Indicative Atlas' showing ACBCBC area



Source: Public Health England / British Geological Society 'Radon in Northern Ireland: Indicative Atlas' 2015 pp11-12

The atlas shows that in ACBCBC, many areas have between a 1% and a 10% probability of exceeding the recommended action level but some areas, e.g. north of Armagh, east of Portadown and Rathfriland have a greater than 10% probability. The map helps to inform where measurement of Radon levels may be required at dwellings, and if necessary, where action may be required to protect homes.

5.1.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

In the absence of a new LDP in place, the Regional Development Strategy (RDS), the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS2) and relevant planning policy statements (PPSs), would still be applied.

However, adverse baseline trends relevant to health and well-being, such as below average levels of physical activity and outdoor leisure time for residents within the Borough may continue. Opportunities to improve the large discrepancies in health and well-being between the most deprived communities and the average in the Borough could be missed. The opportunity to plan strategically for an environment that encourages active travel and physical activity and improve the environment in the most deprived areas could also be missed.

¹ www.psnipolice.uk/sites/default/files/2025-03/2024%20Key%20Statistics%20report.pdf

Some of the measures of health such as respiratory disease may be exacerbated if there is no change or a deterioration in environmental conditions. While there are other environmental controls in place, the lack of a plan would mean that there is less opportunity to site development to reduce negative interactions between uses.

The LDP could support national and regional strategies, through planning and designing development to ensure high standards of homes which support people through all stages of life, enabling access to healthcare facilities and helping enhance living and working environments in areas of greatest deprivation. It can promote accessible spaces for all ages and active travel to incentivise physical activity and encourage social interaction as well as protecting and enhancing the environment to minimise adverse effects on health and to support healthy living.

5.1.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Health and Well-being

- By 2035¹ the population of the Borough is projected to have increased from its 2021 level by 10.6% from 218,656 in 2021 to 241,823 in 2035, significantly above the predicted average rate for NI.
- Population trends indicate an ageing population with potentially a higher number of older dependents e.g. the number of people aged 85 and over is expected to double by around 3,580 individuals by mid-2030.
- An increase in the proportion of older people in the population will increase the requirement for care. There is a need to meet the future needs for care and support for older people at home or in communal homes and to improve access to health services, other facilities and services.
- Participation rates in physical activity are lower than the NI average and significantly lower than recommended minimum levels.
- There is a need to promote and incentivise regular participation in physical activity through provision of and ensuring good accessibility to sports facilities (including water sports facilities), open space, green infrastructure and walking and cycling routes.
- There is a particular need for children to have accessible play in places where they feel safe.
- There will be an increasing need to create accessible means for older people to engage in physical activity to prolong their healthy lives.
- Development should be sited and designed to connect with greenways where possible to allow for additional active travel.
- Need to protect and enhance biodiversity to promote positive health benefits.
- Levels of adult obesity in NI and the UK are high by global standards, reflecting poor diet and a relatively sedentary lifestyle.
- In ACBCBC many of the indicators for mental health appear to show a lower than average quality of mental health.
- Noise and environmental quality are not identified as being significant adverse effects at present however they can impact on health and therefore environmental quality should be improved, or sustained where it is good, to minimise adverse health impacts.
- Road safety for all users should be a key consideration of planning and design.
- The location of and access to emergency services can impact on response times. Rural areas require accessibility to general practice and non-emergency healthcare services.
- ACBCBC shows a lower rate of health deprivation and disability compared with the NI average, but there are large inequalities in health and well-being with most measures of health being significantly worse in the most deprived areas.
- Good spatial planning can reduce health inequalities by providing a high standard of design and place making, open space, capacity for any additional services required and accessibility.
- Need to plan the relative location of industry and housing, open space and public facilities to minimise use conflicts.

¹ 2018 -2043 NISRA popn projections LGD 2014. <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/2018-based-population-projections-areas-within-northern-ireland>

- Major transport infrastructure has the potential to cause noise disturbance, air pollution or safety risks which can be reduced through siting and design.
- There are some communities within the Council area which experience problems of multiple deprivation particularly in parts of Armagh City, Banbridge, Lurgan, Portadown and Keady, where income and employment are the key concerns.
- Parts of Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough may have increased probability of the incidence of Radon at actionable levels.

5.2 Community

5.2.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

Community considers demographics, community identity, shared space, prosperity and social inclusion, crime prevention and community safety, good relations and the rural population.

An understanding of changes in the makeup of the population informs future needs for the plan area for housing, employment, infrastructure, facilities and amenities. Models of the future population take account of other policies, net migration and, for example, health initiatives, which are likely to have an influence on births, deaths. A consistent requirement of policies related to the various demographic groups is the need to incorporate equality of treatment and opportunity.

One of the three long term missions of the Programme for Government (PfG) 2024-2027 'Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most' (2025, Northern Ireland Executive) is to 'support everyone at all stages of their life to ensure they have the chance to succeed by improving life opportunities'. Key priority areas, aimed at delivering the PfG missions include cutting health waiting times and safer communities. The PfG sets out a broad range of actions aimed at addressing the above priorities, including investment in primary, social and community care.

The Regional Strategic Objective of the SPPS2 to 'sustain a vibrant rural community by supporting rural economic development of an appropriate nature and scale' is representative of regional rural policy. It seeks to enable people to live and work in rural communities with reasonable provision of facilities while retaining the intrinsic character and value of the countryside and small communities. This echoes the Rural White Paper Action Plan which also refers to improved infrastructure, transport and key services; strong community infrastructure which can avail of economic, social and cultural opportunities; and better linkages between rural and urban areas.

There is growing recognition of the need for provision to take account of the varying needs of different age groups. The World Health Organisation promotes 'an Age-friendly world is a place that enables people of all ages to actively participate in community activities. It is a place that treats everyone with respect, regardless of their age. It is a place that makes it easy to stay connected to those around you and those you love. It is a place that helps people stay healthy and active even at the oldest ages. It is a place that helps those who can no longer look after themselves to live with dignity and enjoyment.' This is reflected in the objectives of the Northern Ireland Children and Young People's Strategy 2017-2027 and the Active Ageing Strategy 2016-2021.

The Executive programme 'Together: Building a United Community' has a vision for 'a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation - one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance'. It includes a commitment to create a 10-year Programme to reduce, and remove by 2023, all interface barriers including an Interface Barrier Support Package.

The 'Community Safety Action Plan' includes the action for Councils 'to support a sense of pride and ownership within neighbourhoods, deter anti-social behaviour and to address growing amenity problems associated with dilapidated or unsightly buildings and neglected sites'.

The Vision of the Councils Corporate Plan 2023-2027 'Our People, Our Place, Our Future' is to create "a happy, healthy and connected community, a vibrant and sustainable economy and appealing places for living, working and learning" aligning with the aspirations of the Community Plan. One of the five Key Priorities of the Corporate Plan is 'Community Well-being', which sets out the following commitments:

- Encourage participation in arts, culture, heritage and physical activity;
- Provide opportunities which improve quality of life and wellbeing for our communities and staff; and

- Support and empower communities.

The overarching aim of the Community theme in *'Connected'*, a Community Plan for ACBCBC 2017-2030, is that 'We live in a caring and safe Borough, where people lead healthy, fulfilling lives and take pride in shaping, nurturing and enriching community life.'

5.2.2 Baseline Information

A detailed baseline of information is presented in the Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Community Planning (CP) Baseline Report for 'Communities'. Data has also been sourced from the Community Plan and Local Development Plan Technical Supplements. Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service (NINIS) data in general and its Area Profile for ACBCBC at November 2017 have been important data sources. The baseline data also refers to the 2011 Equality Awareness Survey of over 1,000 people which measured attitudes towards specific equality groups and perceptions and experiences of unfair treatment. This topic overlaps with the Health and Well-being, Housing, Transport and Accessibility and Historic Environment topics.

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) is the principal source of official statistics and social research on Northern Ireland. The Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Inequalities Monitoring System enables the examination of health inequalities within sub-regions of Northern Ireland and includes a comparison between the average and the most deprived areas in each geographical area.

Population

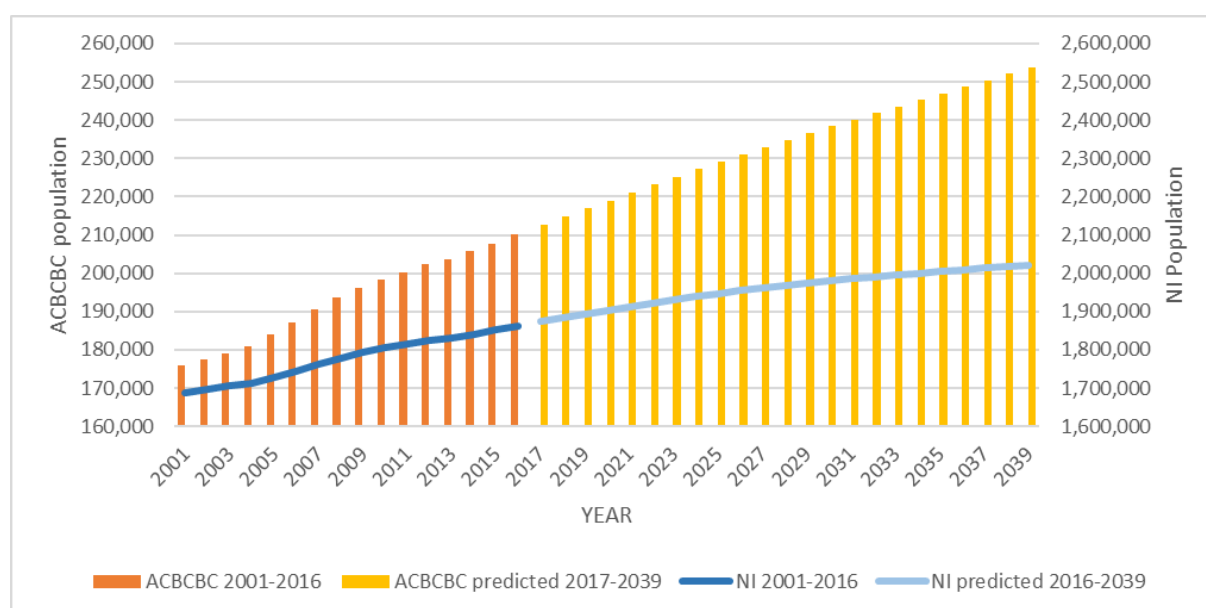
Population trends are largely influenced by other factors such as birth and death rate which in turn reflect many other factors such as health. Migration is subject to external influences such as national policy and the regional economy, however it can also be directly influenced by the physical, economic and social environment. Planning can have an influence on this by creating the conditions for investment and place-shaping to make the area more attractive to live in. What the data tells us about population is summarised here, however the future impact on housing is considered in more detail in section 5.3.

At the time of the 2021¹ Census, the population of Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough was 218,656 accounting for 11.48% of the NI total. This represents a 9.5% increase since the 2011 Census. The population density, at the 2021 census, was approximately 164 usual residents per square kilometre, above the NI average of 141 per square km.

As seen in Figure 10, for the period 2001-2016 the rate of population growth in ACBCBC been almost double that for NI as a whole, with an estimated increase of 19.5% compared with 10.3% for NI.

¹ 2021 usual resident popn: A:16438 B:17248 CUA:72721. ABC:218656. <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/ct0116-usual-resident-population-local-government-district-and-urban-status>

Figure 10: Population Growth 2001-2016 and predicted growth 2017-2039



Source: NISRA 11 LGDs – population totals (2001-2016) and NISRA 2014-based Population Projections for Areas within Northern Ireland

Predicted population growth in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough from 2021 to 2035¹ is set to be significantly higher at 10.6% than the NI rate of growth which is predicted to be 2.2%. This projected increase of 23,167 is projected to be the largest growth in population of all 11 NI Council areas.

As discussed in the CP Baseline Report for Communities, in the 2014 projections ACBCBC is predicted to have the highest growth rate of all 11 LGDs with higher rates of birth and in-migration the main factors in the predicted growth. NISRA has noted that, with the influence of Brexit, these figures may be adjusted in the next round of population estimates.

Based on 2011 census data there is a high proportion (25.1-28.8%) of Under 16s in some parts of Lurgan (the Super Output Areas (SOA)² of Drumgask 1 & 2, Drumgor 1& 2 and Taghnevan) and Armagh (SOA Callan Bridge) and in the rural SOA, Derrynoose. With the exception of Drumgor 1, these SOAs are all ranked among the most deprived quintile of SOAs in ACBCBC under the NI Multiple Deprivation Measure 2017 (NIMDM 2017).

The greatest proportions of over 65s are found in the urban SOAs of Edenderry 2 and Brownstown 2 (Armagh), Court 2 (Lurgan), Fort (Banbridge) and the rural SOA of Hockley. Of these, only Court 2 would be ranked within the most deprived areas in ACBCBC under the NIMDM2017. Hockley and Fort would rank among the least deprived SOAs in the LGD.

Religious belief

On Census Day 2021, 43.8% of residents in the Borough belonged to or were brought up in the Catholic religion and 46.7% belong to or were brought up in a Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related) religion. A further 1.2% belonged to or had been brought up in other religions while 8.2% neither belonged to, nor had been brought up in a religion³.

¹ 2018 -2043 NISRA popn projections LGD 2014. <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/2018-based-population-projections-areas-within-northern-ireland>

² Super Output Areas are statistical geography boundaries created by NISRA to allow the reporting of small area statistics.

Political opinion

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council has 41 elected members. A breakdown of results of the Local Government Election in May 2023 for the borough are as follows:

- Democratic Unionist Party – 13
- Ulster Unionist Party – 6
- Sinn Féin – 15
- Social Democratic and Labour Party – 1
- Alliance – 4
- Independent – 1
- TUV – 1

A total of 87,684 votes were polled in the Borough from an eligible electorate of 155,625 giving an overall turnout of 56.34%. This breakdown is taken as an approximate representation of the political opinion of people within the Borough.

Country of Birth and Ethnic Group

On Census Day 2021 in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough 3.3% of the resident population were from an ethnic minority population; and the remaining 96.7% were white. The 2021 Census recorded 534 Irish Travellers in the Borough. The main ethnic minorities were Mixed (1,652 individuals), Black African (1,132 individuals) and Chinese (683 individuals).

On Census Day 2021, 96,663 people (44.2%) living in the borough identified as 'British'. This is down from 100,825 people (50.5%) in 2011. In Northern Ireland overall, the percentage has also fallen however there remains a greater proportion in the borough who identify as 'British'.

The number of people living in the borough who identified as 'Irish' has increased from 50,284 people (25.2%) in 2011 to 65,115 people (29.8%). This is still below the Northern Ireland average where 33.3% of the population identify as 'Irish'.

The number of people identifying as 'Northern Irish' was 66,457 people or 30.4% of those living in the borough. This is up from 57,613 people (28.8%) in 2011. In Northern Ireland overall, approximately 31.5% of the population identify as 'Northern Irish'.

In Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon, approximately 8.6% of the population recorded their national identity as 'Other' which is above the rate for Northern Ireland at 6%.

Results from the 2021 Census show that 85.5% of residents in the Borough were born in Northern Ireland. 8.6% of residents, or 18,836 individuals, were born outside the United Kingdom or Republic of Ireland.

The number of people living in the borough who were born outside the United Kingdom and Ireland has increased from 10,816 people (5.5%) in 2011 to 18,836 people (8.6%) in 2021. Of those 18,836 people living in the borough who were born outside of the United Kingdom and Ireland, 20% were born in Poland and 16% in Lithuania with a further 9% born in Bulgaria.

In Northern Ireland overall there has also been an increase from 81,500 people (4.5%) in 2011 to 124,300 people (6.5%) in 2021. Again, the majority of those living in Northern Ireland who were born outside of the UK and Ireland were born in Poland (18%) and Lithuania (8%). People born in India and Bulgaria also account for over 5% each.

At 8.6%, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon has the third highest percentage of the population born outside the UK and Ireland, after Belfast and Mid Ulster.

The 2011 Equality Awareness Survey found that in NI, although attitudes towards the different ethnic groups were generally positive, negative attitudes existed towards Travellers (30%) and Eastern European migrant workers (21%).

The statistics on main language show that Irish was the main language of residents aged 3 and over for only 0.2% of the borough (0.3% in Northern Ireland overall). However, in terms of language ability, Census 2021 shows that 12.2% (25,644 people) in the borough aged 3 and over had some ability in the Irish language. This is up from 10.3% in 2011.

Results from Census 2021 show that 6.8% of residents in the borough aged 3+ years (14,376 individuals) spoke a language other than English as their main language. In Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon borough in 2021, the most prevalent main languages other than English were Polish (1.7%) and Lithuanian (1.2%). On Census Day 2021, 9.7% (20,320 people) in the borough aged 3 and over had some ability in the Ulster-Scots language. This is up from 6% in 2011.

Age

The population of the borough was estimated to be 218,656 on Census Day 2021, the profile of which is shown below.

Age Group	Number of People within Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough	% of Population within Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough
0-15 years	48, 243	22.06%
16-24 years	21, 774	9.96%
25-49 years	72, 023	32.94%
50- 64 years	41, 626	19.04%
65 years and over	34, 990	16.0%
TOTAL	218, 656	100.0%

Table 6: Age Profile of Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough at Census Day 2021¹.

Different age groups have particular needs, for example safe access to age appropriate play and recreational facilities for children and young people and greater need for accessibility to health facilities for older people. However many of the needs overlap for example for access to public transportation, open space, leisure and cultural facilities.

A 2016 AgeNI Survey for NI found that the main concerns for older people are

- Access to Health and Social Care 69.3%
- Transport 50.6%
- Keeping Warm in winter/Energy prices 49.3%
- Fear of Crime 48.2%

The 2021 census found that of the 18.04% of households within the Borough had adaptations to accommodate a disability or impairment², with the most common adaptations being for internal wheelchair use (9.59%), followed by other adaptations for physical or mobility issues such as external wheelchair access (8.55%).

Disability

According to the 2021 Census, more than one in five people in the borough (22% or 48,726 individuals) had a limiting long-term health problem or disability.

Census 2021 results are disaggregated by broad age bands, and the results show the prevalence of a limiting long-term health problem or disability is related to age³.

¹ Source: Census 2021

² Census 2021 main statistics housing and accommodation tables | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

³ Census 2021 Main statistics for Northern Ireland - Statistical bulletin - Health (nisra.gov.uk)

Age	Number of People within Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough	Number of People with a limiting long term health problem or disability within Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough	Percentage of People with a limiting long term health problem or disability within Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough
0-14 years	45,420	2,759	6.1%
15-39 years	67,700	7,367	10.9%
40-64 years	70,547	18,715	26.5%
65+ years	34,990	19,885	56.8%
TOTAL	218,657	48,726	22.3%

Table 7: Limiting long-term health problem or disability by age band, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough¹

As presented in Table 7, almost 57% of the population aged 65+ in the borough had a limiting long-term health problem or disability compared to 6% of those aged between 0-14.

Benefit statistics from the Department for Communities showed that as of May 2024 there were:

- 3,030 or 6.2% of under 16 eligible population and 4,490 or 13.3% of pension age eligible population claiming Disability Living Allowance.
- 6,480 or 19.1% of 66+ population claiming Attendance Allowance.
- 21,340 Personal Independent Payment claims in payment (experimental statistics).

Marital status

The 2021 Census provides information on the marital and civil partnership status of those aged 16 and over. Almost half of residents aged 16+ in the borough were married (49.0%).

Marital and Civil Partnership Status	Number of People within Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough	Percentage of People within Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough
Single (never married or never registered civil partnership)	60, 075	35.3%
Married	83,523	49.0%
In a civil partnership	307	0.2%
Separated (but still legally married or still legally in a civil partnership)	5,833	3.4%
Divorced or formerly in a civil partnership which is now legally dissolved	10,253	6.0%
Widowed or surviving partner from a civil partnership	10,420	6.1%

¹ Census 2021

Table 8: Marital and civil partnership status of residents aged 16+ in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough¹

Single people (35.3%) have different housing requirements and may have less purchasing power or different social needs to those who are married. Young, single people may be a key consideration in the economy of town centres, as they can provide a significant part of the market for the evening economy, for example in pubs, clubs and restaurants. However, single people may also experience social exclusion, particularly the elderly, disabled and single parents.

Sexual orientation

The question on sexual orientation was new for the 2021 Census and was asked of all people aged 16 and over. However, while completing the census is a legal obligation, there was no statutory penalty for those people who failed to provide an answer to the question on sexual orientation.

Sexual Orientation	Number of People within Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough	Percentage of People within Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough
Straight or heterosexual	154,259	90.5%
Lesbian, gay, bisexual or other (LGB+)	2,497	1.5%
Gay or Lesbian	1,378	0.8%
Bisexual	901	0.5%
Other sexual orientation	218	0.1%
No sexual orientation stated	13,657	8.0%
Prefer not to say	8,290	4.9%
Not stated	5,367	3.1%

Table 9: Sexual Orientation of residents aged 16 and over in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough 2021²

The results from the question on sexual orientation are presented in Table 9. Just 1.5% of the population aged 16 and over in the borough identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual or other (LGB+) while 90.5% identified as straight or heterosexual and 8% did not provide an answer to the question.

Gender

The 2021 Census recorded 110,388 females in the borough (50.5%) and 108,268 males (49.5%). These proportions have remained relatively static since 2011.

When disaggregated by age, the population increase was greatest in the older age groups. The number of people aged 65+ increased by 7,363 or 26.7%. For those aged 75+, there was a 34% increase. The proportion of the population aged 15-29 fell by 6.4% between 2011 and 2021.

¹ Marital and Civil Partnership Status, Census 2021, NISRA.

² Census 2021

For those aged up to 39 years, the number of males outnumber the number of females, albeit only marginally. However, in the 40+ age group, there are more females than males¹.

People with dependants and people without

On Census Day 2021, in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon borough approximately 52% of households had no children with a further 16% having no dependent children (all children in household are non-dependent). In Northern Ireland overall, 55% of households had no children and almost 16% had no dependent children. Approximately 32% of households in the borough had 1 or more dependent children with 63% of those having 2 or more dependent children.

		Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	Northern Ireland
All households		84,642	768,809
No children		51.97%	55.14%
No dependent children		15.91%	15.65%
1 dependent child	Age 0-4	3.85%	3.54%
	Age 5-11	2.80%	2.75%
	Age 12-18	5.28%	5.10%
2 dependent children	Age 0-4	4.75%	4.24%
	Age 5-11	5.26%	4.75%
	Age 12-18	2.73%	2.41%
3 dependent children	Age 0-4	3.65%	3.14%
	Age 5-11	3.30%	2.82%
	Age 12-18	0.51%	0.46%

Table 10: Number of dependent children in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough- Census 2021

Deprivation

The NIMDM2017 shows that of the 87 SOAs making up the Borough, there are 13 (15%) that have a multiple deprivation measures (MDM) rank within the 20% most deprived SOAs in NI (shown in Table 11). Fourteen SOAs (15%) are ranked within the 20% least deprived in NI. The NIMDM2017 also shows:

- Sixteen SOAs (18%) rank among the 20% most deprived in NI for Income, twelve (14%) ranked among the 20% least deprived)
- Eleven SOAs (13%) rank among the 20% most deprived in NI for Employment, fourteen (16%) ranked among the 20% least deprived)
- Eleven SOAs (13%) rank among the 20% most deprived in NI for Health Deprivation and Disability, fifteen (17%) ranked among the 20% least deprived)
- Fifteen SOAs (17%) rank among the 20% most deprived in NI for Education, Skills and Training, thirteen (15%) ranked among the 20% least deprived)
- Twenty SOAs (23%) rank among the 20% most deprived in NI for Access to Services, eight (9%) ranked among the 20% least deprived)

¹ Census 2021, Summary Report

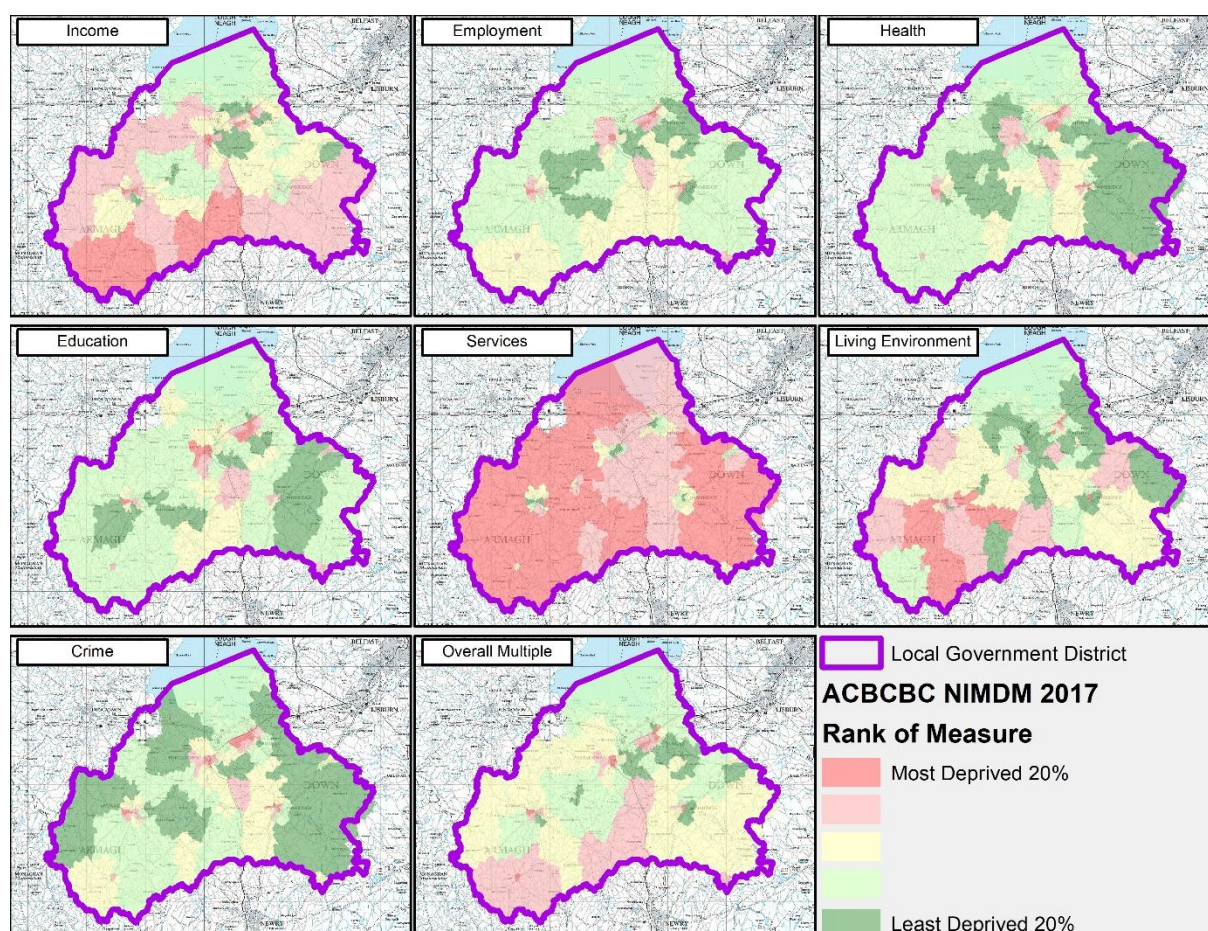
- Twelve SOAs (14%) rank among the 20% most deprived in NI for Living Environment, twenty four (28%) ranked among the 20% least deprived)
- Twelve SOAs (14%) rank among the 20% most deprived in NI for Crime and Disorder, twenty (23%) ranked among the 20% least deprived)

Table 11: ACBCBC SOAs among the 20% most deprived in NI for Multiple Deprivation Measures

SOA NAME	Urban or Rural (2015)	Multiple Deprivation Rank (where 1 is most deprived, 890 least deprived)
Woodville_1	Urban	14
Drumgask_2	Urban	52
Court_1	Urban	54
Callan Bridge	Urban	61
Church	Urban	62
Annagh_2	Urban	73
Drumgor_2	Urban	81
Drumnamoe_1	Urban	83
Corcraín_2	Urban	108
The Cut	Urban	120
Keady	Rural	125
Corcraín_1	Urban	129
Tavanagh	Urban	164

Source NISRA Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures 2017 (SOA Results)

Figure 11: NI MDM Individual Domain Rank Groups showing rank of ACBCBC SOAs

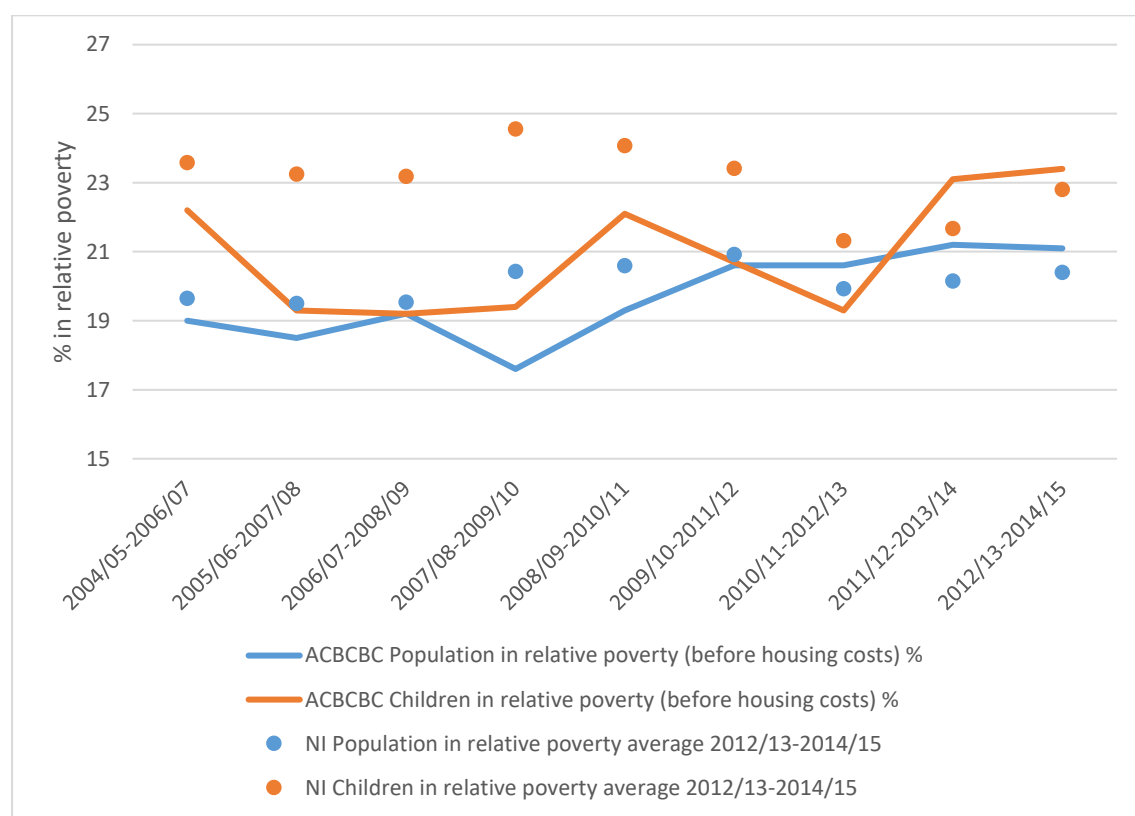


Source NIMDM 2017 Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures 2017 (SOA Results)

It can be seen in Figure 11 that for the 'Income' and 'Access to Services' domains, ACBCBC has a greater proportion of SOAs ranked among the 'most deprived' quintiles. Conversely, many areas, particularly in the east of the Borough, are among the least deprived in terms of 'Crime' and 'Health'. The figure also shows that there are differences between urban and rural SOAs.

In 2012/13-2014/15, 21.1% of the population were in relative poverty (before housing costs) in ACBCBC, compared with 20.4% in Northern Ireland. 23.4% of children were in relative poverty, compared with 22.8% in Northern Ireland. Figure 12 shows that the percentage of individuals and children in relative poverty has risen from being below the NI average prior to 2012/13, to being above the NI average.

Figure 12: Relative Poverty Statistics, 2004-2015



Source NINIS Poverty: Grouped Years (administrative geographies) 2002-2014

Rural

Results from the 2021 Census show that approximately 77% of the borough's households were located in one of our settlements which planning classify as urban whilst approximately 23% of the Boroughs households live in households in the countryside (ie rural areas outside of settlements). Please be aware that this figure varies from the NISRA default urban/rural settlement classification. NISRA classify settlements with a population greater than or equal to 5,000 as urban while those with a population less than 5,000 are classified as rural. The NISRA urban to rural split for our Borough is approximately 51 to 49%.

Craigavon Urban Area (which includes Central Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown), Banbridge, Armagh and Dromore are the four urban areas within the borough, all other settlements are classified as rural according to the NISRA default classification. These four urban areas all contain settlements with population over 5,000.

Crime

The Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Policing District covers the Borough. There are two local policing teams and four neighbourhood policing teams covering the Borough¹.

Police recorded crime² (excluding fraud) in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough was 9,009 in 2024/25 which was a decrease of 10.8% on 2023/24. In Northern Ireland, recorded crime (excluding fraud) fell between 2023/24 (104,201) and 2024/25 (95,968) by 7.9%. When compared with 2014/15, recorded crime (excluding fraud) is now almost 9% lower in the Borough and 7% lower in Northern Ireland in 2024/25.

Shared Space and Community Facilities

Technical Supplement for Education, Health and Community Facilities details community facilities in the Borough.

Libraries NI is the body with overall responsibility for the provision of library services in Northern Ireland. There are currently 10 library branches in operation in the Borough. A further 40 locations within the Borough are visited by a mobile library service operated by Libraries NI

The Council provides a range of community facilities / venues either via direct ownership or via financial support including leisure centres, recreation centres and community centres offering sports facilities. There are also a significant number of play parks, Neighbourhood Equipped Playgrounds, MUGAs (Multi-Use Games Areas) and Outdoor Gyms throughout the Borough.

5.2.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

The legacy area plans were not prepared in the context of the new council area and do not reflect our more up to date understanding of economic growth and social development in our area. Therefore, in the absence of a new plan, there is a risk that policies and provision for development will not reflect the needs of the Borough or support delivery of our Community Plan. A new plan brings an opportunity to develop a plan led system and to reflect the most recent strategies.

5.2.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Community

Additional comment

- There will be a growing population and the plan will need to meet the need for more dwellings.
- Some areas have seen substantial growth in recent years, there is a need to ensure that facilities meet the needs of the population.
- Some areas have seen significant population decline in recent years, there is a need to ensure that this does not have a long term adverse effect on them as places to live or do business.
- A decline in household size will increase the number of homes required per capita and influence the type of dwellings required.
- People may be more likely to stay in a home long term if it meets their changing needs and facilities and amenities that they wish to use are as accessible as possible through their lives.
- A greater proportion of older people will increase the need for suitable housing that is accessible for those who may not drive and enables support to be provided.
- Levels of deprivation vary widely throughout the council area.
- Rural communities have relatively good access to urban areas, however some of their populations may not have good proximity to services.
- There is a commitment and desire to promote social inclusion through shared, welcoming and accessible places.

¹ Armagh Banbridge and Craigavon | Police Service of Northern Ireland

² <https://www.psn.police.uk/inside-psni/Statistics/police-recorded-crime-statistics/>

- Need to plan for and meet the needs of diverse groups in the council area, this may include allowing for facilities to meet specific needs.
- Some parts of ACBCBC have populations which predominantly reflect one religion or political opinion.
- There is a need to provide appropriate shared space and apply place making to make areas inclusive for all backgrounds and income levels.
- The needs and experience of different parts of ACBCBC society differ and are best expressed by representatives of the range of groups. Some of this may be gained through the Community Planning process and also through being proactive in inviting comment on and participation in plan preparation from all groups.
- There will be an increased need to accommodate those with disability.
- The community is not ethnically diverse, but there is a higher than average proportion of people born in an EU country resident in the Council area. The needs of minority groups such as Irish Travellers must be taken into account.
- There will continue to be a need for childcare facilities, nursery, primary and secondary schools as well as accessibility to community and leisure facilities particularly in the short term.

5.3 Housing

5.3.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

Good quality sustainable housing is a fundamental need of society and can make a significant positive contribution to community cohesion and the character of our built and natural environment. It is the role of the LDP to proactively facilitate land for the delivery of homes to meet the variety of future housing needs, together with creating the opportunities for people living there to make healthy lifestyle choices and benefit from community services and facilities.

Regional policy recognises the importance of housing in relation to sustainable development. It acknowledges the potential links between good quality sustainable housing and enabling access to jobs, facilities, services and infrastructure and their ability to bring benefits to wider society. Policy encourages housing located near to public transport links and in residential areas with adequate facilities already in place. Consideration of local character and the environment, as well as attractive design, are also viewed as key elements for sustainable development.

Good quality housing is essential to safety and well-being. Availability of appropriate housing and access to community and social services influences the independence and quality of life of older people. New homes should be capable of being lifetime homes and be built to wheelchair accessible standards. Good quality housing developments promote well-being and health improvement through development design, which encourages walking and cycling, and use of open space for recreation. Fuel poverty can be addressed through housing design that aims for a low-carbon future, which also helps local air quality and our contributions to climate change mitigation.

Regional policy recognises that housing growth needs to be managed to achieve sustainable patterns of residential development. This can be achieved by promoting housing within existing hubs and clusters and by using vacant and underutilised land, including brownfield sites. The needs of rural dwellers, those on low incomes, the vulnerable, the elderly, the disabled and the homeless should also be considered in housing policy.

The Councils Corporate Plan 2023-2027 'Our People, Our Place, Our Future' has a vision to create 'a happy, health and connected community, a vibrant and sustainable economy and appealing places for living, working and learning'. This vision complements the Council's Community Plan, highlighting the strong interconnection between both strategic documents and their shared commitment to enhancing the wellbeing of people and places across the Borough.

The Community Plan for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon, 'Connected Community Plan' states 'we want people to live in well-designed, sustainable and connected communities, benefitting from quality, affordable housing and accessible services and amenities. To ensure this, we will need to provide adequate housing for future population needs, to include appropriate land use, and supporting infrastructure development.'

The Vision of the Councils Corporate Plan 2023-2027 'Our People, Our Place, Our Future' is to create "a happy, healthy and connected community, a vibrant and sustainable economy and appealing places for living, working and learning" aligning with the aspirations of the Community Plan.

5.3.2 Baseline Information

A detailed baseline of information is presented in the Housing Technical Supplement.

Overview

The following summarises the position in relation to housing:

- Household stock and Tenure¹ – On Census Day 2021 there were a total of 84,642 occupied households in the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough. Of these, 58,110 (68.7%) were

¹ [Census 2021 main statistics housing and accommodation tables](#) | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

owner occupied while 26,532 (31.3%) were rented accommodation with 1,936 of these households living rent free. Census 2021 figures also show the tenure of people living in households. In March 2021 72% of the Boroughs population were living in in owner occupied households. Approximately 28% or just over 60,000 people lived in rented accommodations.

- Dwelling Prices – Cost of a typical home in the Borough is £117,637 making the Borough one of the most affordable areas in Northern Ireland from the (NI House Price Index Oct - Dec 2017).
- Age (Elderly) – 15% of the ABC population is 65+ years which is the same as the average for Northern Ireland as a whole.
- Age (Children) – 22% of the ABC population is under 16 years – compared to NI proportion of 21%
- Low income families- 27 Super Output Areas within the Council have higher proportions of children living in low income families than the Northern Ireland average (21.4%). The SOA's with the highest proportions of children living in low income families were Drumgask 2, Drumnamoe 1, Callan Bridge, Woodville 1 and Drumgor 1.
- Health/Disability – Over one fifth (22%) of the usually resident population, reported that their day-to-day activities are limited by a health problem or disability, with 10% describing their day-to-day activities as 'limited a lot' and **12% describing their day-to-day activities as 'limited a little'**.¹
- Social Housing Needs² – The five-year assessment for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough for 2024-29 shows a need for an additional 1,622 units over this period. North Lurgan and Portadown 2 exhibit the highest levels of social housing need in the Borough with 296 and 261 units required respectively.
- Social Housing Needs- As of March 2025, there were 4,148 applicants on the waiting list in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough. Of these applicants, 2,760 (or 66.5%) were in housing stress (where they have 30 or more points under the Common Selection Scheme.) The number of applicants on the waiting list and the number in housing stress has increased over the past year and the number of applicants in housing stress is currently the highest it has been of the years presented. More than 410 applicants were allocated social housing in the Borough in the year ending March 2025, almost 15% less than the previous year, the majority of these were allocated to single persons (43%). The remaining were small family households (25.5%) and 13% were older person households, indicating a need for smaller housing units.

Affordable Housing

House Prices / Affordability – For Quarter 4 of 2024, the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council area had a standardised price (from the housing price index) of £167,907 which made the area the third most affordable in Northern Ireland (behind Mid & East Antrim and Derry City & Strabane), £15,352 less than the NI average (£183,259). This figure increased by 6.7% on the previous 12 months, 2.3% less than the NI average change over the same period. Affordability remains an issue for first time buyers who cannot access mortgage finance.

At 2021 there were 84,642 households in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon, which is an increase of 9,136 households on the 2011 Census figure of 75,506. Owner occupied housing represents the largest overall sector of occupied housing stock at 69%.

Private rented housing comprises 21% of total occupied housing stock within the Borough. This has become the accommodation of choice for many households, especially younger households on lower incomes who would have previously made up first time buyers. Our Borough has the highest number of private rented accommodation outside Belfast³, with 645 lettings in the first half of 2024.

¹ Census 2021

² levels of social housing need are assessed and monitored by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)

³ Ulster University: Performance of the Private Rental Market in Northern Ireland: Issue 23 H1 2024

Social Rented housing sector accounts for 10% of the housing stock share in the Borough, with 7,305 properties within the Borough at March 2023¹.

Rural Housing

Rural housing continues to make a contribution to overall housing supply, albeit at a reduced rate since the introduction of Planning Policy Statement 21 (PPS21).

Fuel Poverty

A fuel-poor household is one needing to spend in excess of 10% of its household income on all fuel use to achieve a satisfactory standard of warmth. It assesses the ability to meet all domestic energy costs including space and water heating, cooking, lights and appliances.

NIHE House Condition Survey 2011 provided a comprehensive picture of the dwelling stock and its condition in 2011 for Northern Ireland and each of the 26 legacy Councils. This survey estimated that 42.0% of households in Northern Ireland were in fuel poverty. For households where the Household Reference Person was aged 60-74 years, 52% of households were in fuel poverty rising to 66% where the Household Reference Person was aged 75+ years.

Unfit dwellings and Decent Homes

NIHE House Condition Survey 2011 shows a small increase in unfitness across Northern Ireland associated with an increase in the rate of vacancy, particularly in isolated rural areas. In 2011 the levels of unfit homes in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon was 4-5%.

‘Decent homes’ considers a range of factors beyond unfitness including meeting modern standards. The proportion of houses that failed to meet this standard was 10-14% across the Borough. Taking account of the NI average (11.4%) the condition of housing remains important as a consideration in planning policy and provision for housing.

5.3.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

Without a new LDP there would be fewer opportunities to consider current zonings for housing and adapt to meet the areas of greatest need. There would also be fewer opportunities to design housing policy to accommodate the changing demography of the Borough and the identified social housing need for more ‘single elderly’ and ‘small family’ units.

Applying sustainability appraisal will enable a more strategic and balanced plan for the future. Considerations for future housing include the availability of or capacity to provide necessary infrastructure, energy efficiency, a good quality environment, accessibility to employment and services, and to forms of transport that reduce reliance on private cars and social considerations such as shared space, the vitality of towns and provision of care.

5.3.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Housing

Additional comment

- For the period 2011 to 2021, the rate of population growth overall for the council area (11.5%) was significantly above the Northern Ireland average and the Borough had the largest increase in population of all 11 NI LGDs.
- The number of households has increased rapidly over the period 2001 to 2021 with a trend for smaller household sizes. A decline in household size will increase the number of homes required per capita and influence the type of dwellings required.
- Overall the proportion of social housing has dropped over the period 2001 to 2011, alongside an increase in the proportion of private rented accommodation used.
- A changing demography has created a high demand within social housing amongst young people, single parents, migrant workers and the elderly.
- There continues to be a demand across Armagh, Craigavon and Banbridge for social housing provision particularly in Craigavon.

¹ NIHE Commissioning Prospectus: Social & Intermediate Housing Requirements for the period 2024/25 - 2026/27

- The number of people presenting themselves as homeless between 2009/10 and 2013/14 has increased across the council area by 3-5%.
- There is scope to bring vacant dwellings into use to contribute to the housing stock.
- As life expectancy of the population rises this will increase the need for suitable housing that is accessible for the elderly and which enables support to be provided.
- There will be an increased need to accommodate those with disability.
- There are advantages to providing life time homes that are accessible and adaptable to all and meet wheelchair standards.
- New housing should be low carbon and reduce the problems of fuel poverty.
- Affordable housing is required for a variety of housing types and sizes. Affordability remains an issue for first time buyers, alongside difficulties in securing mortgages.
- All new housing should help to support healthy lifestyles.
- Housing provision should enable social cohesion in families and communities and promote vibrancy of settlements.
- Rural housing continues to make a contribution to overall housing supply in the council area albeit at a reduced rate since the introduction of PPS 21.

5.4 Education and Skills

5.4.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

Education and skills takes account of learning from primary to third level education in addition to vocational training. Good educational and skills outcomes support people to succeed economically, have better life chances and opportunities for better health.

Low educational attainment and low skills levels significantly constrain life chances and increase the risk of poverty and poor health. Significant inequality in educational attainment exists within Northern Ireland. Access to high quality education and skills training can be increased through cooperation between statutory agencies and other institutions. Overarching policies recognise that the education and skills levels of the population must improve in order meet the needs of communities and businesses. This will allow businesses to make use of opportunities for regional and global trade and help create conditions for increased high quality employment.

Education is one of the most significant investments in developing the individual, society and the economy. The overall vision of the Department of Education is to see *‘every young person achieving to his or her full potential at each stage of his or her development’*.

In recent years there have been a number of influential publications which set out to all those involved in the education sector a challenge to consider new approaches. This includes sharing facilities which would promote a more cohesive and tolerant society and provide a better use of the resources available to education.

In 2009 the Department of Education introduced the ‘Sustainable Schools Policy’ followed by an area planning process in 2011, designed to address the long-term primary and post-primary school needs from 2012-2025. The overall output of these is the assessment of schools against a set of criteria for sustainable enrolment levels, delivery of quality education and financial sustainability.

One of the three long term missions of the Programme for Government (PfG) 2024-2027 ‘Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most’ (2025, Northern Ireland Executive) is to ‘support everyone at all stages of their life to ensure they have the chance to succeed by improving life opportunities’. Relevant priorities within the PfG include ‘Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy’, ‘Deliver More Affordable, Accessible, High-Quality Early Learning’ and ‘Childcare and Better Support for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs’.

Within a land use planning context, LDPs should allocate sufficient land to meet the anticipated educational needs of the community and should recognise town centres as important hubs for a range of uses which include education. Within a rural context, policy requires that people who live in the countryside also have opportunities to access high quality education.

The Community Plan for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon, ‘*Connected*’ Community Plan states *‘It is our ambition to have a thriving and prosperous economy underpinned by the skills base of local people. The Borough benefits from a diverse range of quality and accessible educational and training provision, dedicated staff and excellent relationships with a range of voluntary and community-based groups, services and facilities that promote and support lifelong learning and advancement.’*

5.4.2 Baseline Information

A detailed baseline of information is presented in the technical supplement for: ‘Health, Education and Community Uses’.

The Department of Education (DE) has overall responsibility for education policy and the Education Authority (EA) oversee the delivery of education, youth and library services. Within the context of our Borough, the Southern regional of the EA is responsible for the provision of Primary and Secondary education. An Area Plan has been produced for the region in conjunction with the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) and the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education is also a key stakeholder.

5.4.3 Pre-School, Primary, Post Primary, Further Education and Special Education

The Department for Education is the government body that has responsibility for education within Northern Ireland. The Education Authority is responsible for ensuring that efficient and effective primary and secondary education services are available to meet the needs of children and young people and support for the provision of efficient and effective youth services.

The Northern Ireland School Census takes place in October each year and provides a snapshot of the situation in schools at that time. Information from the School Census shows that the total number of enrolments in educational establishments in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough increased year on year between 2014/15 and 2022/23 with a total increase of 9.4% (3,656 pupils). In the two years since then, there has been a decline in the total enrolments (198 pupils, 0.5%).

The numbers enrolled in pre-school education centres have fluctuated slightly over the years presented with a high in 2015/16 of 1,000 enrolments, dropping to a low of 759 in 2024/25. This represents a fall of 52 (6.4%) since 2023/24. Nursery school enrolments have remained relatively steady since 2014/15 while Primary school enrolments have been decreasing each year since 2018/19 when they were at their highest. Post-primary school enrolments have increased each year since 2015/16 and overall, since 2015/16 when they were at their lowest, enrolments have increased by 2,863 or 18.6%. Special schools have seen the greatest percentage increase in enrolments between 2014/15 and 2024/25, rising by 54.3% to 486 in 2024/25.

In October 2024 there were 33 voluntary and private pre-school education centres in the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough in which there were 759 pupils enrolled.

A total of 22,003 pupils were enrolled in 90 primary schools across the borough when the Northern Ireland School Census was conducted in October 2024.

In October 2024 there were a total of 23 post-primary schools in the Borough in which there were 18,296 pupils enrolled.

There were 486 pupils enrolled in 3 special schools in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough in October 2024.

5.4.4 Post Primary Attainment

The school leavers survey provides information on the achievements of school leavers at both A-level and GCSE. The data refers to the home residence of pupils. In 2023/24 just under 47% of school leavers in the borough achieved 2+ A-levels (or equivalent). This represents a further decrease on the previous school year and is the fourth consecutive year of decline. In Northern Ireland overall, just less than 54% of leavers achieved 2+ A-levels (or equivalent) in the academic year 2023/24.

With regards GCSE attainment, in 2023/24, just over 86% of school leavers in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough achieved at least 5 GCSE's grades A* - C (or equivalent). This remains lower than the Northern Ireland figure of 87.4% with both the Borough and Northern Ireland overall again having experienced a fall in the percentage of leavers achieving at least 5 GCSE's grades A* - C (or equivalent).

	Achieved 2+ A-levels (or equivalent)		Achieved at least 5 GCSE Grades A* - C (or equivalent)	
	ABC %	NI %	ABC %	NI %
2013/14	48.7	55.7	76.3	78.6

2014/15	52.2	57.7	81.1	81.1
2015/16	49.1	57.3	78.2	81.7
2016/17	52.3	58.5	81.4	83.8
2017/18	49.0	56.7	79.9	85.2
2018/19	46.9	55.6	82.5	86.4
2019/20	52.8	59.8	88.9	91.3
2020/21	50.7	60.5	90.5	92.1
2021/22	48.9	57.8	90.3	91.9
2022/23	47.3	56.2	87.0	89.8
2023/24	46.7	53.8	86.3	87.4

Table 12: School Leaver Attainment in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland 2013/14- 2023/24¹

Higher Education Enrolments

In 2023/24, 36.1% of school leavers in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough entered Higher Education Institutions which is just 0.6 percentage points less than the previous year. The percentage continuing on to Institutes of Further Education has also fallen from 39.4% in 2022/23 to 38.4% in 2023/24. The proportions entering employment and training have increased for the fourth consecutive year. Entering employment or training straight after school appear to be becoming increasingly popular options with more than 1 in 5 students in the Borough and nearly 1 in 4 in Northern Ireland overall choosing one of these options. With regards the proportions entering unemployment/unknown, having been at its highest in 2022/23, this has fallen to 3.7% in the Borough in 2023/24 which puts it below the rate for Northern Ireland overall (4.1%).

	Higher Education %	Further Education %	Employment %	Training %	Unemployed / Unknown %
2013/14	40.0	43.9	3.9	8.9	3.3
2014/15	37.6	45.6	5.9	7.5	3.3
2015/16	36.9	43.1	5.7	9.4	4.8
2016/17	39.2	41.0	6.5	9.2	4.1
2017/18	39.8	40.9	5.6	10.3	3.4
2018/19	35.9	41.5	6.3	12.4	3.9
2019/20	39.7	42.1	4.9	9.8	3.5
2020/21	41.7	37.3	7.2	10.8	3.0
2021/22	39.4	37.4	7.4	11.5	4.3
2022/23	35.5	39.4	7.7	12.2	5.1
2023/24	36.1	38.4	7.8	14.1	3.7

¹ Source- NI School Leavers Survey, Department of Education

Table 13: Destination of School Leavers in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough 2013/14-2023/24¹

Skills Level of Working age population

The 2021 Census asked about qualification levels of residents ranging from no qualifications to level 4 and above. The type of qualification at each level is shown in Table 14 below.

Qualification	Description
No qualification	No academic or professional qualifications
Level 1	1-4 GCSEs, O Levels, CSEs, NVQ Level 1 or equivalent qualifications
Level 2	5+ GCSEs (Grades A*-C, 9-4), O Levels (Passes), CSEs (Grade 1), 1 A Level, 2-3 AS Levels, NVQ Level 2, BTEC General, City and Guilds Craft or equivalent qualifications
Apprenticeship	Apprenticeship
Level 3	2+ A Levels, 4+ AS Levels, NVQ Level 3, BTEC National, OND or ONC, City and Guilds Advanced Craft or equivalent qualifications
Level 4	Degree, foundation degree, HND, HNC, NVQ Level 4-5, professional qualifications (e.g. teaching) or equivalent qualifications
Other Qualifications	Any other qualifications, equivalent unknown

Table 14: Qualification Groups²

In Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough the percentage of residents aged 16 and over with no qualifications (25.2%) was slightly higher than Northern Ireland overall (23.8%). Level 1 qualifications and apprenticeships showed similar proportions in both the borough and Northern Ireland. Those with qualifications at level 4 and above was lower in the borough (30.4%) than Northern Ireland (32.1%).

Qualifications	Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough %	Northern Ireland %
None	25.2	23.8
Level 1	5.8	5.9
Level 2	14.1	13.6
Apprenticeship	6.5	6.4
Level 3	15.5	16.0
Level 4 and above	30.4	32.1
Other	2.4	2.2
Total	100.0	100.0

Table 15: Highest level of Qualifications Attained of all usual residents aged 16 and over in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough and Northern Ireland³

¹ NI School Leavers Survey, Department of Education

² Source- 2021 Census

³ Source Census 2021

5.4.5 Likely Evolution of the Baseline within the Local Development Plan

Without a new LDP there may be fewer opportunities to look at settlement pattern and school sustainability or to facilitate skills training.

5.4.6 Key Sustainability Issues for Education and Skills

- Although the council area has a high level of educational achievement at all levels, this is not consistent between DEAs.
- Since 2023 there has been a 0.5% decrease in the number of enrolments in schools within the Borough. There has also been a decrease of 6.4% in 2024 of the number of children enrolled in pre-school education. Post-primary has seen a 18.6 increase in enrolments since 2015/16 while Special Schools have seen the greatest percentage increase in enrolments from 2014/15 to 2024/25 rising by 54.3%.
- In Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough the percentage of residents aged 16 and over with no qualifications (25.2%) was slightly higher than Northern Ireland overall (23.8%). Level 1 qualifications and apprenticeships showed similar proportions in both the borough and Northern Ireland. Those with qualifications at level 4 and above was lower in the borough (30.4%) than Northern Ireland (32.1%).
- Sharing facilities has been recognised as a way to promote a more cohesive and tolerant society and make better use of the resources available to education.

5.5 Economy and Employment

5.5.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

Creating the conditions to achieve and maintain stable economic growth are key aims of all relevant strategies locally, regionally and within a European context. Economic growth is driven by a healthy business sector, which itself relies on a base of high-quality education, and delivery of relevant skills to the workforce.

The common thread of relevant economic policies is to achieve sustainable growth of the economy. In particular, policy recognises the priority in Northern Ireland (NI) to raise competitiveness through increased export, and to identify opportunities in new, emerging and developed markets. The need to support the development of a more innovation-based economy is also identified and this links to a high potential for research and development.

One of the three long term missions of the Programme for Government (PfG) 2024-2027 'Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most' (2025, Northern Ireland Executive) is to 'support everyone at all stages of their life to ensure they have the chance to succeed by improving life opportunities'. One of the priorities of the PfG 'Grow a Globally Competitive and Sustainable Economy' seeks to provide better support to businesses and help grow a globally competitive and sustainable economy. It recognises the need to help improve the quality of available jobs so more people can be involved in and proud of what is designed, made, and built in Northern Ireland. It also acknowledges the need for the right infrastructure which will create the foundations for a more productive and prosperous economy; for better rural and urban communities; and for healthier and greener lives. To create an economy that works for everyone, the PfG seeks to address four key challenges: productivity, good jobs, decarbonisation, and regional balance.

The Council is a partner in the Mid-South West (MSW) project in collaboration with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and Mid Ulster District Council. The Regional Economic Strategy aims to transform the MSW region's economy and boost productivity. The strategy identifies four pillars to guide investment and grow the collective economy: future proofing the skills base; enabling infrastructure; boosting innovation and digital capacity; and building a high-performing tourism economy.

Within current planning policy, it is recognised that planning authorities should take a positive approach to sustainable economic development and enable job creation, giving priority to large scale proposals with job creation potential, through zoning land and promoting developments in settlement hubs. Policy also refers to the importance of creating the right conditions for investment through supporting urban and rural renaissance, ensuring that settlements remain vital. In terms of regional policy there is a recognition that accessible land should be made available to promote job creation and to promote sustainable economic growth at key locations. 'Transform', the Council's Tourism Strategy 2017-2022, sets out the Council's objectives for developing and managing tourism in the Borough. This has been supplemented by the Tourism Economy Action Plan that outlines the actions to be taken and the associated performance measures.

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council's Corporate Plan has 'Place' as one of its strategic themes. The Plan sets out the following priorities for economy and employment:

Economy	Employment
▪ Support business development and business growth ▪ Increase the tourism, hospitality and entertainment economy ▪ Maximise external funding opportunities ▪ Campaign to increase inward investment ▪ Bid for large scale signature events	▪ Develop the skills of the workforce, now and for the future ▪ Safeguard public administration jobs ▪ Support local businesses to grow and increase jobs ▪ Stimulate entrepreneurship and wealth creation.

'Connected', the Council's Community Plan 2017-2030, has 'Economy' as its second theme, with 'Enterprising Economy', 'Skilled Economy' and 'Tourism Economy' as three of its priorities. The Community

Plan's economic outcomes include: *'Our Borough is a centre of excellence for entrepreneurship, innovation and investment'*. *'People are better equipped to take full advantage of the opportunities provided by our dynamic economy'* and *'Our Borough is the destination of choice for international visitors'*.

5.5.2 Baseline Information

A detailed baseline of information is presented in a number of Local Development Plan Technical Supplement. Data has also been sourced from Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) and the Department for Economy. This topic overlaps with the Health and Well-being, Natural Resources, Physical Resources and Historic Environment topics.

Overview

Craigavon urban area is made up of the three centres of Lurgan, Portadown and Central Craigavon with a growing population of around 72,000 in 2021. It is the third largest centre of population in Northern Ireland and performs a strong sub-regional function offering a wide range of services and facilities including an acute hospital. It is well connected to both Belfast and Dublin.

Central Craigavon is a distinct town centre with a built form that dates back around 50 years and was developed as part of Northern Ireland's first new town in 1965, a modernist "linear city" to incorporate Lurgan and Portadown. It has a well-established retail function, a strong manufacturing and industry base and benefits from a lakeside setting with leisure and tourism functions.

Lurgan benefits from its location on the Belfast-Dublin railway line and easy access to the M1 motorway. Lurgan Park, the largest urban park in Northern Ireland is located immediately adjacent to the town centre. Oxford Island National Nature Reserve is situated on the outskirts of Lurgan. Portadown benefits from its drive time to Belfast of around 30 minutes and a stop on the Belfast-Dublin Railway line. Portadown's potential for a rediscovered and rejuvenated riverside area will lead it to become a location for modern mixed-use development, centred around leisure and town centre living.

In 2021, Banbridge had a population of approximately 17,000 and has a good quality natural and built environment, excellent sports and leisure facilities, an abundance of parks and open spaces and a robust telecommunications infrastructure. Banbridge benefits from its strategic location on the Belfast-Dublin road corridor and will continue to have a key role as an important retail and commercial centre within the cluster.

Armagh City with a population of around 16,000 has a unique sense of place in Ireland with a significance and influence felt across the island for 6500 years. It has been the spiritual capital of Ireland since around 445AD. Armagh is a rich heritage and tourism destination with an abundance of cultural product – the rich Georgian architecture, cathedrals, museums, old gaol, planetarium and Navan Fort. Armagh's potential in tourism terms relies largely upon strategic improvements to the transport corridor around the city.

Craigavon, Banbridge and Armagh have the potential to cluster and to capitalise on their strategic position on the Belfast/Dublin and Belfast/Enniskillen/Sligo economic corridors.

Economic Activity and Employment

It is estimated that 121,000 people (aged 16+) in the borough were in employment in 2024. The majority of those in employment were working full-time (77% of those aged 16+). In 2024, the economic inactivity rate (16-64) in the Borough of 19.2% is the lowest figure since 2009 5.1 percentage points below the Northern Ireland average. Between 2009 and 2024, the economic inactivity rate (16-64) in the Borough has been consistently below the Northern Ireland average. Economically inactive people are those not looking for work or not available for work; this will include all those who are looking after a home, long term sick or disabled, students and retired.

The employment rate for the Borough in 2024 was 67.6% for those aged 16+ and 79.3% for those aged 16 to 64. For those aged 16 to 64, the employment rate has been higher in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough than the Northern Ireland average since 2009. The Borough employment rate declined between 2018 and 2021 but increased greatly in 2022 and again in 2023¹. At 79.3% in 2024, the working age employment rate in the Borough is now 5 percentage points above the Northern Ireland average.

Employment Sectors

The Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) is a statutory two yearly survey of employers in NI by the Department for Economy. It covers employee jobs but excludes agriculture, the self-employed, HM Armed Forces, private domestic servants, homeworkers and non-employed trainees such as those on internships. It presents information by Council area, which is primarily based on the location of the jobs rather than the residence of the employee.

The distribution of employees across the various employment sectors in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon in 2015 is shown in Figure 13. When compared to NI as a whole, these results show that a greater than average proportion of employees working in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon are employed in the 'Manufacturing' sector and 'Wholesale and Retail Trade / Motor Vehicle Repairs' sector. The proportion employed in the 'Human Health / Social Work' sector is also higher than the NI average. The 2015 employee trends continue in the BRES 2022 survey which also reveals that our Borough has a higher % of employees in transport & storage sector 5.71%, 50% higher than the NI average of 3.81%. These differences are likely due to the Borough being home to some of NI's largest and most successful companies including Hyster-Yale Group, Ulster Carpet Mills, Moy Park, Tayto, Fane Valley, Irwin's, Almac, EoS, Turkington's and Wilson's. In comparison to NI as a whole, a smaller proportion of employees are employed in the Public Administration and Defence, Accommodation and Food Service and Information Communication sectors. The dPS Economic Development Strategy has estimated that up to 17,000 new jobs will need to be created over the period 2016-2035.

In 2024², the BRES estimated 114,000 employee jobs in the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council area. Employee numbers have seen some fluctuations in recent years, particularly in 2011-12 & 2020-2022, but appear to be steadily increasing. 47% of employee jobs in September 2023 were held by males and 53% by females, however a significantly greater proportion (39%) of male employees were working full time (>30 hrs per week) with only 27% of female employees working full time.

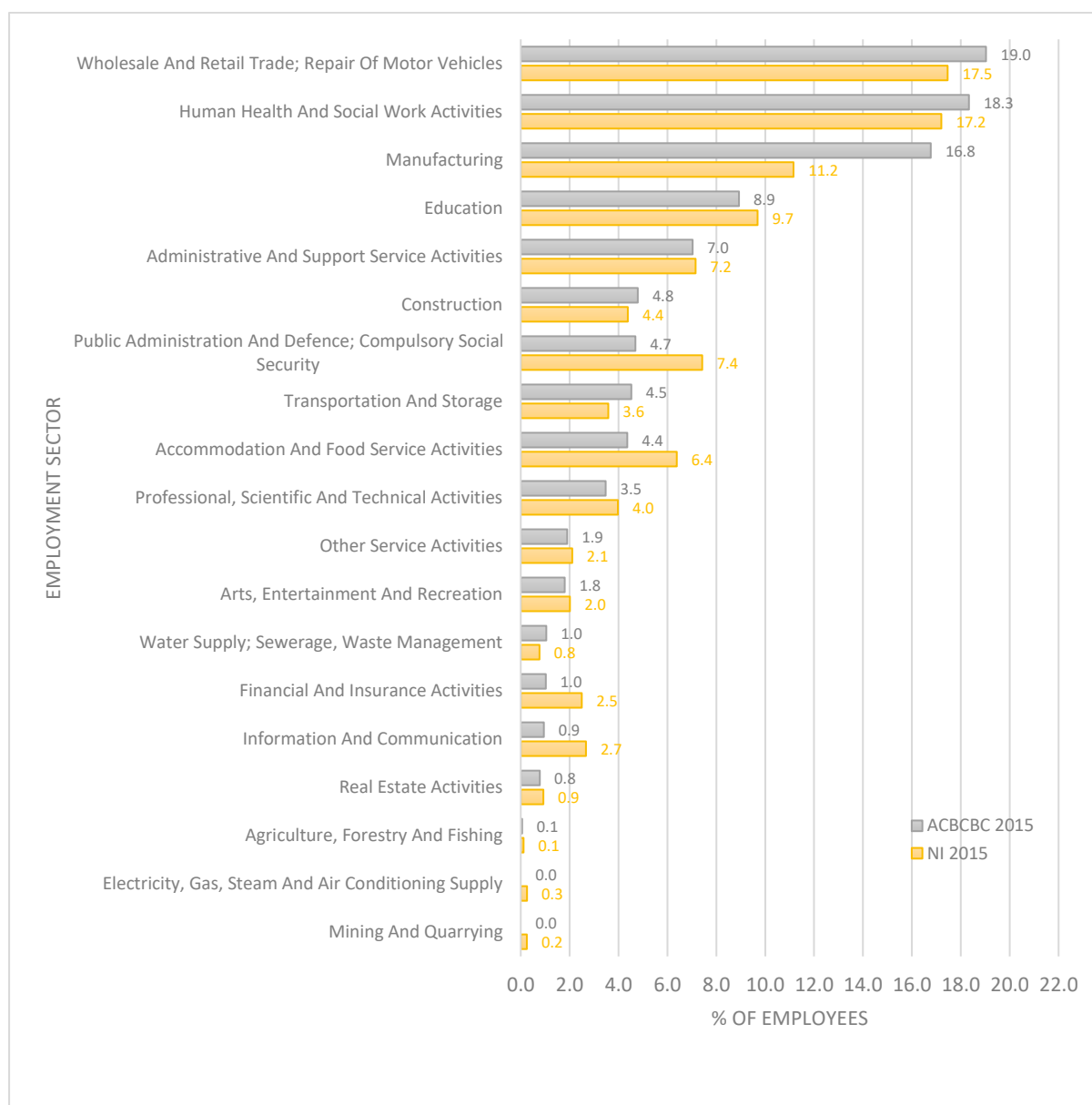
The employment rate for the Borough in 2024 was 67.6% for those aged 16+ which is higher than Northern Ireland overall. For those aged 16 to 64, the employment rate has been higher in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough since 2009. The employment rate for both age groups in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough had been in decline between 2018 and 2021³ but increased greatly in 2022 and again in 2023 and 2024 to what is now the highest of the years presented. At 79.3% in 2024, the working age employment rate in the Borough is now 5 percentage points above the Northern Ireland average while the employment rate for those aged 16+ in the Borough is 6.2 percentage points above the Northern Ireland average.

¹ <https://share.google/S7ugNqBVllj6TxmO4>

² <https://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/resident/borough-statistics/economy/#:~:text=Businesses,those%20working%20in%20the%20borough.>

³ <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/annual-employee-jobs-surveys/business-register-and-employment-survey>

Figure 13: Percentage of Employee Jobs by Industry Sector vs NI overall (2015)



Source: NISRA, Census of Employment, Business Registration Employment Survey 2015

Note: Figures exclude agriculture but include animal husbandry service activities and hunting, trapping and game propagation.

The BRES does not record the number of self-employed or those that earn their living from agriculture. In 2015 there were estimated to be 9,000 self-employed persons in the Borough¹, representing 11-12% of those in employment (NI 14%). The Inter Departmental Business Register (IDBR) recorded 9,9400 businesses in the Borough in 2025, 11.6% of all businesses in NI and the fourth highest number in NI LGDs. Of these, 26.5% were in the Agriculture² sector (NI 23.5%). It is notable that our Borough has the highest number of transport & storage and motor trade businesses in the 11 NI LGDs. The IDBR excludes smaller businesses and the self-employed who fall below the VAT registered/PAYE thresholds. Almost 90% of the businesses on the IDBR are micro-businesses, with 0-9 employees and a further 8.5% are small businesses with 10-49 employees.

¹ Invest NI Armagh Banbridge Craigavon Area Profile June 2017 (accessed 16/11/2017)

² <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-business-activity-size-location-and-ownership-2025>

Earnings from Employment

The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings¹ by Local Government Districts is published by the Department for the Economy (DfE). The 2016 (provisional) survey results gave the value for those persons living in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon a median gross annual salary of £20,196 (up from £19,299 in 2015), which is in the middle of the range of all the Council areas. The median gross annual salary for all of NI in 2016 was £20,953. The median gross annual salary in 2016 for those working in the Borough was £19,452, slightly lower than for those living in the Borough. This discrepancy in earnings between those living and working in the Borough is due to a tendency for workers to commute out of the Borough for higher earning employment.

Business Start-ups and Success

The office for National Statistics publishes an annual bulletin of Business Demography which presents the number of active enterprises and charts the births of new enterprises, and deaths of enterprises. The number of enterprises active in the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council area in 2015 was 6,115, a decrease of just over 500 from 6,620 in 2010². In the Borough, the five-year survival rate for businesses established in 2010 was 38.9% (NI 40.4%). Businesses in the former Banbridge Council areas (42.9%) performed significantly better than those in the former Armagh and Craigavon Council areas (36.4% and 37.5%). 2012 was a particularly difficult year, with the lowest number of new start-ups (400) and the greatest number of enterprise deaths (175). In 2015, 605 new business start-ups were recorded; a significant increase on the five previous years which averaged around 460.

The statistics show that although the Borough has similar entrepreneurial and business start-up rates to Northern Ireland overall, these are relatively low in comparison to other parts of the UK. The consultees surveyed for the Community Plan agreed that a focus on encouraging and nurturing new business ideas would help the Council increase and sustain economic growth.

Innovation

It is widely recognised that improving the ability of the economy in NI to be innovative is a key factor in improving economic growth and employment. The most recent innovation figures are published by DfE in the UK Innovation Survey (UKIS) 2015. These show that in 2012-14, more NI businesses were innovation active than in 2010-12. 45% of enterprises in NI were estimated to be innovation active in the three year period 2012-14 (up from 40% in 2010-12). However this remains lower than the equivalent UK figure of 53% (up from 45% in 2010-12) and NI remains the second least innovation active region of the UK.

Within NI, 'Manufacturing' was the most innovative sector in 2012-14. In particular, 'Manufacturing of Electrical and Optical Equipment' (87% innovation active) and 'Manufacturing of Transport Equipment' (84% innovation active). Currently, large enterprises with 250 or more employees are reported as being more likely to engage in some sort of innovation activity, with 48% innovation active, as opposed to 40% of Small-Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Improving the quality of goods or services was the main factor driving innovation in NI and the UK as a whole.

Competitiveness

No data is available at Council level on levels of competitiveness. Total external sales by companies in NI to markets outside of NI were estimated to be worth £23 billion in 2015³, representing an increase of 1.3% (£300 million) from 2014. These figures are broken down as £18.3 billion (79.6%) for goods (a slight decrease of 0.5% on 2014) and £4.7 billion (20.4%) for services (an increase of 8.8% over 2014). These figures exceed the previously recorded peak in 2014 (£22.7 billion), and external sales are therefore at their highest level since 2011. External sales account for just over a third (34.4%) of all sales by companies in NI in 2015 (£66.7 billion).

¹ Department for the Economy Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings by NI geographies, by place of work and place of residence, 2016 (provisional) and 2015 (revised) (accessed 31/10/2017)

² Pre 2015 ONS figures are published under the three former local government district areas of Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon.

³ NISRA Northern Ireland Broad Economy Sales and Exports Statistics (BESES): Goods and Services Results 2015 – published 11 May 2017

Retailing

The Council has a settlement hierarchy with five main town centres (Armagh, Portadown, Craigavon, Lurgan and Banbridge) and six smaller local towns (Keady, Markethill, Tandragee, Dromore, Rathfriland and Gilford). Section 3.2 of the 'Town Centres and Opportunity Sites' Preparatory Study Paper summarise the results of surveys carried out on the main town centres in 2015. This report is consistent with the findings of the 2023 LDP Retail and Commercial Leisure Study. The town centres display a strong presence of independent retailers and service providers which helps provide an attractive alternative to national operators and contributes to the local distinctiveness of each centre. The proportion of 'other' town centre uses is notably higher in NI than the UK average. The 'other' category includes transport services, employment and commercial activities, religious buildings, wholesale trade, civic and unclassified buildings. Having a range of other uses within town centres should be considered a positive attribute which confirms town centres are performing as a hub for a range of activities thereby contributing to overall vitality and viability. There is only one notable out-of-centre retail park (The Boulevard Outlet, Banbridge) in the Borough. The Town Centres and Opportunity Sites Discussion Paper notes that the Outlet 'may be considered as the biggest threat to the vitality of Banbridge Town Centre or alternatively a centre which will complement the offer and attractiveness of Banbridge as a whole'.

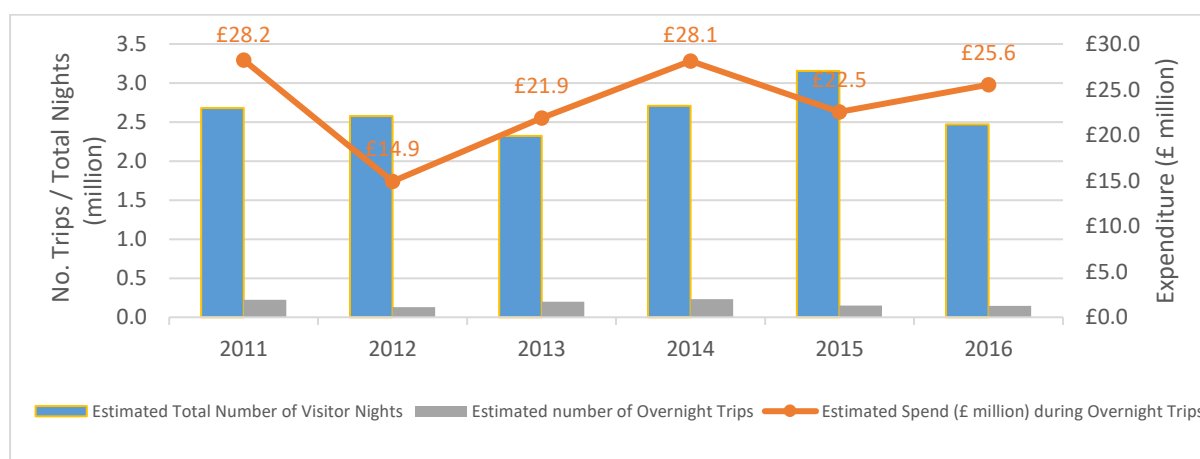
Borough Town Centre, vacancy rates¹ in April 2025 were favourable compared to the rates for the town centres in the rest of NI and the NI average of 23%. Borough Town Centre vacancy rates were: Armagh 17.6%, Banbridge 14.9%, Craigavon 7.8%, Dromore 23.0%, Lurgan 18.8% and Portadown 20.6% (NI 23%). Of the 41 town centres detailed, Craigavon Town Centre is second lowest vacancy rates and Banbridge is seventh. Dromore has the sixth highest vacancy rate (23%) and Portadown (20.6) is also in the bottom third in terms of vacancy rate. The vacancy rates in the Boulevard Outlet, located outside Banbridge, have fallen significantly since a high of 37% in 2015. With the changing and dynamic scale and nature of retailing, a comprehensive updated Retail Capacity Study will be required for the LDP.

The Borough shares a border with County Monaghan in Ireland. The 'Town Centres and Opportunity Sites' Discussion Paper mention that Keady in particular benefits from strong cross border trade and cultural associations with the nearby towns of Castleblaney and Monaghan. The uncertainty following 'Brexit' may add to the challenges experienced in towns along the border area.

Tourism

Investment in tourism brings new facilities to our City, towns, villages and surrounding landscapes and makes a vital contribution to the Borough in terms of the revenues it generates, the employment opportunities it provides, and the potential it creates for economic growth. It also provides the opportunity to get maximum benefit from our wealth of environmental and heritage assets; our waterways, landscapes and historic environment. There are also health benefits to be gained by a more active resident population who are motivated to be out and about exploring more of the Borough's tourism assets.

Figure 14: Estimated overnight Trips, Nights and Expenditure 2011 -16 for ACBCBC



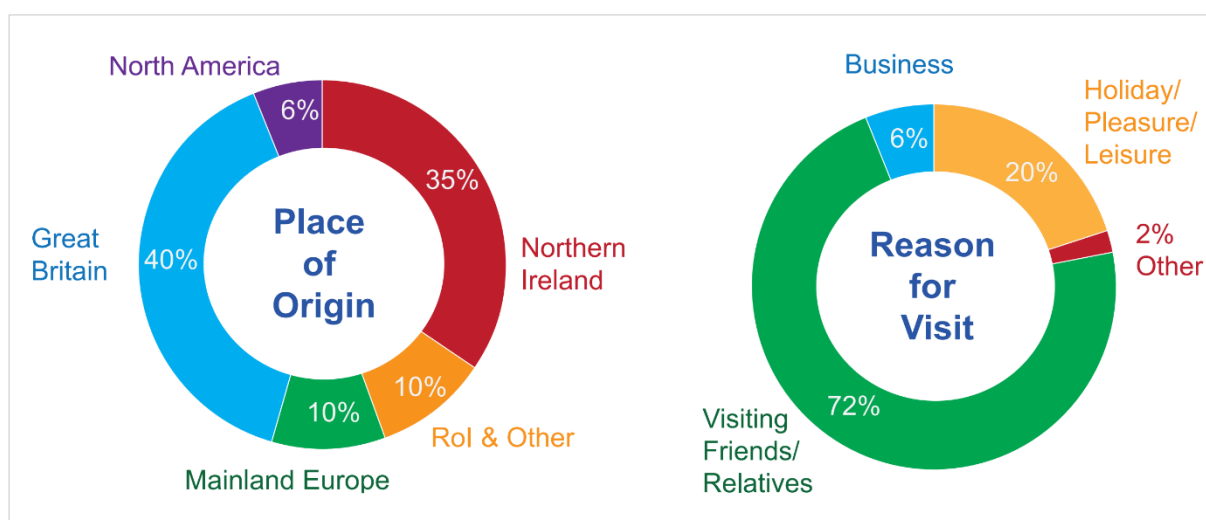
¹ <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/town-centre-database>

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council is among the least visited of the local government districts as an overnight tourism destination. The Borough has lower numbers of available tourist accommodation than most other local government districts, having the second lowest number of bed spaces in 2015 (1,173 spaces) and third lowest in 2016 (1,249 spaces) - around 3% of the NI total. Excluding day visits, tourism was worth around £25.5m to the Borough in 2016 from overnight expenditure (around 3% of the NI total of £850m). In 2015, tourism-related employment supported 4,266 jobs in the Borough, around 6% of all employment.

Overnight visitors to Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon typically stay there for longer than when visiting other areas in NI, with the average number of overnights per trip in 2016 being 5.0 (NI 3.3 nights). NISRA's annual tourism survey estimates show that for the three-year period 2014-16, the Borough attracted a greater than average proportion of visitors from mainland Europe and North America (Figure 15). A lower than average proportion (34.8%, NI 46.7%) of visitors travelled from elsewhere in NI to stay in the Borough, however a greater than average proportion of visitors (39.6%, NI 29.1%) originated from Great Britain.

Figure 15 also shows almost three-quarters (72%) of overnight stays in the Borough for the period 2014-16 were to visit friends/relatives. This proportion is much higher than in any other Council area (NI 41%). Only 20% of overnight visits were for holiday/leisure/pleasure; a much lower proportion than for any other local government district (NI 47%).

Figure 15: Overnight Visits - Place of Visitor Origin and Principal Reason for Visit (2014-2016)



Source NISRA Local government district tourism statistics infographics (Date published: 06 July 2017)

In 2016 Oxford Island National Nature Reserve, Kinnego Marina, Tannaghmore Gardens & Rare Breeds Animal Farm and the Lough Neagh Discovery centre were the most popular visitor attractions in the Borough. Lurgan Park was the second most visited park in NI, with 634,000 visitors.

The estimated tourism expenditure per trip averaged around £150 in 2016, which was slightly lower than the average for NI (£164). Annual average hotel room occupancy rates in the Borough have remained fairly constant around 52% over the past five years, while the occupancy rate for other commercial accommodation has more than doubled from an average of 19% for 2013-15, to 43% in 2016 (NI: 34%). Self-catering unit occupancy has also increased from an average of 24% for 2011-14 to 37% in 2015 and 2016 which is slightly better than the NI average (NI: 36%).

The Council's Tourism Strategy 2017-2022 has identified a number of initiatives it wishes to develop to enhance the Borough's ability to stand out in a crowded market. It proposes that the tourism offer in its widest sense will be developed on the basis of appealing to the higher spend 'Free Independent Traveller'

as opposed to pursuing a strategy of purely higher volume, lower yield business. Themes it will focus on include culture, heritage and high quality / artisan food and drink.

5.5.3 Likely Evolution of baseline without the Local Development Plan

Without a new LDP in place, the opportunity to make plans for growth in line with recent evidence and to develop a plan-led system may be missed. The absence of a LDP to address local needs could further disadvantage those on lower incomes in terms of access to places of work. High levels of retail building vacancy in village and town centres might continue which would be detrimental to the vitality and viability these centres. The Council would be unable to facilitate sustainable tourism growth to adequately reflect the needs and assets unique to the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon area.

5.5.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Economy and Employment

- Identifying and zoning appropriate land is a vital part of creating the conditions to sustain economic development that meets employment needs and supports economic growth.
- Many of the large settlements in the Council are located on key transport corridors. In selecting land for development, it is important to provide sites with quality environments located on transport corridors to attract businesses.
- Need to ensure that the Council area is attractive to investors, and higher skilled people, by supporting the vitality and vibrancy of the wider area and facilitating a high-quality local environment through appropriate land use, design and layout. This relates particularly to quality of provision, location, and accessibility of office/manufacturing/retail space.
- Proposed new employment locations should be readily accessible by active travel and/or public transport.
- A higher than NI average percentage of people in the Council area are economically active.
- The Council area has a high proportion of people employed in the wholesale / retail trade, manufacturing and health sectors.
- Employee salaries are slightly broadly average for NI.
- The business birth rate and survival rate is average for NI, but lower than the rest of the UK. A focus on encouraging and nurturing new business ideas would help the Council increase and sustain economic growth.
- Within the Council area, there is a vibrant rural entrepreneurial spirit within the villages and open countryside. It is important that the Plan provides policy which can facilitate appropriate sustainable rural businesses.
- Within retail, there have been a number of challenges in recent years, however the market is in recovery and is evolving.
- Town centres should be supported by encouraging occupation of vacant buildings.
- The out-of-town retail park should be supported to increase its unit occupancy and usage in a manner that complements nearby town centres rather than taking business from them.
- 'Brexit' and exchange rate fluctuations may disproportionately affect businesses in border areas.
- Almost three quarters of overnight visits to the Council area are to visit friends and relatives. The proportion of overnight visitors staying for holiday/pleasure/leisure is the lowest in NI.
- There are a wealth of heritage and cultural, natural and landscape tourism assets within the Council area with significant future potential.
- Activity tourism has the potential to create important economic benefits, particularly in the rural area.
- Water sport activities, including those based on connections to Lough Neagh, have important tourist potential; Oxford Island and Kinnego Marina were the most popular visitor attractions in the Council area (excluding country parks/parks/forests).

5.6 Material Assets

5.6.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

Material assets are referred to in the EAPP Regulations, but they are not defined. For the purposes of this report, the material assets sustainability topic covers a range of policy areas, including telecommunications, electrical infrastructure and energy distribution, energy including renewable and low carbon energy, derelict and contaminated land, and waste management.

Overarching regional and strategic planning policy strives for the sustainable development of land to help ensure the integration of material assets. Growth of infrastructure should be enabled in an efficient and effective manner whilst environmental impacts are minimised.

The National Renewable Energy Action Plan for the UK 2010, the Sustainable Energy Action Plan 2012-15 and Beyond and the NI Waste Management Strategy are all relevant to material assets. Current policy encourages the multifunctional use of land; increases in renewables to the energy mix and reductions in waste / increases in recycling rates. The Energy Strategy for Northern Ireland, published in December 2021, sets out a framework for achieving 100% reduction in energy-related emissions by 2050. It seeks to 'grow the green economy' by investing in green innovation and low carbon technologies and replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy. Decarbonising energy and reducing wastefulness/ growing a circular economy are also principles within DAERA's draft Green Growth and draft Environment Strategies, both of which were consulted on in late 2021.

Investing in telecommunications, particularly in rural areas and considering the infrastructure required for renewable energy projects and strengthening of the grid for future energy demands is encouraged at the regional level. New gas infrastructure is also supported as the move to gas helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and may help to meet UK climate change commitments. Climate change concerns encourage the use of renewables and a move toward a more sustainable energy mix that reduces emissions and improves air quality.

Sustainable waste management is also acknowledged as an opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by focusing on the waste management hierarchy and the proximity principle. Impacts should be considered of all types of installation on the environment and a strategic approach to the sustainable development of land could include multiple uses. For example, derelict land could be used to treat waste, which could in turn produce energy for local distribution.

The Council's Corporate Plan 2023-2027 is committed to supporting efforts in the Borough as a whole to reduce carbon emissions, generate and use energy more cleanly so the area remains a progressive and vibrant place to live, work and visit. Sustainable management of our material assets will be integral to delivering on the Plan. Ensuring our material assets are fit for purpose can not only stimulate innovation, investment and employment, but also futureproof the Borough for a reduced reliance on fossil fuels, an increase in the use of renewables and a culture of resource efficiency based on the proximity principle.

5.6.2 Baseline Evidence

A detailed baseline of information is presented in the 'Public Utilities' Local Development Plan preparatory study. This topic also overlaps with the Economy and Employment, Physical Resources, Climate Change and Landscape topics of this report.

Telecommunications/Electrical Infrastructure

Northern Ireland has an excellent standard of telecommunications including broadband infrastructure. Some areas and businesses in the Council have already benefitted from several broadband related projects including fibre optic links to the United States for Armagh and Portadown under Project Kelvin.

Although the Borough is generally well connected with 82% of premises having access to superfast fixed line broadband¹, some rural areas remain limited in their connectivity, with 2,300 premises (2.7%) unable to receive 2Mbit/s in 2017. Download speeds published by OFCOM in the 2017 'Connected Nations' report vary greatly, ranging between 0.1 Mbit/s and 80 Mbit/s, with an average speed of 28Mbit/s, fourth lowest of all LGDs (average across NI 35.5Mbit/s).

Mobile coverage in the Borough is best across the wider Craigavon area, but OFCOM reports that that mobile coverage in Northern Ireland, particularly indoor coverage and outdoor coverage on A & B roads, is lower relative to the rest of the UK. Both 3G and 4G are available in the Council but 3G is the most common.

51% of premises in the Borough can receive a 3G signal indoors from all four providers, fourth lowest amongst the LGDs (NI average 66%). 0.5% of premises cannot receive 3G from any provider. 29% of premises in the Borough can receive a 4G signal indoors from all providers. There is a need to improve mobile data services across the Council.

The System Operator for Northern Ireland (SONI) manages the large-scale electrical transmission infrastructure across the country. SONI is the independent Transmission System Operator for Northern Ireland and operates 1,500 km of transmission power lines and 45,000 km of distribution power lines. Currently all customers are connected to the distribution network for their electricity².

SONI presents a live link www.soni.ltd.uk to the current energy mix for Northern Ireland and connected sources of power generation including renewables. It is important for the grid to remain fit-for-purpose as this helps to ensure security of supply. This also supports increased diversity within the system, by enabling additional connections from renewable projects to both the transmission and distribution systems.

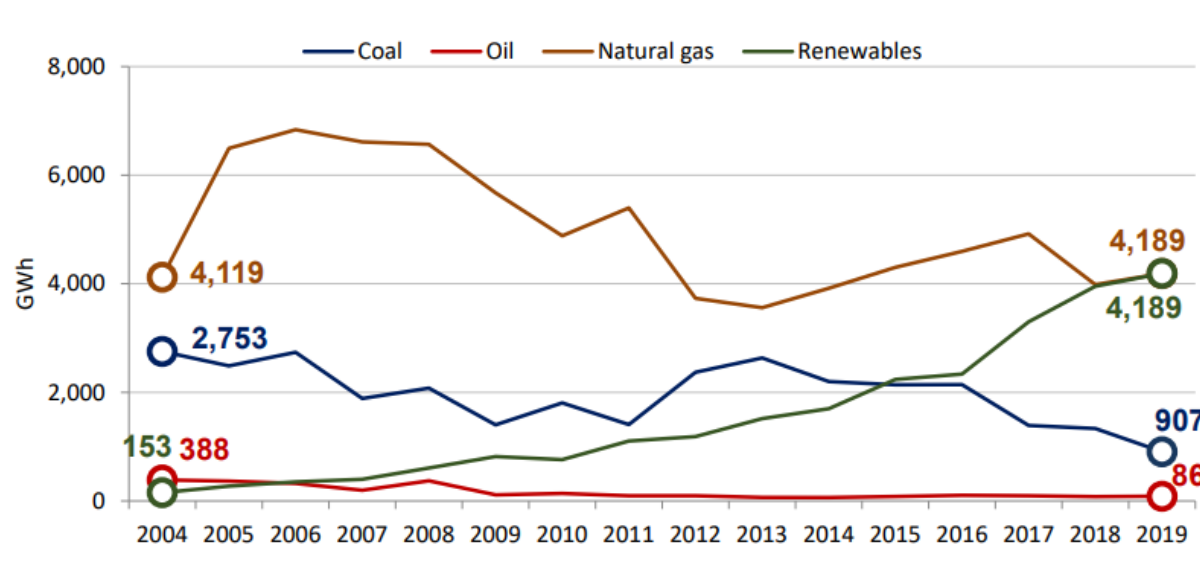
Energy Supply and Distribution

In total Northern Ireland has three fossil fuelled power stations. Two are located on the east Antrim coast at Ballylumford and Kilroot, and the third is located at Coolkeeragh on the southern shore of Lough Foyle. Although no power stations are located within or near the Borough, there are no issues with access to energy supply. Two of the three plants now use natural gas for generating electricity, rather than coal or oil. The changing sources of electricity generation can be viewed in Figure 16, with the growth of renewables and the decrease in the use of oil for domestic heating both evident.

¹ OFCOM Connected Nations 2017 – data downloads

² Northern Ireland Electricity: Briefing on Grid Capacity in Northern Ireland in the context of enabling Economic Growth April 2015

Figure 16: Electricity generation by fuel type 2004-2015



Source: DAERA, NI Carbon Intensity Indicators 2021 (Published 28 October 2021)

The use of natural gas for domestic heating has also significantly increased in Northern Ireland since its introduction in 1996 and this growth is likely to continue where the infrastructure is feasible.

As changes in policy direct the energy market towards reduced GHG emissions and a low carbon future, changes in the operations of all the fossil-fuelled power stations in Northern Ireland will have to occur. In the draft Programme for Government, GHG emissions will be used to help indicate environmental sustainability in Northern Ireland.

Renewable Energy

Renewable energy can be defined as energy derived from natural sources which can be replenished faster than they are consumed. The Sustainable Energy Action Plan 2012-2015 and beyond, is endorsed by the NI Executive and had a target of 40% of electricity consumption to be from renewables by 2020, which was achieved. The Climate Change (NI) Act 2022 commits NI to generating 80% of its electricity supply from renewable sources by 2030.

The significant majority of all renewable electricity generated in NI is derived from onshore wind (82.1% in 2021, slightly down from 84.5% in 2019)¹. Applications for turbines (single turbines and windfarms) have historically formed the majority of planning applications for renewables, with solar, hydroelectric and biomass schemes less common.

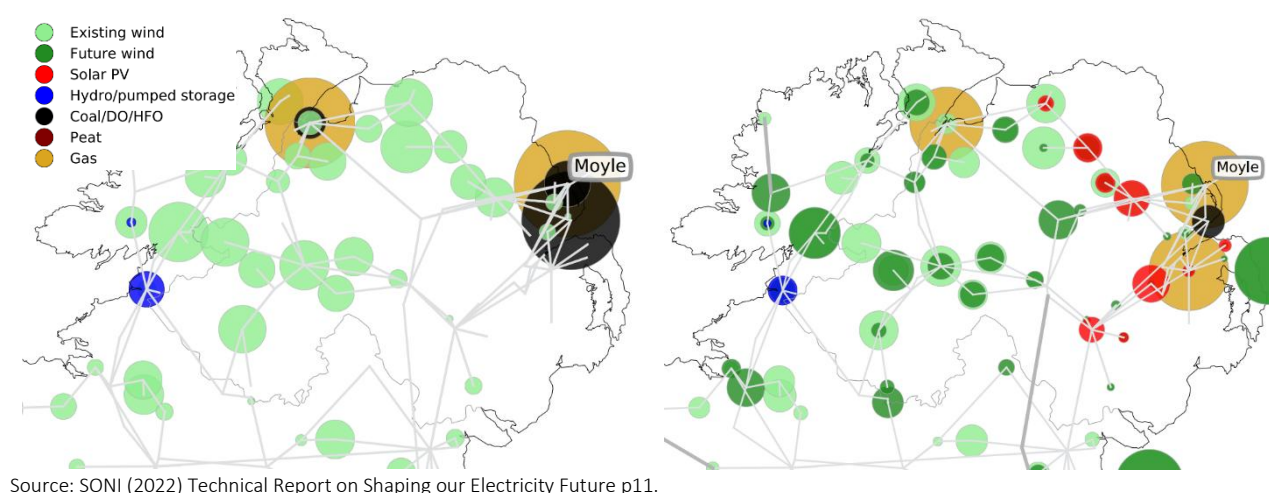
With the growth of renewables in Northern Ireland, seen in Figure 16, the ability of the grid to accommodate new connections is becoming more of an issue.

In its 'Shaping our Electricity Future Roadmap', SONI has identified the existing and planned generation infrastructure within NI and it can be seen in Figure 17 that the 2030 projected distribution may include a number of larger-scale proposals in the Borough.

Between 2004 and 2024, three windfarms and 235 single turbines had been approved in the Borough. There are physical constraints, such as lower elevations, that possibly make the Borough less attractive to investors of large scale wind projects. Other constraints are landscape related in the Slieve Croob and Slieve Gullion areas but the market for single turbines has been evident right across the Borough.

¹ NISRA & DfE Electricity Consumption and Renewable Generation in Northern Ireland: Year ending December 2021

Figure 17: SONI Generation Spatial Distribution 2020 and (projected) 2030.



Waste Management

Regional policy promotes the waste management hierarchy to – reduce, reuse, recycle, recover and dispose. The Borough is within the Southern Waste Management Group (SWaMP) and expected to align with most recent SWAMP Waste Management Plan (WMP) dated up to 2020.

There is a domestic recycling collection, provision of bottle banks and nine recycling centres for residents in the Borough. These should go some way to helping the Borough achieve recycling targets set by the Department for municipal waste. This will become increasingly important, as there are no active landfill sites in the Borough. The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 introduces a requirement for the Department to ensure that at least 70% of waste is recycled by 2030.

The Northern Ireland Revised Waste Management Strategy supports sustainable development, the waste management hierarchy and resource efficiency. At its core is to reduce waste; and then reuse, recycle or recover, before any consideration of landfilling. The proportion of municipal waste collected and prepared for reuse, recycling and composting in the Borough has increased from 48.02% in 2015 to 54.3% in 2020¹, and is around 4% above the NI average.

The Council recognises that recyclable waste has a value and that the non-recyclable waste can be used as an energy source.

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council works jointly with Fermanagh & Omagh District Council and Mid Ulster District Council under a shared Joint Councils Waste Management Plan, most recently updated in the Joint Councils Addendum to the Waste Management Plan 2024. This plan coordinates long-term waste management across the three council areas, reflecting updated recycling and landfill diversion targets as well as changes in waste legislation since 2015, ensuring all councils take a unified, strategic approach to waste reduction, resource efficiency and compliance with national policy.

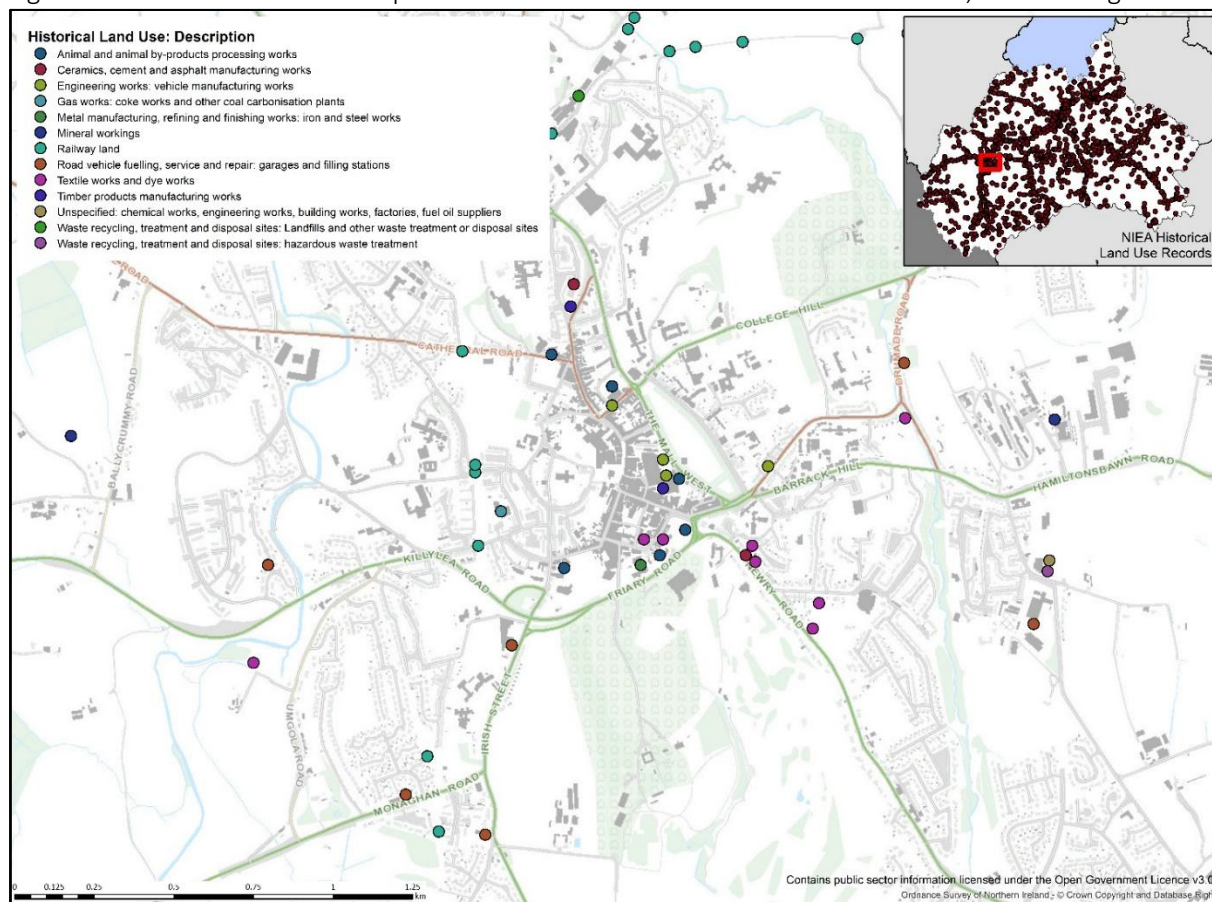
Derelict / contaminated land

The Historic Land Use Database held by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) provides a record of approximately 14,000 sites that have had previous industrial land use(s). This database was originally developed in 1997 based on historic maps and records held provided by the Local Councils for the period 1834 to 1960. More recently this database was further updated using NIEA datasets such as the Industrial Heritage database, Waste Management License Database and Pollution Incidents Database.

There are 1,738 records on the Land Use Database in our area. An excerpt from the database, showing Armagh City is shown as an example of the information in Figure 18.

¹ NISRA (2021) Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Recycling (administrative geographies) 2003 - 2020

Figure 18: Excerpt from Land Use Database, Armagh City



Source: DAERA Historical Landuse Database

5.6.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

In the absence of a new plan, it may become more difficult to sustainably manage provision and integration of material assets, as land is more likely to be developed without appropriate infrastructure in place or planned for.

5.6.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Material Assets

- Sustainably improve the telecommunications network in areas with slow download speeds and in rural areas to help ensure those residents, communities and businesses are not disadvantaged.
- Adopt a spatial approach to the sustainable planning of our material assets to help ensure energy sources and distribution to users are located as efficiently as possible in relation to one other.
- Work with partners to help sustainably develop gas infrastructure projects.
- Continue to support appropriate sustainable renewable projects and associated infrastructure to help increase the diversity of renewables supplying energy to the grid, to help meet commitments made under the UK Climate Change Act.
- The lack of financial incentives for renewable projects may affect the demand to develop renewables.
- Consider community based renewable projects that can make more efficient use of land and reduce environmental impacts including landscape related issues.
- Consider alternative renewable technologies to wind in areas where wind technology may cause concern for landscape issues.
- Look for sustainable opportunities within the waste management industry that support resource efficiency and align with the Southern West Management Plan (SWaMP).
- Reduce non-recyclable wastes and educate people about alternatives in accordance with the principles of the waste management hierarchy – avoid, reduce, reuse, recycle, recover.

- Ensure equal access to waste management facilities across the Council based upon the proximity principle and use the LDP to enable consideration of derelict/contaminated land for waste management facilities.

5.7 Physical Resources

5.7.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

The physical resources sustainability theme covers minerals, earth science sites, geothermal energy, land and soil. Physical resources provide us with the building blocks we need for everyday life and are mostly finite in their supply.

The sustainable management of physical resources is a common theme of regional, strategic and subject planning policy. The need to safeguard sufficient land to provide physical resources into the future is evident. Land is recognised as multifunctional in that it can act as a connective wildlife corridor; provide amenity value, building resources, adaptation for climate change; remove water and soil pollution; support biodiversity and create landscape character. Land is a finite resource and adequate amounts of land are required to deliver all of these functions. Some physical resources such as soil can become so contaminated from pollution that they no longer adequately function.

The overarching aims of current government policy and programmes are sustainable development and sustainable land management, as these will underpin sustainable economic growth and a sustainable energy supply. Current policy strives to ensure that physical resources are safeguarded for the future and that sufficient local supplies are available. The Department for Economy recognises that the concept of sustainability is different within the minerals industry because reserves are finite but the industry can still play a part in the circular economy and the principles of the waste management hierarchy¹. Northern Ireland also has a Geodiversity Charter that aims to inform decision makers of the importance of geodiversity to the economy and the environment².

The SPPS2 aims to minimise the impacts from the minerals industry on local communities and the environment. This is expected through sustainable minerals development that carefully considers impacts on the local area and includes the safe restoration of sites with an appropriate reuse.

Our Council's Corporate Plan 2023-2027 recognises that integral to achieving its outcomes will be sustainable management of our physical resources. Ensuring the sustainable management of our land, including our mineral reserves, will help to both drive the economy and also safeguard the environment, and at the same time enable development of new concepts like geothermal energy projects.

Baseline Information

A baseline of information is presented in the Local Development Plan Public Utilities Discussion paper, the Minerals paper and the Pressure Analysis paper. This topic also overlaps with the Material Assets, Climate Change, Air Quality, Water Resources, Natural Resources and Landscape sections of this report.

Minerals

There are 14 active quarry sites in the Borough that mainly extract limestone and sandstone, with two additional landing sites along the southern shores of Lough Neagh where sand and gravel is taken in following extraction within Lough Neagh. The active hard rock quarries are all located across the southern half of the Borough, mainly to the west. Some commercial peat extraction also takes place in raised bogs near to Lough Neagh. There are old lead mines in parts of the Borough (mainly to the south-west). A large area of constraint on minerals development (comprising two designations) (ACMDs) extends southwards from (and including) Lough Neagh) to the M1 Motorway. These ACMDs overlap important International (Ramsar), European (SAC) and National (ASSI) natural heritage designations.

The underlying geology of the Borough means a wide range of mineral resources are available. Minerals resource maps can be accessed at www.bgs.ac.uk. The maps show the dominance of clay on the southern shores of Lough Neagh, of lower grade sandstone and limestone across the north of the Borough and the majority of land through the central Council area dominated by higher grade sandstone. Igneous rocks also begin to dominate in the south east of the region.

¹ Department for the Economy Information note on Minerals, Geothermal Energy, Groundwater and Geohazards 2017

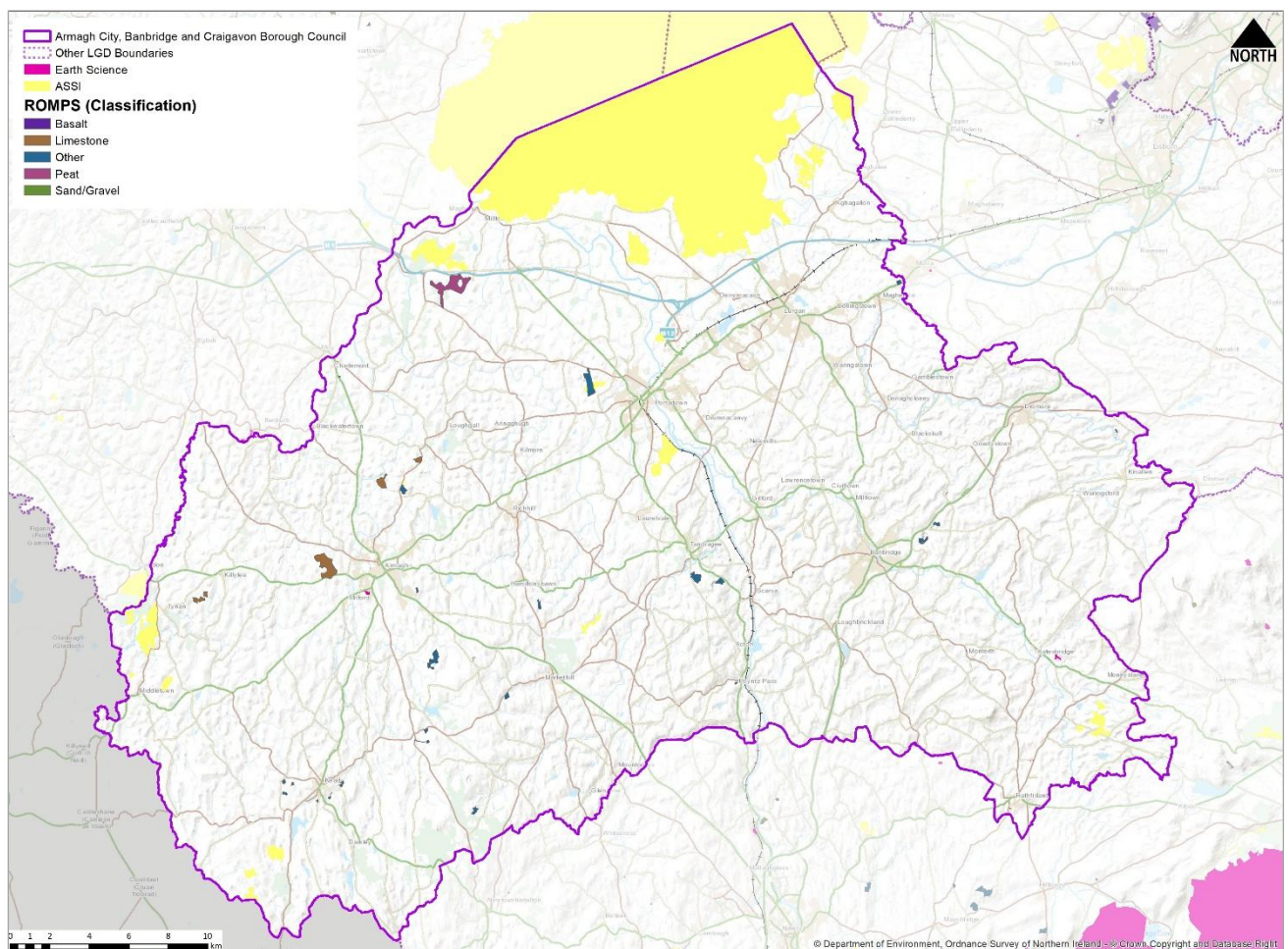
² GSNI 2021: Northern Ireland's Geodiversity Charter 2021-2024

The local minerals industry makes a significant contribution to the local and regional economy and it is an important employer, with many more jobs indirectly supported through the supply of minerals products, in particular construction and engineering. The Department for Economy recognises that the concept of sustainability is different within the industry because reserves are finite but the industry can still play a part in the circular economy¹. The Department also encourages Councils to be mindful of the role their area has to the regional economy. Some Councils have more reserves than others and are advised by the Department to be mindful of the need to both export and import for micro-economies.

After an area has been mined, it may become an important educational resource, or a site for local recreation. Sites often become important for local nature conservation and may merit protection. With or without restoration, redundant sites can become part of green/blue infrastructure, connecting habitats and species across the wider landscape and helping to conserve and enhance local biodiversity.

Current planning policy aims to minimise the impacts from the minerals industry on local communities and the environment. This is expected through sustainable minerals development that carefully considers impacts on the local area and includes the safe restoration of sites with an appropriate reuse. In Northern Ireland, older mineral workings from the 1970s and 1980s had little emphasis placed on managing their environmental impacts or restoration. Recent changes to our planning legislation through the Planning Act (NI) 2011, enables Councils to review these older mineral permissions (ROMPs). However, a further Order is needed before Councils can begin this review.

Figure 19: Location of Council's ROMP sites



Source: Spatial NI, DAERA

¹ Department for the Economy Information note on Minerals, Geothermal Energy, Groundwater and Geohazards 2017

In total, there are 23 ROMP sites in the Borough. A significant amount of these are located in around the Armagh City area and Keady, with a few sites in and around Tandragee and Banbridge. The majority of these were worked for limestone or 'other' materials. A relatively large peat site is also located just southwest of Lough Neagh.

Some of the ROMPs overlap with, or are adjacent to, existing ASSI or ESCR designations. This is the case with the peat ROMP site south west of Lough Neagh that is near to Peatlands Park ASSI; a limestone ROMP north of Armagh City overlaps with Carganamuck Quarry; a ROMP site east from Carganamuck lies adjacent to Annacramph Meadows ASSI and Annacramph Lane ESCR; and a ROMP site west of Portadown overlaps with Selshion ASSI.

Earth Science

Current Earth Science Conservation Review (ESCR) records identify at least five recognised Earth Science sites within the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon (ABC) council area. These include Rock Road Quarry a significant Earth Science site featuring the maximum development of a coral conglomerate. Located near Armagh city, it offers exposure to the Wilson's Bridge Limestone Formation, which is important for understanding the Carboniferous geology of the area. Shannaghan Hill provides access to exposures of a granite-like rock called granodiorite and Silurian sedimentary rocks that together with a number of other sites describe the Newry Igneous Complex. The granodiorite was formed 410 million years ago. Annacramph Lane is recognised as an Earth Science site because it exposes a rare occurrence of sandstones within the otherwise predominantly limestone Armagh Group. Drumarg Cave System a significant geological site featuring a disused quarry and a notable cave system, this site exposes rare Carboniferous limestone from the Armagh Group, featuring a 200m outcrop with approximately 10m of limestone and calcareous shale. Also, Drumarg Permian exposure features the best, and only, exposure of the Lower Permian Drumarg Conglomerate Formation, a unique bedded basal breccia on an abandoned quarry wall. Each of these are designated for their important geological features and conservation value.

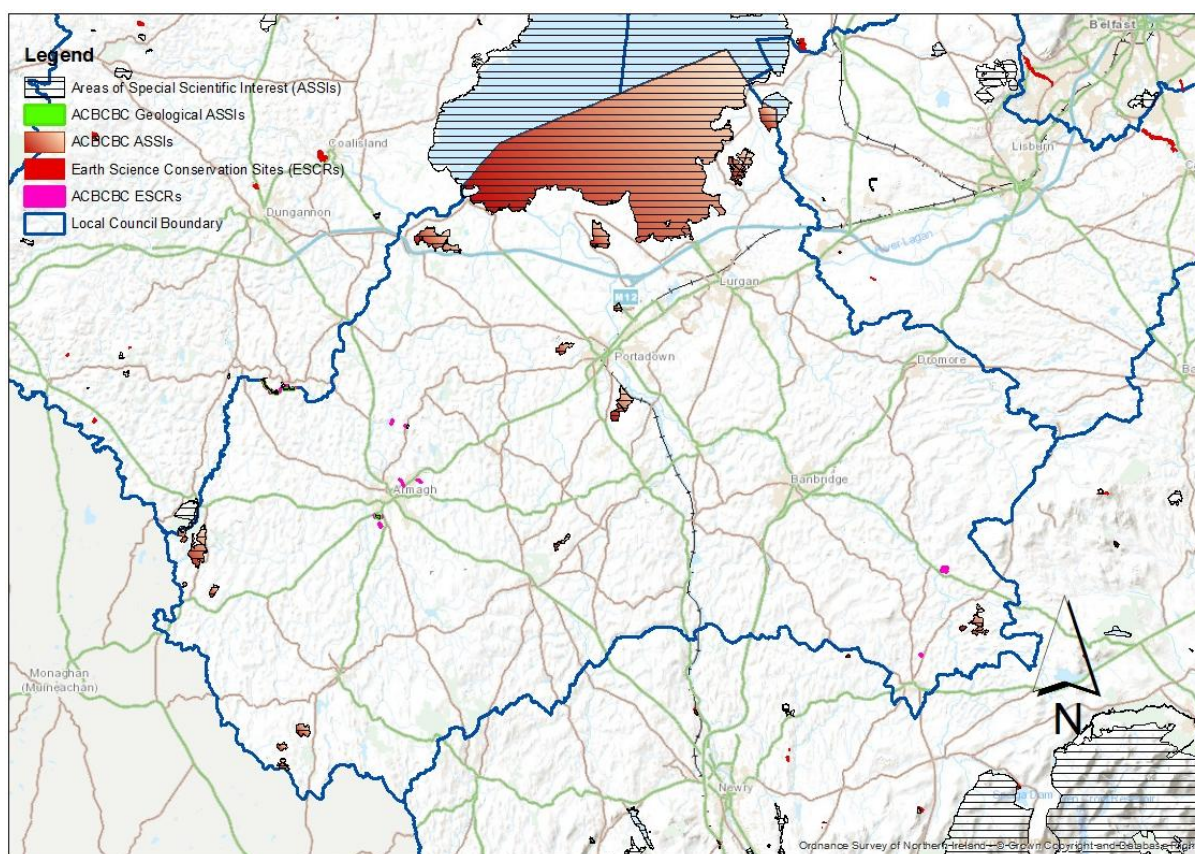
There are Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) in the Borough that have geological features:

- Drumarg ASSI (near Armagh): A disused quarry exposing Carboniferous limestone of the Armagh Group, featuring palaeokarst surfaces and a 200m long outcrop containing a cave system;
- Aughtenallog ASSI (near Poyntzpass/Banbridge): Part of the Newry Igneous Complex, this site provides access to exposures of granodiorite, a rock formed 410 million years ago.
- Annacramph: Identified as a notable geological exposure in the Armagh area featuring limestone intraclast conglomerate and lenticular sandstone.
- Benburb/Milltown: Located along the River Blackwater (crossing into the Borough boundary), these show late Viséan Carboniferous strata.
- Peatlands Park ASSI: While primarily a nature reserve, it is of earth science interest for its extensive peatlands.

Geological sites can also provide habitat for local wildlife and help to maintain local biodiversity. There is a direct link between the geology and the geomorphology of an area and its physical character and natural heritage. Very often protection of geological features enables a site to also become locally important for habitats and species and accountable as green/blue infrastructure. There are nine Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCIs) recognised for their geological importance¹.

Figure 20: Council Earth Science Sites and geological Areas of Special Scientific Interest

¹ Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council planning team



Source: Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)

Geothermal Energy

Naturally occurring heat is stored in ground layers ranging from core depths to shallow layers. It can be used as a source of heating for buildings and possible electricity. This naturally occurring ground heat is called 'geothermal energy' and in Northern Ireland, the Lough Neagh basin and the Mourne Mountains are good examples of geothermal aquifers. Armagh City, Craigavon & Banbridge Borough Council has the potential for use of both of these sources.

Shallow geothermal energy could be available right across Northern Ireland as this can be accessed at only a couple of metres depth using ground source heat pumps. Geothermal energy is low carbon, renewable (without fluctuation) and potentially viable with existing technology. It could become a viable part of the future energy mix, if investment and the necessary infrastructure were provided. Consideration of its installation and integration is recommended at an early design stage alongside other infrastructure. The UK National Renewable Energy Action Plan refers to ground heat and the Strategic Energy Framework (SEF)¹ discusses shallow geothermal energy. Ground source heat pumps have been installed in the Borough.

Land

There are six operational public cemeteries provided and maintained by the Council. Two of these are not expected to suffice over the plan period, affecting both the Armagh and Craigavon areas. The remaining cemeteries will have adequate provision but it is an issue for our Council to consider where future cemeteries are needed and are feasible.

There is also potential pressure from renewables. Although windfarms are low in number relative to other Council areas, the single turbine approvals since 2002 are widely distributed across the Borough. Pressure from single turbines is more evident in the rural hinterlands south of Portadown as shown in of the LDP 'Pressure Analysis'. Single turbines and associated infrastructure can place pressure on land. Community based renewable energy projects can help to reduce these impacts.

¹ DETI (2010): Strategic Energy Framework for Northern Ireland

Rural housing approvals from 2010 onward are shown within the LDP '*Pressure Analysis*'. These appear to be widely distributed across the Borough's rural area with an approval rate of 82% between 2004 and 2024. There is some additional pressure from rural housing within the southern hinterland of Lough Neagh.

Sub-surface planning is another new concept that is promoted by the Department though this may be more applicable in urban areas to help deal with land/space issues. The local geology needs to be understood before any sub-surface planning would be feasible.

Forestry and Woodland

The Borough has approximately 5,600ha of woodland identified on the Forest Service's Woodland Register (Figure 5.7.3). Of this, approximately 1,500ha is forestry that is managed by the Forest Service. c.26ha has been identified by the Woodland Trust as 'ancient woodland'. NIEA has identified around 1,200ha of woodland in the Borough as 'priority habitat' under the E.U. Habitats Directive.

Land cover

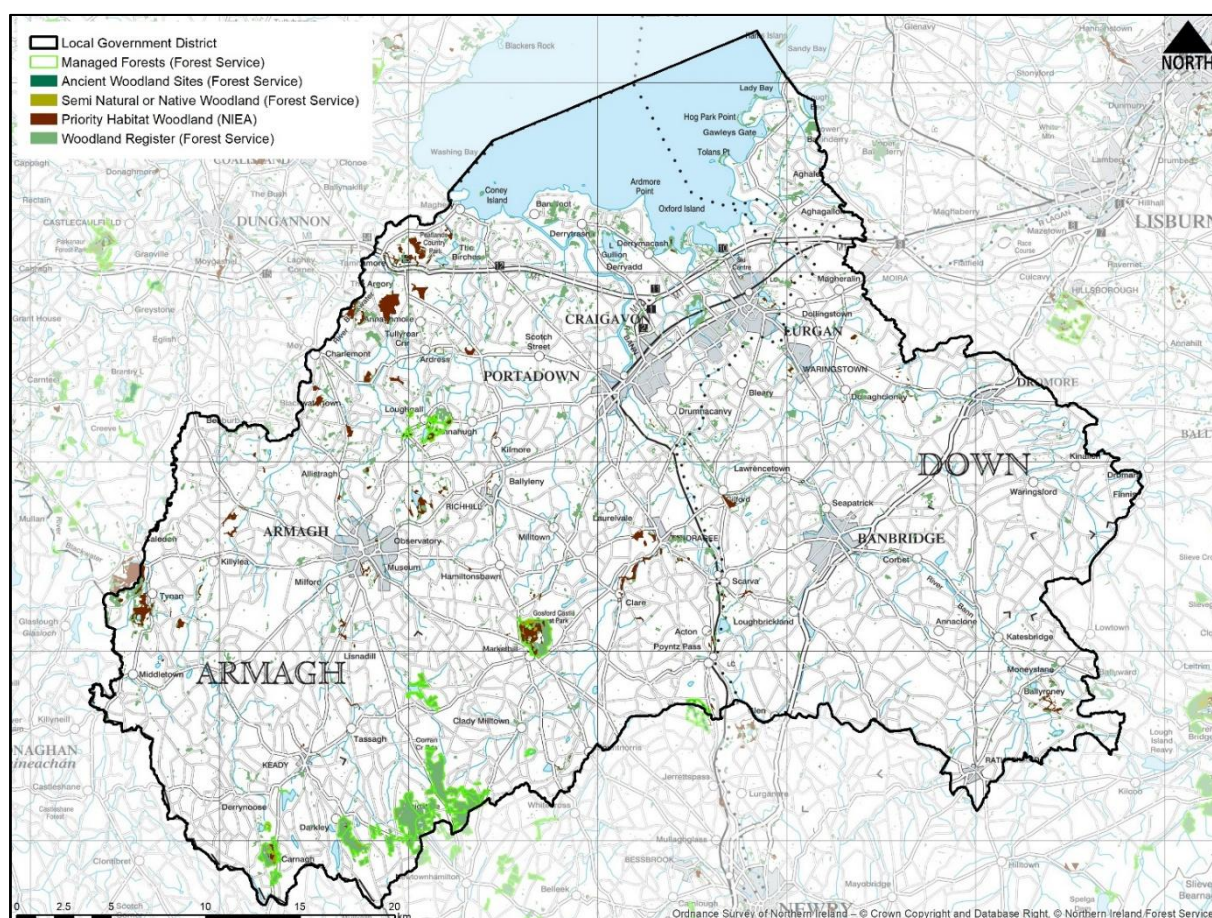
The Northern Ireland Countryside Survey (2007)¹ found that the main changes in land cover were the loss of semi natural habitats to agricultural grassland and rural buildings. The trend for land conversion to improved grassland and curtilage was observed in the 1998 survey. Building was mostly on neutral or improved grassland indicating pressure on agricultural land but semi natural habitat losses were also recorded.

Soil

Soil quality is not currently protected under any specific legislation but it is a fundamental physical resource. It acts as a store and source of gases like oxygen and carbon dioxide. A proper, functioning soil should be less vulnerable to erosion, reduce flooding, filter pollution and store essential nutrients that can support plants and animals. Development can affect soil through pollution and erosion.

¹ Cooper, A. *et al* (2009): Northern Ireland Countryside Survey (2007): Broad Habitat Change 1998-2007. Northern Ireland Environment Agency Research and Development Series No. 09/06

Figure 21: Forestry and Woodland



Source: Forest Service, NIEA, Woodland Trust

5.7.2 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

In the absence of a new plan, there could be less opportunity to spatially plan and sustainably manage our physical resources so that reserves are safeguarded, environmental damage avoided and geological sites conserved. It may become more difficult to manage local development pressures on our physical resources and to avoid inappropriate development, pollution and erosion.

5.7.3 Key Sustainability Issues for Physical Resources

- Minerals, including high value minerals, are an important natural resource and their responsible exploitation is supported by Government. The minerals industry makes an essential contribution both the local and regional economy and to people's quality of life, providing primary minerals for construction and as a valued provider of jobs and employment, particularly in rural areas.
- Mineral resources will be safeguarded from being sterilised by non-minerals surface development, where there is evidence to support this, to ensure they can be exploited in the future.
- Sustainable and safe restoration of former mineral sites (including older sites (ROMPS), with appropriate re-use, at the earliest opportunity. This could provide significant benefits to local communities and the environment as well as adding to local green/blue infrastructure.
- Peat extraction still takes place in the Council but peatlands are also important for a range of ecosystem services (i.e. water/carbon stores, biodiversity including habitat for rare plants/animals)) requiring their conservation.
- Promoting the circular economy could reduce the demand for some minerals.

- Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) are protected areas that represent the best of our wildlife and geological sites that make a considerable contribution to the conservation of our most valuable natural places.
- ACBCBC holds a unique position with regards to potential development of deep geothermal energy in Northern Ireland and the integration of its infrastructure as it is situated between both potential aquifers of Lough Neagh and the Mourne Mountains.
- Shallow geothermal energy could be incorporated in development.
- The potential effects of sub-surface development should be assessed at an early stage to determine feasibility and to avoid any adverse effects.
- ACBCBC needs to consider the future need for cemetery provision in some areas.
- Local development pressure from single turbines, rural dwellings, and in some areas cemetery provision may require local site-specific measures.
- Soil quality should be protected using effective conservation measures.

5.8 Transport and Accessibility

5.8.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

Overarching regional planning policy for transport, aims to deliver a balanced approach to transport infrastructure. Integral to this is an underlying drive to improve transport connectivity, accessibility, efficiency and social inclusivity. Regional policy also aims to reduce our carbon footprint and mitigate and adapt to climate change whilst improving air quality. Some measures to achieve this are directly linked to transport and include reducing emissions from transport, improving energy efficiency and enabling the revocation of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).

Encouraging people to use public transport and to consider active travel options like walking and cycling will be key to achieving regional policy outcomes. This is reflected in the policy objectives for transport in the Strategic Planning Policy Statement along with objectives for adequate parking facilities and road safety. The Plan will also be fundamental to promoting and enabling sustainable transport but a behavioural shift within society is also required, both at home and in the workplace.

The Programme for Government outlines its commitment to investing in public infrastructure and reshaping how services are delivered, with one of the key commitments to *‘improve our transport infrastructure for safer travel, connected communities and sustainable economic growth’*. Planning for the Future of Transport – Time for Change (2021) outlines how the DfI’s priorities for the future of transport here can be supported by the improved planning, management and development of the transport networks over the next 10 to 15 years and this links with the PfG. Two of its three actions are relevant to the LDP *“Proactive planning and design – taking direct steps towards desired outcomes”* and *“Integrated land use and transport planning – securing short, medium and longer term changes if we start now”*. This is reflected in the draft Transport Strategy 2035, which emphasises that integrated LDPs and Transport Plans are fundamental to future sustainable development.

In 2021, DfI published a Local Transport Study (LTS) for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon to help inform the LDP process ahead of the production of a new series of Local Transport Plans. The LTS sets out an objective evidence-based assessment of current and future transport issues in the context of the Council’s growth ambitions.

The Corporate Plan 2023-2027 has a number of priorities which are both directly and indirectly reliant on transport and accessibility, particularly economic growth and community wellbeing. A sustainable and accessible transport system that enables active travel will be key to achieving corporate priorities and helping to deal with the concerns of residents.

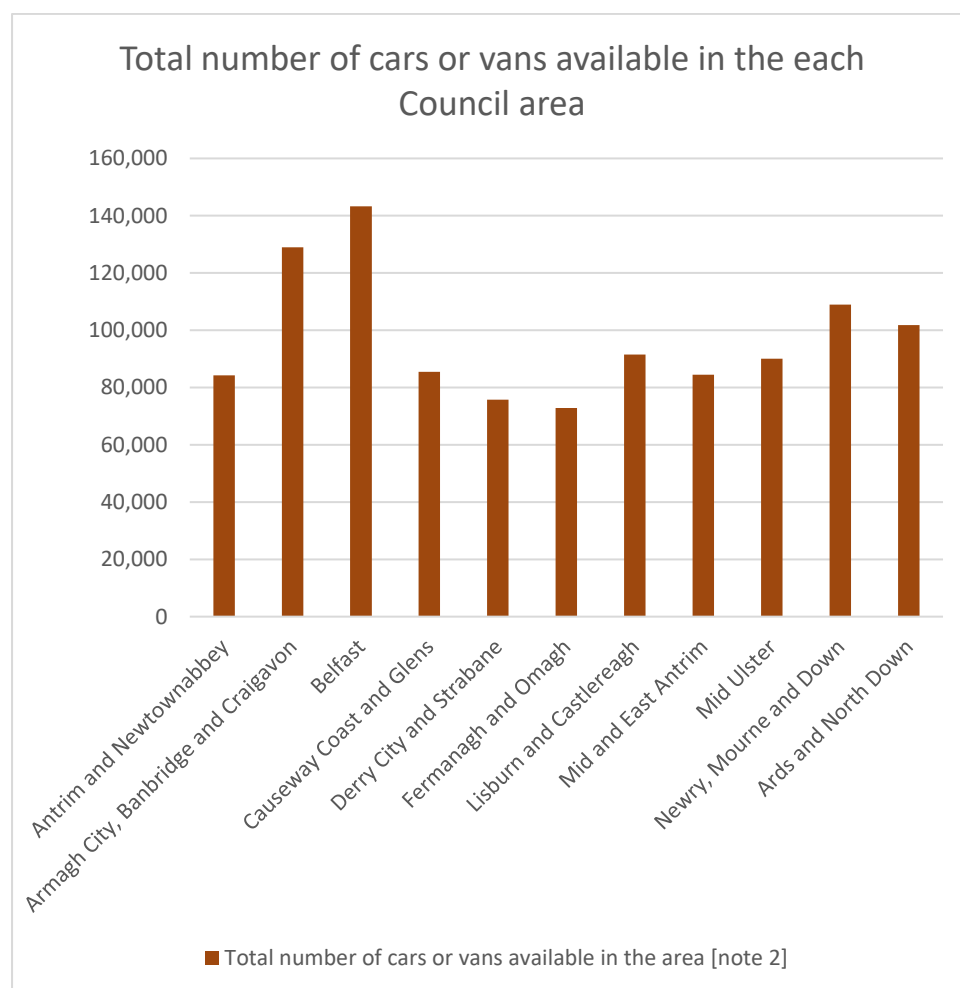
Connectivity is a major theme of our Community Plan as we believe connectivity is integral to improving quality of life. One of our short-term outcomes is *‘We have improved the promotion, accessibility and use of local assets, services and facilities through combining skills, knowledge and connections’*. During development of the community plan traffic congestion, and exhaust fumes, were raised by people as their top environmental concerns.

5.8.2 Baseline Information

Car ownership

In 2021, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council had the second highest level of cars relative to other Councils at 128,927. Census 2021 data showed that 37.77% of households had access to one vehicle, 32.75% had access to two vehicles, 9.26% had access to three vehicles and 3.19% had access to four vehicles. The Borough has a slightly higher than average amount of households with access to two, three, four or more vehicles. In total, 84.5% of households had access to at least one car or van. This leaves a considerable number of households that do not have any access and are therefore reliant on public transport, car sharing or active travel options.

Figure 22: Licensed Cars 2021

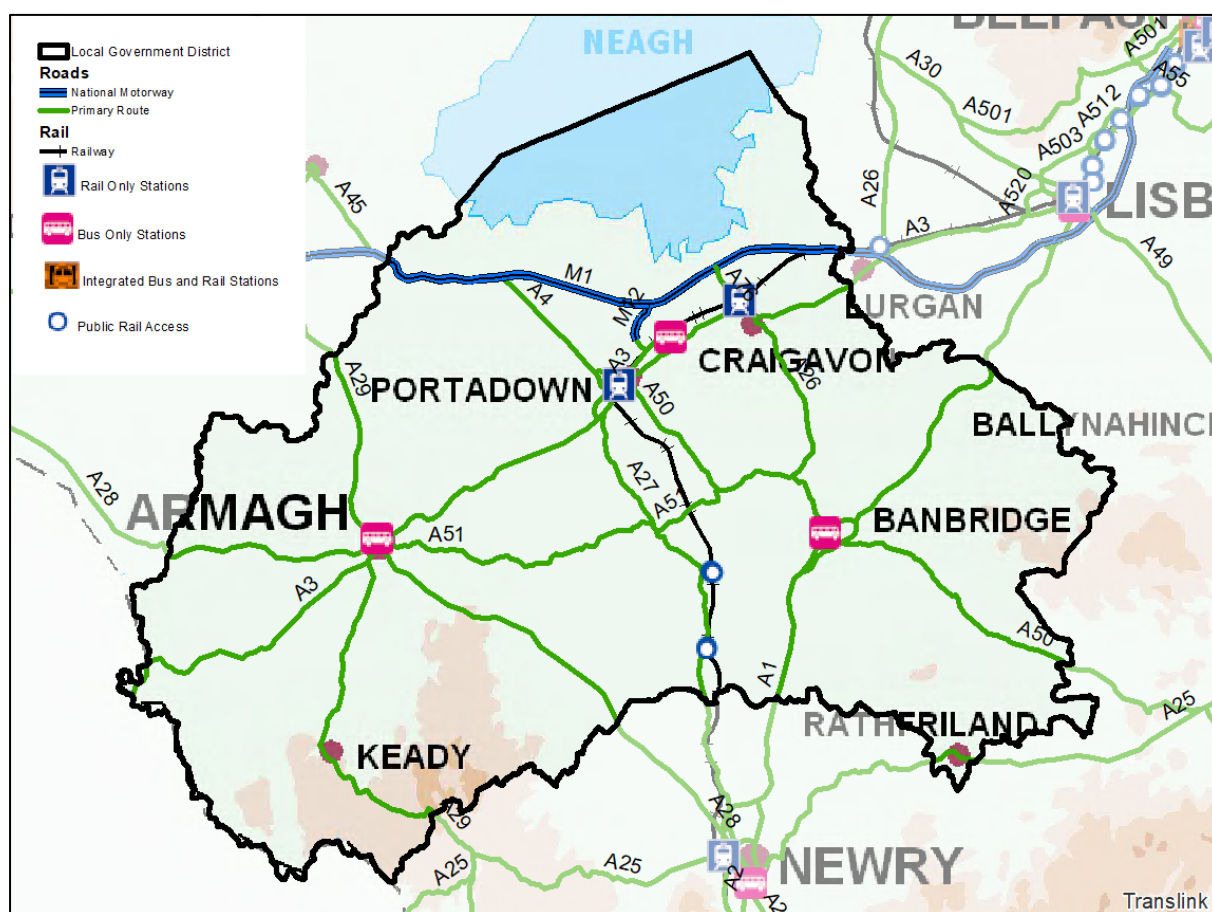


Source: NISRA Table *Census 2021*

Roads

Some of the main roads in the Borough include the M1, A1, A3, A27, A28 and the A29. The M1 is a key transport corridor and is recognised for its importance at a regional level. Total road length in the Borough is 3,562 kilometres. Several main transport routes cross the Borough including 27.2 km of motorway. Relative to the other councils, the Borough has the greatest length of A class dual carriageway at 29.9 km and the fourth highest amount of both A class single carriageway at 231 km and B class roads at 399.3 km.

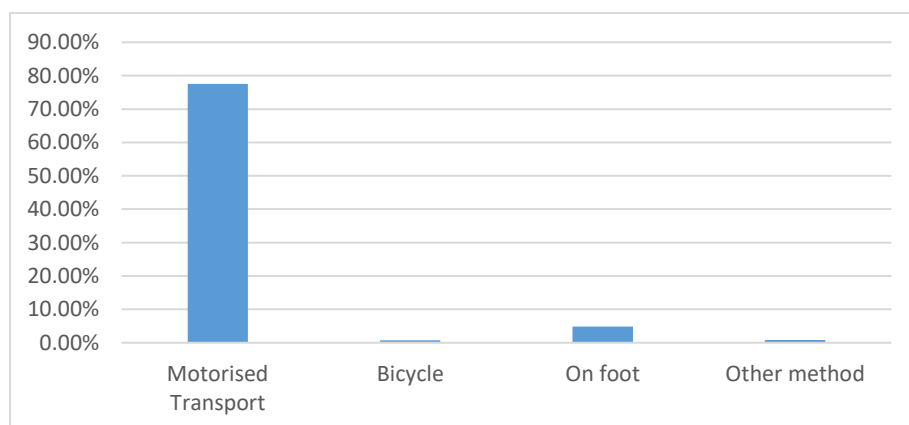
Figure 23: Principal Transport Routes and Public Transport Hubs in the Borough



Source: Spatial NI Roads Service Road Network (NI) (INSPIRE View Service)

At the time of the Census 2021, the number of employed people of working age in Armagh City Banbridge, Craigavon Borough Council (excluding full-time students) was 97,705. Of these 68.14% were driving to work by motorised vehicle (car/van). Other motorised transport included: car passenger (5.41%)/pool (0.67%); taxi (0.87%); motorbike (0.19%). Just over 2% used public transport with 1.34% opting for the bus and 0.94% using the train. There were 4.82% of people in the Borough walking to work, which is more than those using public transport. Cycling was least popular with 0.68% of people using this mode. 0.78% indicated that they used other methods of transport.

Figure 24¹: Mode of travel to work in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council



¹ Source: NISRA: Method of travel to work MS-I01

Public Transport

There are both bus and rail services available to people in the Borough. The main passenger bus stations are in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon. All other towns and villages are served by bus stops but there are generally limited timetables based on school times. The rail service in the Borough provides a number of routes, one of which is part of the route that connects Belfast to Dublin. Likewise, there is a Belfast to Dublin bus service runs through Banbridge.

Car parking provision is important to help enable car sharing and access to public transport for general travel and to key tourist destinations. Parking is managed across statutory agencies and the private sector. Planning for parking needs to take account of public transport services and routes, as well as walking and cycling networks. Park and ride/share locations are located <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/park-share-or-park-and-ride>. A focus on providing additional sites at strategic locations could enable more citizens to access car sharing arrangements, public transport routes and if feasible, active travel routes.

Electric Charge Points

In 2025 there are a total of 31 public charging points, including one 'rapid charging' unit¹. In line with the transition to renewable energy and low-carbon transport, numerous private, commercial, and domestic electric vehicle charging points are available throughout the Borough. In the future, with the switch from combustion engines to hybrids and 100% electric vehicles, there is likely to be a need for additional electric charging points.

Greenways

Regional policy highlights the potential use of existing features like disused railway lines for alternative modes of transport. In 2016, the Department for Infrastructure published a strategic plan for a network of greenways in Exercise – Explore – Enjoy: A Strategic Plan for Greenways. These greenways can connect cities, towns and villages to the countryside across all eleven Councils. The Primary Greenway Network extends into a Secondary Greenway Network and aims to bring back into use much of the disused railway network and provide people with access to a safe traffic-free environment for health and well-being, active travel and leisure. The strategic greenway network is shown in Figure 25. Both primary and secondary routes are evident in the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council.

A primary route in the Borough was identified as the old Portadown to Armagh railway line. In the Craigavon Area Plan, a disused rail track between Portadown and Dungannon was protected. Potential routes also exist from Lisburn to Banbridge, Banbridge to Scarva, and Banbridge to Ballyronney.

The National Cycle Network has a number of routes running through the Council Area. The NCN Route 91 runs west from Portadown to Tynan via Armagh and route 9 / 94 (The Craigavon Cycle Trail) starts and finishes in nearby Portadown. The Ulster Way also traverses part of the Council Area with routes from Portadown to Newry (along the Newry Canal Tow Path) and from Scarva to Aughnacloy.

¹ EV Charging Point League Tables for Northern Ireland Councils – EVANI

Figure 25: Map of Primary and Secondary Greenway Routes



Source: Exercise – Explore – Enjoy: A Strategic Plan for Greenways, November 2016, Department for Infrastructure (DfI)

The Armagh City Centre Masterplan 2030 proposed a network of greenways that would follow the local rivers such as along the Callan and Ballynahone Rivers. Disused railways to Monaghan, Portadown and Castleblayney were also highlighted as potential greenways. Likewise in the Banbridge Town Centre Masterplan a number of potential greenway links to the River Bann were highlighted. These included a riverside greenway between Solitude Park and the leisure centre, a boardwalk at the River Bann bridge and a pedestrian link on the old Rathfriland Road to Downshire Road railway line with potential links to the Mournes.

Further information on active travel is below and on blue infrastructure in the Natural Resources topic of this report.

Active Travel

Opportunities for active and sustainable travel, with priority given to walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport movements over other vehicles will be encouraged.

There have been proposals for a continuous pedestrian network in Banbridge that would connect all the main locations in the town including schools and clinics. These primary routes could be improved to increase connectivity across the town as found in a Sub Regional Transport Plan 2015¹. For example, in the Banbridge Town Centre Masterplan, new footbridges and cycle lanes are proposed to improve connectivity between Solitude Park and the leisure centre.

The Craigavon Community Greenway Project made a seven-mile cycle corridor between Portadown and Lurgan linking the train stations and some of the main facilities and communities together. The project has enabled much improved active travel for citizens in the local area. A second project called the 'Black Path' also linked the centres of Craigavon, Portadown and Lurgan together for both cyclists and pedestrians.

¹ Local Development Plan background information to Environmental Assets paper

5.8.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

In the absence of a new plan, there would be a lack of up-to-date spatial information that reflects the new Council area. Without this information there would be a higher risk of missing key opportunities to integrate sustainable and active travel options to new and existing developments. The most sustainable use of land for a transport system that enables people to reduce their reliance on the private car and connects people and places together would be less feasible. This could be problematic for some aspects such as use of disused railways due to differing policies within legacy Area Plans.

5.8.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Transport and Accessibility

Additional note

- The Council has several main transport routes crossing through it that make it an important area for transport connections moving north and south, east and west but there are also a significant amount of smaller routes and unclassified roads that culminate in the Council with the second highest amount of transport routes.
- There is a slightly higher than average number of households with access to two, three, four or more vehicles and a high reliance on the private car/van for transport.
- Traffic congestion is one of the top environmental concerns of people in the Borough.
- Over three quarters of workers in the Council rely on some form of motorised transport to get to work rather than using public transport, walking or cycling.
- A considerable amount of people walk to work rather than use any other mode of transport and this trend could be encouraged by providing appropriate services and walkways/greenways to enable more people to commute this way.
- Less than 1% of commutes to work are by bike so there may be a need to investigate measures (design, connectivity) that could help enable more people to commute by bike.
- The Council benefits from being part of the rail network and is part of the connection between Belfast and Dublin.
- The amount of people who choose to use public transport to commute to work is lower than those that choose to walk and significantly lower than those relying on a car/van so there is a need to investigate measures that could help enable more people to commute by bus or train.
- A considerable amount of people car share and this trend could be encouraged by providing additional park and ride/share facilities at strategic locations to enable more citizens to commute this way and enable much stronger transport connections for rural communities to urban hubs and reduce traffic congestion.
- There is expected to be an increase in electric vehicles and demand for electric charging points across the Council.
- Planning active travel links/projects to existing greenways could help reflect strategic plans for a greenway network at the local level and help to encourage citizens to walk or cycle enabling easier access to the outdoors with benefits for health and well-being.
- The primary walking routes and cycling lanes in the hubs of the Council could be improved by adding new links that would increase connectivity and accessibility for citizens to the key locations but also out to the wider countryside and rural attractions.

5.9 Air Quality

5.9.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

Air quality is an important indicator of local, regional and international environmental conditions as it helps to indicate levels and sources of air pollutants and air pollution trends. Air pollution is both an urban and a rural issue that can affect human health, but when levels of certain substances such as nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide or ammonia are exceeded, the effects on ecosystems can also be adverse.

DAERA and Councils manage air quality in Northern Ireland in compliance with domestic legislation (the Environment Order 2002, the Air Quality Regulations (NI) 2003 and the Air Quality Standards Regulations (NI) 2010). These stem from European Air Quality Directives and the UK Air Quality Strategy 2007. This 2007 Strategy provides the strategic direction to help meet objectives that will protect human health and ecosystems¹. The 2019 UK Clean Air Strategy² states that the main sources of air pollution in NI are from road traffic emissions, particulate matter from residential burning of solid fuels, and ammonia emissions from agricultural activities. It highlights the risks posed to both the environment and human health and in section 5.9 it focuses on actions under way to tackle air pollution in NI.

A Clean Air Strategy for NI is currently in preparation. The draft discussion document for this Strategy³ highlights that in addition to impacts on health and mortality, air pollution has economic impacts and environmental effects. Air pollution, and in particular nitrogen emissions in the form of ammonia, has negative effects on plants, trees and water bodies that support our wildlife. DAERA's draft Environment Strategy (2021) seeks to achieve the outcome of 'excellent air, water, land and neighbourhood quality'. Key outcomes of this strategy are to have cleaner air and for critical loads of nitrogen deposition and critical levels of ammonia to no longer be exceeded at any designated sites.

Air quality objectives are set at a regional level and include limits for air pollutants. These are primarily based on ensuring protection of human health and sensitive habitats. Other measures include Smoke Control Areas (SCA) and Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA).

Overarching regional planning guidance highlights agriculture, transport and energy supply as the three sectors which give rise to the greatest proportion of greenhouse gas emissions in Northern Ireland. All these sources emit other air pollutants in addition to greenhouse gases. Agricultural land makes up a significant amount of land cover in Northern Ireland; we remain heavily reliant on private car use for journeys; and we are mostly dependent on fossil fuels for our energy supply. All these sources emit air pollutants including greenhouse gas emissions. Regional policy thus recommends developing policy links between air quality and climate change and fully supports an air quality strategy.

While the Programme for Government 2024-2027 no longer has improving air quality as an indicator of achieving its outcomes, it includes a number of actions the Executive will take *"to ensure we protect our environment and tackle climate change in a way that is fair and balanced to everyone."* This includes the development of a Climate Action Plan and finalising the Third Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP3). Maintaining good air quality is an important aspect of sustainable development, as it is fundamental to the quality of our environment, society and the economy.

The Council's Corporate Plan 2023-2027 focuses on environment and place. The Council is committed to actively responding to the climate crisis and shape our places to be attractive, accessible, healthy, clean and safe. Achieving these outcomes will depend upon maintaining and improving air quality. It further outlines that the Council is also committed to supporting efforts in the Borough as a whole to reduce carbon emissions, generate and use energy more cleanly which should positively contribute to improvements in air quality.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-air-quality-strategy-for-england-scotland-wales-and-northern-ireland-volume-1>

² UK Gov (2019) Clean Air Strategy 2019 (found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-air-strategy-2019>)

³ DAERA (2021) A Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland – Public Discussion Document

5.9.2 Baseline Information

A baseline of information is presented in the Local Development Plan papers. This topic also overlaps with the Health and Well-being, Transport and Accessibility, Climate Change, Water Resources and Natural Resources sections of this report.

Air Pollution

Information on current air quality can be accessed at www.airqualityni.co.uk, where recent progress reports and screening assessments can also be found. There is one continuous monitoring site located in Armagh City at Lonsdale Road. Monitoring takes place for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM₁₀), both generated from fossil fuel combustion. NO₂ is primarily from traffic or industrial sources and can be a severe respiratory irritant. Nitrogen oxides can readily mix with other chemicals to form acid rain or other pollutants like ground level ozone which can affect ecosystems and the built environment. PM₁₀ can also cause respiratory and carcinogenic issues. There have been no exceedances of NO₂ at this location¹ but other parts of the Borough continue to exceed NO₂ health-based limits and these are further detailed below.

There are some smoke control areas (SCAs) in the Borough, which have been enforced to help improve local air quality by reducing smoke and other air pollutants/emissions from burning fossil fuels. The SCAs are in Armagh City at Newry Road/Barrack Street and across the entire Craigavon Urban Area.

Air Quality Management Areas

There is currently one active Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) in the Borough. These are for NO₂ generated from road traffic because levels exceed health-based limits². Road traffic in the Borough accounts for 85% of all air emissions and in the main towns, frequent road congestion adds to local air pollution. NO₂ levels are an indicator of traffic pollution. Maps for all of the AQMAs can be accessed at www.airqualityni.co.uk.

The most recent 2015 Updating and Screening Assessment for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council reported, *“whilst air quality has not significantly worsened, no significant improvement has been made to the local air quality.”* NO₂ from traffic emissions is the main cause of concern for the Borough as there are no other major sources of air pollution from industrial, agricultural or constructional sources. There are plans to designate the entire Council to help focus Borough wide on reducing emissions.

Transport Sources

As shown in Figure 23, the Borough encompasses an extensive road network. The predominantly rural nature of the Borough has shaped the high number of smaller roads but as a transport hub, the Borough also has major routes including the M1, A3, A27, A28 and the A29. Commuters can reach mid-Ulster, the Republic and the south-east of Northern Ireland through the Borough. In the Borough, reliance on the private car is high.

The average annual mean concentration of NO₂ across Northern Ireland's urban background sites remained relatively stable between 2011 and 2016, varying between 20 and 23µg/m³. Since 2017 the average annual mean concentration of NO₂ has fallen below this level and was 14.4µg/m³ across Northern Ireland's urban background sites in 2021. Roadside nitrogen dioxide levels have decreased from 35.1µg/m³ in 2011 to 24.0µg/m³ in 2021.

PM₁₀ which is also emitted from transport sources, has generally shown a decreasing trend in urban sites since 2003. PM₁₀ in urban areas can come from road traffic and other fossil fuel combustion sources.

Ground level ozone is produced during the chemical reactions of nitrogen oxides from sources such as vehicle emissions and can cause respiratory issues. Urban sites show ozone levels are not in decline but remain variable. This is why in the UK from 2040, all vehicles will be electric or hybrid as diesel and petrol vehicles will be phased out to help significantly reduce air pollutant emissions³.

¹ Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council: 2015 Updating and Screening Assessment

² Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council: 2015 Updating and Screening Assessment

³ Climate NI website

As also reported in Figure 24, car ownership in the Borough relative to other Councils is high at 104,627¹, second only to Belfast. This is unlikely to change without investment in improved public transport, which in some areas is quite poor and even more so at weekends and on Sundays². This may be why the use of public transport is significantly below the Northern Ireland average and yet there is a sizeable proportion of residents without access to any vehicle (18%). These are mostly people from older age groups and single parents.

There are already a number of electric charging points in the Borough, mainly focused along the arterial routes of the M1, A1, A27, A28 and A29. To meet future demand, the number of charging points will need to increase significantly.

There are proposals for a continuous pedestrian network in Banbridge that would link key locations and the town centre together³. Likewise, a cycle network linking all arterial routes to the town has previously been identified. As with all other areas, a modal shift is required to help move people away from the private car to public transport options, cycling or walking. The Council can help to achieve this with the LDP.

Human Health

In the UK, air pollution is the largest environmental risk to public health. Long-term exposure to air pollution can cause chronic conditions such as cardiovascular and respiratory diseases as well as lung cancer, leading to reduced life expectancy. Short-term increases in levels of air pollution can also cause a range of health impacts, including effects on lung function, exacerbation of asthma, increases in respiratory and cardiovascular hospital admissions and mortality. The annual mortality of human-made air pollution in the UK is roughly equivalent to between 28,000 and 36,000 deaths every year⁴. Public Health England⁵ estimates that, in NI, around 553 deaths annually may be attributed to pollution from particulates, and 330 to NO₂. PM₁₀ pollution is composed of fine particles from natural and man-made sources; pollen, sand dust, road traffic, coal burning, and construction work are all potential sources⁶. Excessive ammonia emissions can also lead to increases in particulate matter which is associated with human health impacts. It is currently estimated that in the UK, life expectancy is shortened by eight months because of poor air quality⁷.

Agricultural Sources

Ammonia (NH₃) is an air pollutant which arises mainly from agricultural practices. Other sources include transport, commercial and domestic combustion and industrial processes. Northern Ireland is responsible for 12% of UK ammonia emissions, despite only having 3% of UK population and 6% of the land area⁸. Ammonia is known to have a damaging impact on biodiversity, including sensitive habitats, and ecosystem resilience, as well as human health. It is produced by many common farming activities, such as the housing of livestock, the storage and spreading of manure and slurries and the application of fertiliser. Reducing ammonia emissions across Northern Ireland is a key DAERA priority⁹. Of the ammonia emissions from agriculture in 2020, 89% came from livestock, 7% came from the application of fertilisers and 4% came from the application of other organic materials to land (sewage sludge and digestate). Since 2001, ammonia emissions from livestock in NI have increased by 8%, but have decreased for the UK as a whole by 3% over the same period. Ammonia emissions from fertiliser use have significantly reduced by 33% over the period 2001-2020, but overall ammonia emissions have increased by 7% during this period¹⁰. Trends for declines in ammonia emissions from livestock on a UK-wide basis may not be reflected in NI, because cattle numbers have declined by a much lesser extent, and pig and poultry numbers have increased.

¹ NINIS

² Armagh City, Craigavon & Banbridge Borough Local Development Plan Preparatory Studies Transportation Paper

³ Armagh City, Craigavon & Banbridge Borough Local Development Plan Preparatory Studies Transportation Paper

⁴ UK Gov Office for Health Improvement & Disparities [online] Guidance Air pollution: applying All Our Health (found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/air-pollution-applying-all-our-health/air-pollution-applying-all-our-health> (accessed 07/10/2022))

⁵ Public Health England (2014) Estimating Local Mortality Burdens Associated with Particulate Air Pollution, pp. 21 (accessed 06/05/2020))

⁶ www.airqualityni.co.uk

⁷ DAERA draft Programme for Government Air Quality Stakeholder Consultation, August 2016

⁸ DAERA [online] Ammonia emissions in Northern Ireland (found at <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/ammonia-emissions-northern-ireland> (accessed 07/10/2022))

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ DAERA & NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report 2022

Energy generation

As discussed in section 5.10, electricity supplied from renewables in Northern Ireland has generally increased every year since 2001 and Figure 16 shows that there has been a 1,366% increase in the number of energy units generated by renewables over the period between 2004 and 2015. Currently, nearly 25% of electricity consumed in Northern Ireland is from onshore wind and 27% of electricity consumption is from renewable sources¹. This type of diversification in our energy use means that carbon emissions and other pollutants from fossil fuel combustion have been reducing. There has also been a rise in the use of natural gas for residential heating and a move away from oil and coal for domestic heating purposes.

5.9.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

In the absence of a new plan, there may be the risk of decreasing air quality through inappropriately located development and fewer opportunities to spatially influence development and/or help improve local air quality. The likelihood of congested areas and AQMAs improving in any way would be unlikely (see also section 5.9).

5.9.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Air Quality

- One Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) for NO₂ is located in a main town and directly linked to road traffic emissions.
- Key regional transport routes are located within the Council making it a transport hub for residents and visitors across the country and continuously producing air traffic pollution.
- Road traffic generates 85% of emissions and is the largest contributor to air pollution in the Council.
- Traffic congestion in Armagh City continues to be an air quality issue.
- Traffic congestion is one of the top three environmental concerns of residents.
- Public transport options need to be improved to help reduce reliance on the private car particularly in rural areas but also in the main towns where congestion is frequent.
- Ammonia is known to have a damaging impact on biodiversity, including sensitive habitats, as well as human health. Reducing ammonia emissions across Northern Ireland is one of DAERA's key priorities.
- Continued support for renewables in appropriate locations should be encouraged through initiatives like the Council's Renewable Energy Strategy to help reduce air pollutants from fossil fuels.
- Air quality should be a consideration when planning the location of land uses, particularly when residential areas may be affected or other sensitive receptors.

¹ Climate NI 2017

5.10 Climate Change

5.10.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

The typical weather conditions of an area are based on natural variabilities that create the climate. These variabilities can cause extreme weather events but also normal or expected conditions. It is only when there is a shift in the usual weather patterns and climate, that the term “climate change” should be applied.

There are several factors that affect our climate. These include how near to the sea and how far from the equator we are located, as well as local topography, wind direction and ocean current. During the last few decades, it has become more and more accepted that human activity is affecting the climate.

Since the late 18th century and the Industrial Revolution, greenhouse gases (GHG) - carbon dioxide (CO₂), nitrous oxide (N₂O), methane (CH₄) and fluorinated gases - have been entering the atmosphere at an accelerated rate due to human activity. These additional gases are mostly emitted by fossil fuel combustion but are also influenced by deforestation and agricultural practices. They add to background levels and increase the natural warming of the planet - the ‘greenhouse effect’.

Climate scientists have estimated that human activities have caused approximately 1.0°C of global warming above pre-industrial levels. If change continues at the current rate, warming is likely to reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052¹. Thermal expansion and ice loss from glaciers has led to an increase of 15 - 20 centimetres in global sea levels since 1900². 1.5°C of global warming is projected to lead to a mean sea level rise of between 0.26 and 0.77 metres globally, relative to 1986–2005³.

The main forum for international action on climate change is the United Nations Framework convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), created in 1992. Its overall aim is to “*achieve... stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Such a level should be achieved within a time frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.*”⁴

UNFCCC negotiations led to the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 and the Paris Agreement in December 2015. The Paris Agreement is the first truly global effort to reduce emissions. As of March 2020, 189 out of 197 countries have ratified the Paris Agreement, including the UK and Ireland⁵. The main aim of the Paris Agreement is to hold the increase in global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C.

The UNFCCC commits all signatory nations to formulate, implement, publish and update measures to prepare for the impacts of climate change, known as ‘adaptation’. The 2010 ‘Cancun Adaptation Framework’ includes the agreement that adaptation must be given the same priority as mitigation.

The UK was the first country to have a legally binding commitment to reduce GHG emissions with the UK Climate Change Act 2008, which legislated for the 80% reduction of GHG emissions based on 1990 levels by 2050. This led to the formation of the independent body, the Committee on Climate Change (CCC), and the CCC’s Adaptation Sub-Committee. These advise the UK and devolved administrations on carbon budgets and preparing for climate change. On 1st May 2019, the UK Parliament declared an Environment and Climate Change Emergency. In the following month, the Climate Change Act was amended to commit the UK government to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels by 2050 (‘*net zero*’).

The Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 passed into law in June 2022. This Act requires the Northern Ireland departments to ensure that the net Northern Ireland emissions account for the year 2030

¹ IPCC (2018) Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5 °C - Summary for Policymakers

² Committee on Climate Change (2017) UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017 Synthesis Report

³ IPCC (2018) Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5 °C - Summary for Policymakers

⁴ Committee on Climate Change ‘Global Action on Climate Change’ (found at <https://www.theccc.org.uk/tackling-climate-change/the-legal-landscape/global-action-on-climate-change/> accessed 03/04/2020)

⁵ UN Paris Agreement - Status of Ratification (found at <https://unfccc.int/process/the-paris-agreement/status-of-ratification>, accessed 31/03/2020)

is at least 48% lower than the baseline. For the year 2050 the target is at least 100% lower than the baseline. The Act also requires The Department for the Economy to ensure that at least 80% of electricity consumption is from renewable sources by 2030.

The SPPS2 directs the planning system towards helping to mitigate and adapt for climate change and was informed by the NICCAP. The RDS recommends that we reduce our carbon footprint, adapt to climate change and deliver a sustainable and secure energy supply. Reducing GHG emissions is the only way to mitigate human-induced climate change. In the SPPS2, climate change is viewed as a central challenge to achieving sustainable development. The SPPS2 promotes the planning system as a tool to shape new and existing developments to help combat climate change, by promoting sustainable patterns of development and transport, with renewables, energy efficiency and green/blue infrastructure accounted for.

The NI Executive's Programme for Government 2024-2027 outlines a number of actions *"to ensure we protect our environment and tackle climate change in a way that is fair and balanced to everyone."* This includes the development of a Climate Action Plan and finalising the Third Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP3). The PfG highlights that *"setting our first three carbon budgets, consulting on the first Climate Action Plan and publishing our Green Growth Strategy will act as the springboards to drive forward further emissions reductions, and to begin to realise the economic, health, social and wellbeing outcomes for all of our communities."*

In NI's first Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP) 2014-2019, the focus was on flooding, water, natural capital, agriculture and forestry. Flooding was identified as 'potentially one of the most significant and urgent risks' in NI and local Councils were identified as being 'particularly well placed to raise awareness and provide leadership through their responsibilities' on climate change.

In NI's second Adaptation Programme (NICCAP2) 2019-2024, 'planning' is referred to as 'essential to managing the resilience of our society and natural environment to an uncertain future, as well as for the known current and projected impacts of a changing climate. 'NICCAP2 sets out our preparation for climate change impacts that are already occurring and puts in place plans for future impacts. The aim is 'to build a resilient Northern Ireland in which timely and well-informed decisions are taken to address the socio-economic and environmental impacts of climate change'. Resilience will be built upon under five Key Priority Areas - natural capital, infrastructure, people and built environment, disruption to business/supply chains, and food security/global food production.

Each priority area has outcome objectives and for each of those a delivery plan to help achieve that objective. The objectives for each priority area are listed below:

- NC1: 'we have species, habitats and water bodies that are resilient to the impacts of climate change.'
- NC2: 'we have coastal communities, habitats, landforms and infrastructure that are resilient to the impacts of climate change.'
- NC3: 'we have soils and land types that are resilient to the impacts of climate change.'
- IS1: 'we have transport and network services that are resilient to the impacts of flooding and extreme weather'
- P1: 'we have people, homes, buildings and communities resilient to the impacts of flooding & extremes of weather.'
- B1: 'we have businesses that can adapt to the impacts of climate change & extreme weather.'
- I1: 'we have a food system that is resilient to impacts of climate change'.

The key message from NICCAP2 is about ensuring resilience in everything we do. In conjunction with Climate NI, NICCAP2 has also addressed how local government can help deliver the objectives of NICCAP2 and raise awareness on the need for climate change risk assessments.

The 'Forests for our Future' programme, announced in March 2020, aims to plant 18 million trees / 9,000 hectares of new woodland in NI over a 10-year period. The programme seeks to contribute towards the

UK 'Net Zero by 2050' target by offsetting carbon dioxide emissions and to contribute to sustainable economic growth through timber production, forest-based recreation and tourism¹. The first stage of the programme is to identify public land (owned by local authorities or government departments) that has the greatest potential for woodland creation in the short term.

The Council's Corporate Plan 2023 - 2027 is committed to actively respond to the climate crisis and support others to do likewise. Climate change and its impacts (flooding, erosion, risks to health and safety) may affect residents. The effects of climate change could quite easily disrupt the provision of Council services and facilities, as well as negatively impact on people's well-being, the economy and the environment.

5.10.2 Baseline Information

Relevant information can be found across multiple sources including NISRA, the NI Environmental Statistics Report and the NI Greenhouse Gas Inventory. This topic overlaps with the Health and Well-Being, Material Assets, Physical Resources, Transport and Accessibility, Air Quality, Water, Natural Resources, Landscape and the Historic Environment sections of this report.

International context

In 2018 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate change (IPCC) published a Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C². This Special Report indicates that there is a high degree of confidence that human activities are estimated to have caused approximately 1.0°C of global warming above pre-industrial levels, with a likely range of 0.8°C to 1.2°C.

The IPCC Special Report adds that estimated anthropogenic global warming is currently increasing at 0.2°C (likely between 0.1°C and 0.3°C) per decade due to past and ongoing emissions. Global warming is likely to reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052 if it continues to increase at the current rate.

A key message from the Special Report is that climate-related risks for natural and human systems are higher for global warming of 1.5°C than at present, but lower than at 2°C. Limiting global warming to 1.5°C compared to 2°C is projected to lower the impacts on terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems and to retain more of their services to humans. While climate-related risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security, and economic growth are projected to increase with global warming of 1.5°C, they will increase further with 2°C and adaptation may become more challenging.

Sustainable development supports, and often enables, the fundamental societal and systems transitions and transformations that help limit global warming to 1.5°C. Such changes facilitate the pursuit of climate-resilient development pathways that achieve ambitious mitigation and adaptation in conjunction with poverty eradication and efforts to reduce inequalities.

UK Context

The 2008 Climate Change Act requires the UK to produce a report every five years on the risks and opportunities from climate change. The first UK National Adaptation Programme (UK NAP) was published in July 2013 for each devolved administration. The first Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) was produced in 2012. The CCRA enters its third report cycle (CCRA 3) in 2022.

The UK level Climate Change Risk Assessment Reports have already highlighted the importance of focusing more action and further research on flooding and coastal change; the health risks from higher temperatures, water shortages, natural capital, food trade; and new pests, diseases and invasive non-native species.

The most recent land and marine climate projections for the UK (UKCP18³) were published in November 2018. The UKCP18 reports that the average temperature over the most recent decade (2009-2018) has been on average 0.3 °C warmer than the 1981-2010 average and 0.9 °C warmer than the 1961-1990 average. All the top ten warmest years for the UK, in the series from 1884, have occurred since 2002.

¹ DAERA (2020) 'Poots' Planting Pledge' published 02 March 2020 (Found at - <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/news/poots-planting-pledge> accessed 27/03/2020)

² IPCC

³ Met Office UK Climate Projections 2018 (found at <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/approach/collaboration/ukcp/index>)

UKCP18 also reports that most recent decade (2009-2018) has been on average 1% wetter than 1981-2010 and 5% wetter than 1961-1990 for the UK overall. Mean sea level around the UK has risen by about 17 cm since the start of the 20th century (when corrected for land movement).

The CCC recommends a pathway for reduction of UK territorial [GHG] emissions to meet the Sixth Carbon Budget with four key steps: take up of low-carbon solutions, expansion of low-carbon energy supplies, reducing demand for carbon-intensive activities and land and greenhouse gas removals.

Additional note

NI Context

The CCRA 3 Evidence Summary for Northern Ireland¹ identifies 61 risks and opportunities from climate change to Northern Ireland, including to business, infrastructure, housing, the natural environment, our health and from the impacts of climate change internationally. “More action is needed now” to address 31 of these. Changing climatic conditions and extreme events, high and low temperatures, coastal, river, surface water and groundwater flooding, erosion, pests, pathogens and invasive species are all identified as risks where more action is needed.

In NI’s first Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP), published 2014, the focus was on flooding, water, natural capital, agriculture and forestry. Flooding, which has already affected people living within the Council area, was identified as “*potentially one of the most significant and urgent risks*” in NI². NICCAP identified local Councils as being “*particularly well placed to raise awareness and provide leadership through their responsibilities*” on climate change issues.

In NI’s second Climate Change Adaptation Program 2019-2024³ (NICCAP2), central government details how to address the current risks and opportunities to NI. Planning is referred to in the Plan’s Executive Summary, as “*essential to managing the resilience of our society and natural environment to an uncertain future, as well as for the known current and projected impacts of a changing climate.*”

NICCAP2 sets out our preparation for climate change impacts that are already occurring and puts in place plans for future impacts. The aim of NICCAP2 is “*to build a resilient Northern Ireland in which timely and well-informed decisions are taken to address the socio-economic and environmental impacts of climate change*”. NICCAP2 identifies five Key Priority Areas. These priority areas have seven associated outcome objectives, which will be discussed in their relevant sub-topics.

- Natural Capital, including Terrestrial Coastal/Marine/Freshwater ecosystems, soils and biodiversity.
- Infrastructure Services
- People & Built Environment
- Disruption to Businesses & Supply Chains
- Food Security/Global Food Production.

The NI Environmental Statistics Report⁴ reports that the ten-year moving average annual minimum temperature has been increasing since the end of the 19th century. By the end of the 20th century, the ten-year moving average temperature had risen to its highest levels since records began.

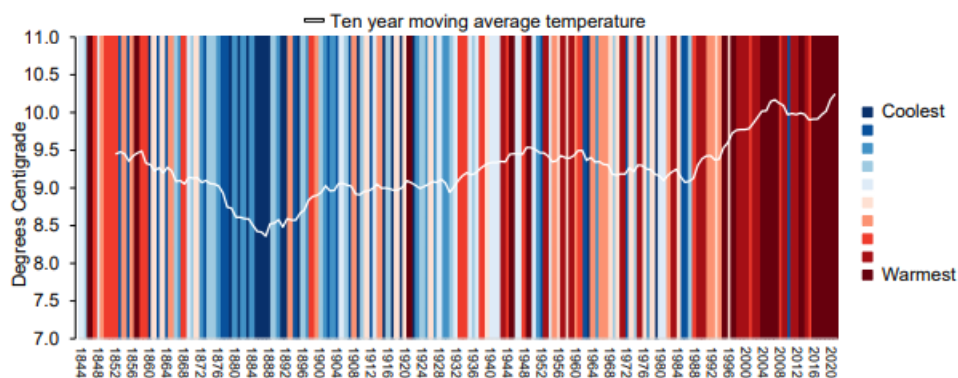
Figure 26: Mean annual temperature, 1844 – 2021

¹ Climate Northern Ireland (2021) Evidence for the third UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3) Summary for Northern Ireland

² DoE (2014) Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2014-2019

³ DAERA (2019) Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2019-2024

⁴ DAERA, NISRA & NIEA (2022) Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report May 2022



Source: Armagh Observatory (Published in Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report 2022)

The NI Environmental Statistics Report does not report any long term trends in summer and winter rainfall, however NICCAP2 has stated that in recent years NI has experienced incidents of extreme and notable weather events. NICCAP2 adds that it is not possible to say conclusively if these events, such as severe and sustained rainfall, are the direct result of human induced climate change. The increased incidence and intensity of such events however, is consistent with what we would expect to see with a changing climate.

The UKCP18 projects greater chance of hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters with more extreme weather and rising sea levels. It also projects higher intensity rainfall events, storm events and increased flood risk. The high-emission scenario for NI shows that, by the year 2070, winters could be up to 3.9° warmer and summers could be up to 4.9° hotter. By 2070, winters could be 25 per cent wetter and summers 38 per cent drier. In the high emissions scenario, mean sea levels at Belfast could be up to 94cm higher relative to the 1981-2000 average by the year 2100¹.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

In 2019, NI accounted for 5% of the UK's total GHG emissions, a proportion which has steadily risen from 3.5% in 2008 when NI began publishing an annual bulletin on the Greenhouse Gas Inventory² and is higher than its population share of 3 per cent. In 2019 these emissions were estimated to be equivalent to 21.4 million tonnes of CO₂³.

In 2020 CO₂ emissions accounted for 68% of all GHG emissions in NI (UK average 79%)⁴. It is the most common gas emitted from most sectors with the exception of agriculture and waste management. Methane (CH₄) was a more significant GHG from both of these sectors because of livestock and landfill. Nitrous oxide (N₂O) is the other significant GHG emission from the agriculture sector. This is a difficult GHG to both measure and reduce. NI accounts for a much larger share of the UK's emissions of these gases due to the economic importance of agriculture in NI⁵. Overall, in 2020 there was a decrease in total GHG emissions of 4% compared to the previous year, and the longer-term trend shows a decrease of 24% compared to the base year, 1990⁶.

¹ UKCP18 Factsheet: Sea level rise and storm surge (found at <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/approach/collaboration/ukcp/marine-projections> accessed 02/04/2020)

² DAERA [online] Northern Ireland greenhouse gas inventory (found at <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/northern-ireland-greenhouse-gas-inventory> [accessed 21.02.2022])

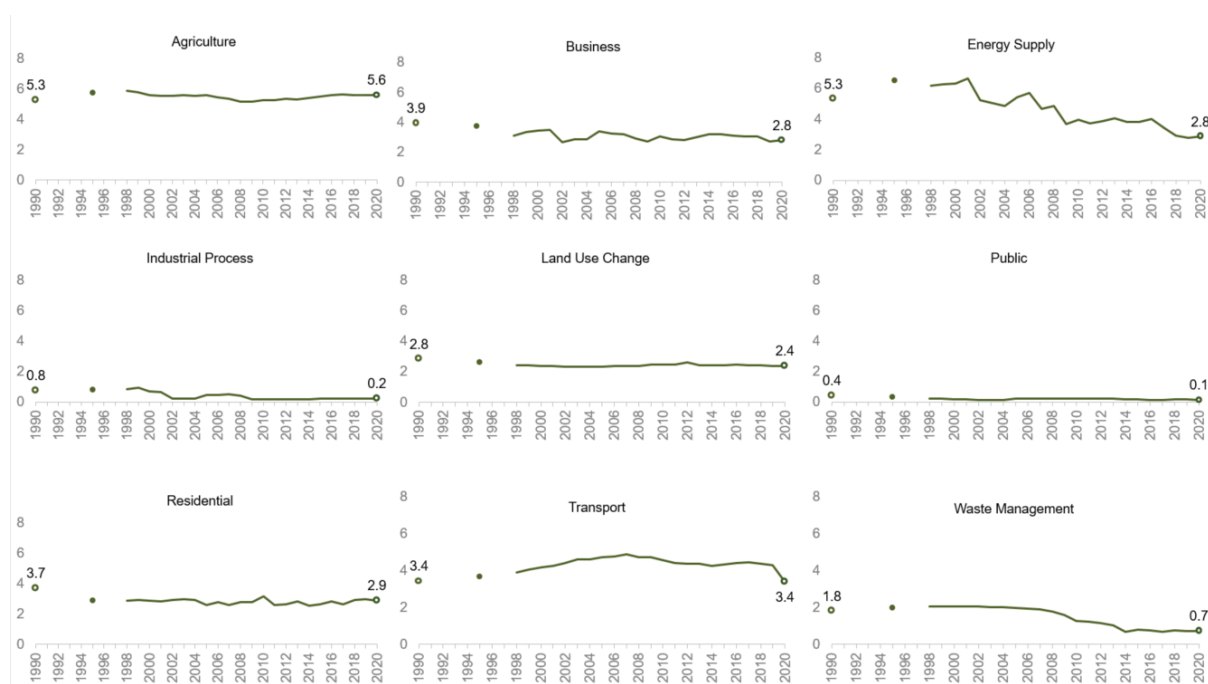
³ DAERA, NISRA & NIEA (2022) Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report May 2022

⁴ DAERA & NIEA (2022) Northern Ireland greenhouse gas statistics 1990-2020 statistical bulletin infographic

⁵ Defra 2012: A Climate Change Risk Assessment for Northern Ireland

⁶ DAERA & NIEA (2022) Northern Ireland greenhouse gas statistics 1990-2020 statistical bulletin infographic

Figure 27: Greenhouse Gas Emissions (by Sector) NI; 1990, 1995, 1998 - 2020 (MtCO₂e)



Source: DAERA [online] NI greenhouse gas inventory 1990 - 2020 (found at <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-greenhouse-gas-inventory-1990-2020-statistical-bulletin> accessed 04/10/2022)

As shown in Figure 27, most sectors have shown a long-term decreasing trend in emissions since the base year, with the largest decreases seen in the energy supply, residential and waste sectors.

The agriculture sector was, in 2020 the only sector to show higher emissions in the base year, though in 2019 the transport sector was also above the base year. The land use change sector reflects losses in semi-natural land cover to developed land¹.

Agriculture

Since 2002, the agriculture sector has been calculated as the greatest contributor of GHG emissions in NI, representing 27% of these emissions in 2020. Although the sector emits a relatively low amount of CO₂, it emits other GHGs to a significant level. The agriculture sector is the main source of CH₄ (methane) and N₂O (nitrous oxide) in NI, accounting for approximately 80% of total emissions of these GHGs in 2020². Livestock and nitrogen fertiliser are the two principal sources of these GHG emissions. Farming is an important part of NI's economy, so there is a responsibility to develop effective measures that will help reduce GHG emissions like N₂O and CH₄, even if they are difficult to estimate.

NISRA reports that there are approximately 3,253 farms in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough in 2018, farming an area of approximately 107,713ha³ (approx. 11% of all land farmed in NI). DAERA's 'Efficient Farming Cuts Greenhouse Gases - Implementation Plan 2016-2020' (*Efficient Farming*) identifies a number of measures that can reduce GHG emissions in the agricultural sector. These include 'better nutrient management', 'better livestock management', 'improving land and carbon management' and 'increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy'. DAERA's Future Agricultural Policy Proposals for NI were launched for consultation in December 2021. Eight main product workstreams are proposed including 'Farming for Carbon Measures' to assist and incentivise farmers to adopt carbon reduction actions into their management and 'Investment Measures' to support innovation and new technologies which may be relevant to LDP.

A key objective of the NICCAP2 is that "*we have a food system that is resilient to impacts of climate change*". While some elements of '*Efficient Farming*' such as increased fuel efficiency in machinery and improved

¹ DAERA & NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland greenhouse gas inventory 1990-2020 statistical bulletin - data and chart

² DAERA & NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas Inventory 1990-2020 Statistical Bulletin - Figure 2.

³ NINIS Farm Census (administrative geographies) 1999-2018

nutrient management practices are largely outside the influence of planning, the LDP may be able to support the delivery of some of the proposed measures in the 'Efficient Farming' programme and NICCAP2. These include facilitating on-farm renewables, storage facilities for crops, slurry/manure and dirty water that meet modern standards, and housing for dairy, pigs and poultry that is highly efficient in respect of its lighting, heating, cooling and ventilation.

The UK CCRA 2017 also identifies current and future risk to agriculture from drought and flooding and identifies that strategic planning for increased water scarcity in vulnerable locations is needed, including re-evaluation of land use options and, if necessary, investment in storage infrastructure may be necessary to maximise use of surplus winter rainfall.

Transport

In 2020, the transport sector accounted for 16.2% of all GHG emissions in NI and represented a decrease of 1.9% on baseline levels. However, this period encompasses the most significant travel and business restrictions implemented during the Covid 19 pandemic. In the previous years 2018 and 2019, emissions from transport were respectively 28.5% and 21.5% above the 1990 baseline.

This reflects the reliance people have in NI for motorised vehicles and also reflects its largely rural nature. Transport is a significant contributor of CO₂ and, along with reducing NO₂ emissions that can affect health, is why current UK government policy 'The Road to Zero' seeks to end the sale of new conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2040¹. This policy's eventual aim is that almost every car and van is 'zero emission' by 2050. The transition to zero emission vehicles does not just require the vehicles to be available and affordable. An infrastructure network needs to be in place that is easy for current and prospective drivers to locate and use, and is affordable, efficient and reliable. The *Road to Zero* acknowledges that accommodating this transition will require many changes to the electricity system. It therefore includes the objective of "ensuring local planning policies incorporate facilities for charging electric vehicles (EVs)".

Although the new emissions standards for HGVs have achieved significant air quality improvements, CO₂ emissions from HGVs have remained relatively constant in recent years. Zero emission options are yet to be developed and made available commercially for all types of HGVs. Transportation of goods and freight can also be achieved more efficiently through a reduction in traffic congestion or the consideration of alternative modes such as rail.

New development needs to be encouraged to consider the infrastructure needed for these future changes in the transport system. Likewise, the LDP could be used to help reduce GHG emissions from transport, by encouraging and enabling the provision of accessible walking and cycling routes, as well as supporting the provision of adequate public transport options. An outcome objective of NICCAP2 is that "*we have transport and network services that are resilient to the impacts of flooding & extreme weather*". Spatial planning of land uses that facilitate the provision of the most effective local and regional level travel routes should help to encourage reduced car dependency and increased active travel. Consideration can also be given to vulnerability to climate change when zoning areas. More information is in the Transport and Accessibility and Air Quality sections of this report.

Energy Supply

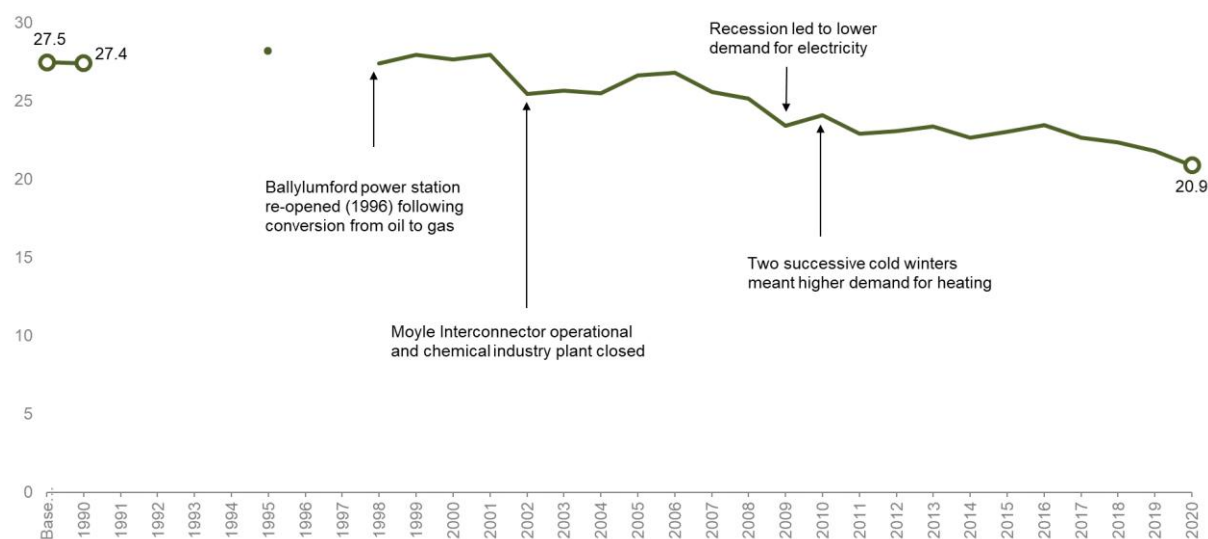
The energy sector (energy generation and heat production) has been one of the main contributors to reductions in GHG emissions in NI, having reduced from 5.3 MtCO₂e in 1990 to 2.8 MtCO₂e in 2020², the largest reduction in GHG emissions from the base year of all the sectors. The reduction is due to the switch from coal and oil to natural gas, improvements in energy efficiency and the uptake of renewables³. The effects of some of these measures are demonstrated in Figure 28 below.

¹ UK Department for Transport (2018) The Road to Zero Next steps towards cleaner road transport and delivering our Industrial Strategy

² DAERA & NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland greenhouse gas inventory 1990-2020 Statistical Bulletin data & charts - Table1

³ DAERA (2019) Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Annual Report 2019

Figure 28: Greenhouse Gas emissions NI 1990-2020 (MtCO₂e)



Source: DAERA & NISRA, Northern Ireland greenhouse gas inventory 1990-2020 statistical bulletin - data and charts Figure 1

For energy generation, gas is less carbon intensive and more energy efficient than coal and oil, therefore it is a preferred option in terms of GHG emissions and efficiency. As policy directs the energy market toward reduced GHG emissions and a low carbon future, changes in sources and production will have to occur. These include diversity of renewables, battery storage and carbon capture projects, and a grid that can enable multiple renewable connections including for prosumers i.e. small-scale producers. Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) has identified that many of its distribution circuits and substations are at saturation point with very limited potential for generation export, without investment¹. More information is in the 'Material Assets' section of this report.

Renewable Energy

Renewable energy is not reliant upon fossil fuel combustion and can help reduce GHG emissions from the energy sector, as it uses natural energy with a low or zero carbon footprint. Annual power generation from renewables has increased from 153GWh in 2004 to 4,189GWh in 2019, with generation doubling over 5 year period 2014-19². The NI Executive has voted for new climate change legislation and made a commitment to meet 80% of its electricity needs from renewables by 2030. Since 2018 between 42% and 49% of NI's electricity was generated from indigenous renewables. The highest monthly proportion on record, 76.5% was generated in February 2022¹. The renewable electricity industry group Renewable NI believes that the 80% target can be delivered using current and proven technology in NI "but the planning system must become better resourced to avoid acting as a disincentive to renewable investors"³.

Another important aspect of successfully delivering renewables is a fit-for-purpose grid. Northern Ireland Electricity has identified areas within the district where there is limited potential for generation export⁴ without investment. The Council area has a mix of renewables – wind, solar and biomass and 'seeks to support the further development of renewables' but without significant negative effects on the environment – particularly in sensitive locations.

Renewable energy development proposals in the marine environment are managed under a separate consenting regime within the framework of the UK Marine Policy Statement and the NI Marine Plan, once the latter is adopted. The SPPS2 encourages consenting authorities for both terrestrial and marine environments to work together.

¹ NIE & SONI (2018) Consultation on Connecting Further Generation in Northern Ireland

² DAERA & NISEA (2022) Northern Ireland Carbon Intensity Indicators 2021 data tables (Table 1.1)

³ Renewable NI website, May 2022

⁴ Northern Ireland Electricity [online] Network Capacity map (found at <https://www.nienetworks.co.uk/connections/capacity-map>)

Residential, Business and Industrial

The residential sector is among the top contributors to GHG emissions within NI, despite decreases in CO₂ emissions since the base year in 1990¹. NI remains dependent on fossil fuels for home heating. Fuel switching to natural gas from more carbon-intensive fuels such as coal and oil has reduced emissions, but more households creates greater demand for energy². ‘Business’ and ‘Industrial Processes’ respectively accounted for 13% and 1% of NI GHG emissions in 2020³. Both sectors have also seen substantial decreases in GHG emissions since the base year. This reduction is in part related to a reduction in the use of coal in industrial combustion⁴. Emissions from houses and businesses can be linked to not just their source of fuel heating, but also their energy efficiency and their location to key services.

The GSNI has not indicated in its pre-POP consultation⁵ if there is opportunity in the Council area for exploitation of deep geothermal energy, but most of NI has widespread potential for the use of shallow geothermal energy for heating and cooling. This sustainable low carbon energy resource is suitable for homes and businesses.

NICCAP2 includes the outcome objectives that “we have people, homes, buildings and communities that are resilient to the impacts of flooding and extremes of weather” and that “we have businesses that can adapt to impacts of climate change and extreme weather”. The LDP could be used to help facilitate and encourage low carbon lifestyles and to help reduce GHG emissions from the residential, business and industrial sectors, as well as better equipping businesses and communities to adapt to the impacts of climate change. Measures to do this could include energy efficient / green building design, access to renewables, native planting schemes, integration of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and connection to walking and cycling routes.

Waste Management

In 2020 the waste management sector was responsible for 3.5% of GHG emissions in NI. As shown in Figure 5.10.1 this sector has seen a considerable decrease in GHG emissions since 1990⁶. Methane is a powerful GHG and is the dominant GHG emitted from the waste management sector due to landfilling practices⁷. The introduction of methane capture in landfills, the closure of landfills and an increase in reusing, recycling and recovery practices have contributed to the decreasing trend in emissions from the sector. In 2020/21 Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough had a municipal landfill rate of 6.9% (NI 22.8%) and waste recovery rate of 34% (NI 24.6%)⁸. Programs that reduce, reuse and recycle municipal waste are effective and high-impact means of reducing GHG emissions⁹. The Climate Change Act (NI) 2022 includes a sectoral target that the Department (DAERA) must ensure that at least 70% of waste is recycled by 2030. The LDP can support this through enabling the provision of sites for the management and processing of waste in sustainable locations.

Flooding

Climate change is expected to increase the frequency, severity and extent of flooding and extreme weather events, with increases in annual damage to residential properties and other buildings such as culturally valued buildings¹⁰. Flooding, which is discussed in more detail in section 5.11, ‘Water’, has been identified as “potentially one of the most significant and urgent risks” to NI¹¹. Portadown/Craigavon and Lurgan are ‘Areas of Potentially Significant Flood Risk’ and Banbridge is a ‘Transitional Area of Potentially Significant Flood Risk’. Armagh City and Keady have also been identified as areas with a moderate degree of flood risk¹².

¹ DAERA, NISRA & NIEA (2022) Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report May 2022 (Chapter 2)

² DAERA & NIEA (2022) Northern Ireland Carbon Intensity Indicators report ‘Key Points’

³ DAERA & NISRA (2021) Northern Ireland greenhouse gas inventory 1990-2019 Statistical Bulletin - Table 1.

⁴ DAERA (2019) Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Annual Report 2019 Issue 11 ‘Greenhouse Gas Emissions’

⁵ DfE Minerals Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Pre POP consultation

⁶ DAERA & NISRA (2022) Northern Ireland greenhouse gas inventory 1990-2020 data and charts - Table 1.

⁷ DAERA (2019) Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Annual Report 2019 Issue 11 ‘Greenhouse Gas Emissions’

⁸ DAERA (2021) Northern Ireland Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Management Statistics 2020/21 annual data

⁹ USEPA, Solid Waste Management and Greenhouse Gases: A Life-Cycle Assessment of Emissions and Sinks, 3rd Edition. 2006.

¹⁰ DAERA (2019) Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2019-2024

¹¹ DoE (2014) Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme 2014-2019

¹² DfI (2018) Northern Ireland Flood Risk Assessment (NIFRA) 2018

It is becoming increasingly accepted that having fully functional wetland and coastal ecosystems will help to absorb excess water from flooding events and storm surges¹. Development in areas with an identified flood risk not only places the development at risk, but may increase flood risk on adjacent sites and downstream, as well as increasing pressure on natural floodplains. This places risk on both the natural and built environment.

NICCAP2 includes the outcome objective that *“we have people, homes, buildings and communities that are resilient to the impacts of flooding and extremes of weather”*. In addition to avoiding development in areas of flood risk, the introduction of SuDS within the built environment can also protect areas further downstream from flooding, as runoff is managed at source and slowed down through attenuation and storage. ‘Soft’ SuDS can deliver added benefits for this objective, where they can help improve water quality, biodiversity and create landscape features. ‘Soft’ SuDS components can also contribute to a reduction and/or sequestration of carbon². SuDS are more adaptable to changing environments and weather conditions when compared to regular underground drains³.

As Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough does not have a coastline, coastal flooding and coastal erosion do not present a direct risk, though there are downstream hydrological linkages through the river catchments which drain to the estuaries of Belfast Lough, Carlingford Lough, the Lower Bann / North Coast (via Lough Neagh) and Dundalk Bay.

Biodiversity

The NI Evidence Report⁴ has highlighted that climate change presents both potential risk and opportunities to landscapes / landscape character and our soils and land types.

NICCAP2 states that *“adaptation is vital in ensuring resilient soils and that land types are preserved, while in turn contributing to building the resilience of our ecosystems and communities that depend upon them”*.

Climate change is expected to impact on local biodiversity, as changing climatic factors will cause habitats to alter and species to move. In certain locations, these changes may enable non-native invasive species to thrive and/or may cause native species to relocate in an attempt to stay within their preferred climate. NICCAP2 identifies that there are risks to species and habitats due to inability to respond to climatic conditions. Local biodiversity will need green and blue infrastructure, including buffer zones around designated sites, to aid their movement in response to climate change.

Feedback from public engagement meetings linked to the Community Plan has already highlighted a belief in the importance of preserving peatlands because of their carbon storage and flood protection benefits. Peatlands also have specialised plants and associated fauna and avifauna.

NICCAP2 has also identified the Forest Expansion Scheme among its actions to achieve outcome objective NC3 *“we have soils and land types that are resilient to the impacts of climate change.”* This scheme encourages the creation of new forest blocks of at least 5 hectares and, in addition to providing increased carbon capture, NICCAP2 identifies secondary benefits such as improved biodiversity and enhanced ability of individual species to endure climate change.

5.10.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

In the absence of a new Plan, there could be fewer opportunities to apply land use planning to help reduce GHG emissions by integrating sustainable development patterns. Without up-to-date spatial information, it would become more difficult to locate development away from areas at risk of flooding, to design efficient transport routes and to zone lands for the most appropriate use. Considering the most sustainable use of land that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and reliance on fossil fuels, whilst also enabling adaptation measures for climate change (e.g. preservation of peatlands and blue/green infrastructure)

¹ SEPA (2016) Natural Flood Management Handbook

² SusDrain ‘Carbon reduction and sequestration’ (found at <https://www.susdrain.org/delivering-suds/using-suds/benefits-of-suds/Carbon-reduction-and-sequestration> accessed 03/04/2020)

³ Ashley, RM; Walker, AL; D’Arcy, B et al. (5 more authors) (2015) UK sustainable drainage systems: past, present and future. Proceedings of ICE - Civil Engineering, 168 (3). pp. 125-130

⁴ Committee on Climate Change (2021) ‘Evidence for the third UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3) Summary for Northern Ireland.

would not be feasible. It could become increasingly difficult to locate renewable energy projects in the most sustainable locations in relation to both infrastructure and users. There may be fewer opportunities to integrate measures such as sustainable drainage systems, green/blue infrastructure and sustainable transport infrastructure.

5.10.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Climate Change

- The Council has the ability help contribute to climate change mitigation objectives by promoting and encouraging measures to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions from all sectors, but especially the top contributing sectors. An increased number of households and new development will lead to greater demand for energy, unless net consumption is reduced.
- The LDP should support a low-carbon future in anticipation of new energy and climate change policies, as well as evolving and emerging energy technologies, including planning for electric charge-up points.
- The LDP should support and facilitate the delivery of appropriate renewable energy development that will help to increase the future diversity of renewable energy supplied across all of the Council area and support commitments made under the UK Climate Change Act. However, this must be balanced against the environmental impacts where there is potential to negatively impact on citizens and/or sensitive features.
- Agriculture is a significant contributor to GHG emissions and opportunities to reduce emissions within the scope of the LDP need to be considered.
- There is a need to encourage and increase options for active and sustainable travel across the Borough, to help reduce reliance on the car and reduce GHG emissions from the transport sector.
- The LDP should promote and support the reuse and retrofit of existing buildings as a sustainable approach in the context of carbon cost and encourage the integration of measures to enable adaptation to the effects of climate change into new development, where appropriate.
- The waste management hierarchy and the proximity principle should continue to be used to guide waste management facilities and practices, based on the principles of sustainable development.
- Any potential development in areas of flood risk needs to be carefully considered against the likely impact of flooding but also the likely impact of the development on adjacent or downstream areas, including the marine area.
- It is important to protect ecosystems which provide habitat for local biodiversity and which provide natural resilience against the effects of climate change.
- Provisioning of buffer zones around designated sites and priority habitats could help enable species and habitats to move and reactively adapt in a changing climate.
- A cross-sectoral approach involving various stakeholders will be needed to further develop and deliver Climate Change Action Plans.

5.11 Water

5.11.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

This topic encompasses water as a resource for ecological services, water supply and treatment. The water environment, made of groundwater, surface water and watercourses can also be used as drinking water (both through public supply utilised by Northern Ireland Water) and private supplies (boreholes, wells and springs) or as a component in industrial processes. It also considers the management of water storage and flow, flood risk and measures to avoid or manage flood risk.

Regional legislation, plans and strategies seek to protect the quality and supply of water to maintain natural resources and protect human health. The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 require waterbodies to be protected from deterioration and, where necessary and practicable, to be restored to 'good' status. The Groundwater Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 include criteria for the assessment of 'good' chemical status and for identifying and reversing upward trends in pollution of groundwater. Nutrient Action Programme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019 and Pollution Prevention and Control (Industrial Emissions) Regulations (NI) 2013 also require the implementation of standards for the control and prevention of pollution of water by nitrates from agricultural sources and phosphorus and other pollutants from agricultural, industrial and waste water sources.

The Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 aim to reduce the pollution of freshwater, estuarine and coastal waters by domestic sewage and industrial wastewater (collectively known as urban waste water). These Regulations set minimum standards for the collection, treatment and discharge of urban waste water. Minimum standards for the provision of sewerage systems and treatment of sewage are set according to the population served by sewage treatment works, and the sensitivity of receiving waters. The Water Environment (Floods Directive) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 require flood risk to be assessed and mapped and management plans to be developed for the most significant flood risk areas.

In addition to the above Regulations, which were originally developed to transpose European Directives regionally, regulations are also present to control the use of water through either abstraction or impoundment and to protect water supplies. There are also a number of pieces of drainage legislation to control water levels and flows.

Three primary River Basin Districts (RBD) have been identified in Northern Ireland: the North Eastern (NE), the Neagh – Bann (NB) and the North Western (NW) RBDs. The 3rd cycle River Basin Management Plan for NI was adopted in June 2025. River Basin Management is a key element in implementing the WFD Regulations, taking an integrated approach to the protection, improvement and sustainable use of the water environment. It applies to groundwater and to all surface water bodies, including rivers, lakes, transitional (estuarine) and coastal waters out to one nautical mile, as well as wetlands which are directly associated with ground or surface water.

NI also maintains a register of protected areas. The register consists of an inventory of protected area sites representing the protected area categories outlined below:

- Areas designated for the protection of habitats or species
- Groundwater dependent terrestrial ecosystem sites
- Bathing Waters
- Shellfish waters;
- Groundwater and Surface water Drinking Water Protected Areas;
- Urban wastewater Sensitive Areas; and
- Nutrients Action Programme (Total Territory Approach).

The WFD Regulations include coastal waters, and the UK Marine Strategy also seeks to achieve Good Environmental Status (GES)¹ of marine waters. It includes key objectives that are relevant to LDP in respect

¹ GES is defined in the MSFD as: "The environmental status of marine waters where these provide ecologically diverse and dynamic oceans and seas which are clean, healthy and productive" (Article 3).

of contaminants (including contaminants in seafood); marine litter and underwater noise. The draft Marine Plan includes among its core policies the requirement for public authorities to consider any potential impact from proposals on natural heritage, marine litter and marine noise. It also has a key activity policy supporting aquaculture. While Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough does not have direct connectivity with the marine area, it has indirect connectivity via its watercourses and river systems.

Every six years, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) in partnership with the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) produces a River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) for each River Basin District within NI. The third RBMP cycle extends from 2021 – 2027. The WFD Regulations require action to meet good ecological and chemical status and prevent deterioration of our water bodies. Each RBMP therefore sets out the current state of our water environment and the measures to be put in place to achieve further improvements to the water environment over their six-year period.

It is essential that RBMPs are integrated with a wide range of strategies and initiatives impacting on the water environment in Northern Ireland. This exploits commonality across regional, national and European wide requirements and directives, ensuring efficient and cost effective delivery. A Long Term Water Strategy has been developed by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) in partnership with Northern Ireland Water (NIW), DAERA and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA). The Strategy aims to encourage a sustainable and integrated approach to managing the different water needs within a catchment while promoting regional development without compromising the environment or increasing flood risk.

DAERA is working with the agricultural sector to promote good practice in nutrient management and safer, more effective slurry spreading. The Nitrates Action Programme has been a key element in providing safeguards for the water environment since 2007 and farmers' cooperation has been a key factor in the success of this scheme. This is the main tool for reducing diffuse pollution through the Nitrates Action Programme and Nutrient Management Plans. This has delivered significant improvements in water quality in the last 10-15 years, however increasing nitrate concentrations were reported in 30.8 % of RBMP monitoring sites across NI in 2018¹.

The Quality of Bathing Water Regulations (Northern Ireland) implements quality standards for a number of parameters in identified bathing waters, to safeguard public health and protect the environment. The most important of these are the standards relating to the coliform and streptococcal groups of bacteria, which, in general, can be taken as an indication of the amount of sewage or other faecal contaminants present. In addition to monitoring the bathing waters, DAERA Marine and Fisheries Division monitors rivers which run into the sea at beaches. Pollution problems at beaches and in marine coastal waters often arise from within upstream river catchments.

A Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP) is a requirement of the Water Environment (Floods Directive) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009. The FRMP has been developed to align with the six-year cycle of the RBMP. The FRMP highlights the flood hazards and risks in 12 Areas of Potential Significant Flood Risk (APSFR) identified within NI and sets out a framework in which measures to manage flood risk will be delivered or planned for at a local level.

Environment Strategy (2022) seeks to achieve the outcome of 'excellent air, water, land and neighbourhood quality'. Key actions of this strategy include investment in sewage infrastructure, with outcomes including a reduction in levels of nitrates and phosphorus in NI waterbodies.

The fundamental policy message arising from the SPPS2 is that the most effective means of managing flood risk is to avoid the risk, by locating new buildings and infrastructure outside flood risk areas. The LDP should ensure that land identified as being at risk of flooding is not zoned for development. Such development would be at an unacceptable risk of flooding, may cause flooding elsewhere and may impair the natural function of the floodplain in storing flood water. The Council should adopt a precautionary approach to the identification of land through the LDP process and the determination of development proposals, in

¹ DAERA (2021) Draft River Basin Management Plan for Northern Ireland 2021-2027

those areas susceptible to flooding where there is a lack of precise information on present day flood risk or climate change flood risk.

The Regional Development Strategy 2035 includes protective measures for water such as:

- Adopt grey water recycling
- Minimise development in areas at risk from flooding from rivers, the sea and surface water run-off
- Promote a more sustainable approach to the provision of water and sewerage services and flood risk management.
- Integrate water and land-use planning.
- Manage future water demand.
- Encourage sustainable surface water management.

The Strategy for Promoting the Use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) also encourages the incorporation of measures to ameliorate the impacts of development on water quality and flow.

Our Corporate Plan 2023-2027 acknowledges the impact of water quality and is committed to research and explore new ways to sustainably manage and conserve waterways, grasslands and wildlife across our natural assets. It outlines that the Council is committed to shaping healthy, safe and clean places.

5.11.2 Baseline information

A detailed baseline of information is presented in a number of LDP Preparatory Study Discussion Papers including 'Public Utilities' and 'Environmental Assets'. The Water Management Unit (WMU) of the DAERA has published digital datasets of the water environment online and created an online River Basin Map Viewer¹. The DfI has also created an online maps portal². This topic also overlaps with the Health and Well-being, Physical Resources, Transport and Accessibility, Air Quality, Climate Change, Natural Resources and Landscape topics.

River Basin Management Plans

The RBMP requires action to meet 'good' (or better) ecological and chemical status and prevent deterioration of our water bodies. 'Good' status is assessed using a broad range of parameters for water quality (such as nutrients and oxygen levels); aquatic biology (including plants, aquatic insects and fish) and physical environment (such as river flows and habitat). Classification of water bodies assists in planning what measures might be required for improvements. The WFD also recognises that some water bodies have been changed to such a degree that they can no longer be restored to their original condition without compromising their current use. These are called heavily modified (HMWBs) or artificial water bodies (AWBs). HMWBs and AWBs are classified according to their ecological potential rather than status, with the objective to achieve 'good ecological potential' (GEP).

The water quality status figures published at the conclusion of the first cycle of RBMP in 2015 showed that 37% of Northern Ireland's water bodies met 'good' status. Classification tools and standards, as well as water body boundaries have changed during the first River Basin Cycle, therefore a direct comparison between 2009 and 2015 data cannot be made.

Within the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council area the principal river systems are the Bann, Blackwater, Tall, Cusher and Callan rivers, which drain into Lough Neagh. Upper sections of the River Lagan and its tributaries, within the North Eastern River Basin District, are also in the Borough.

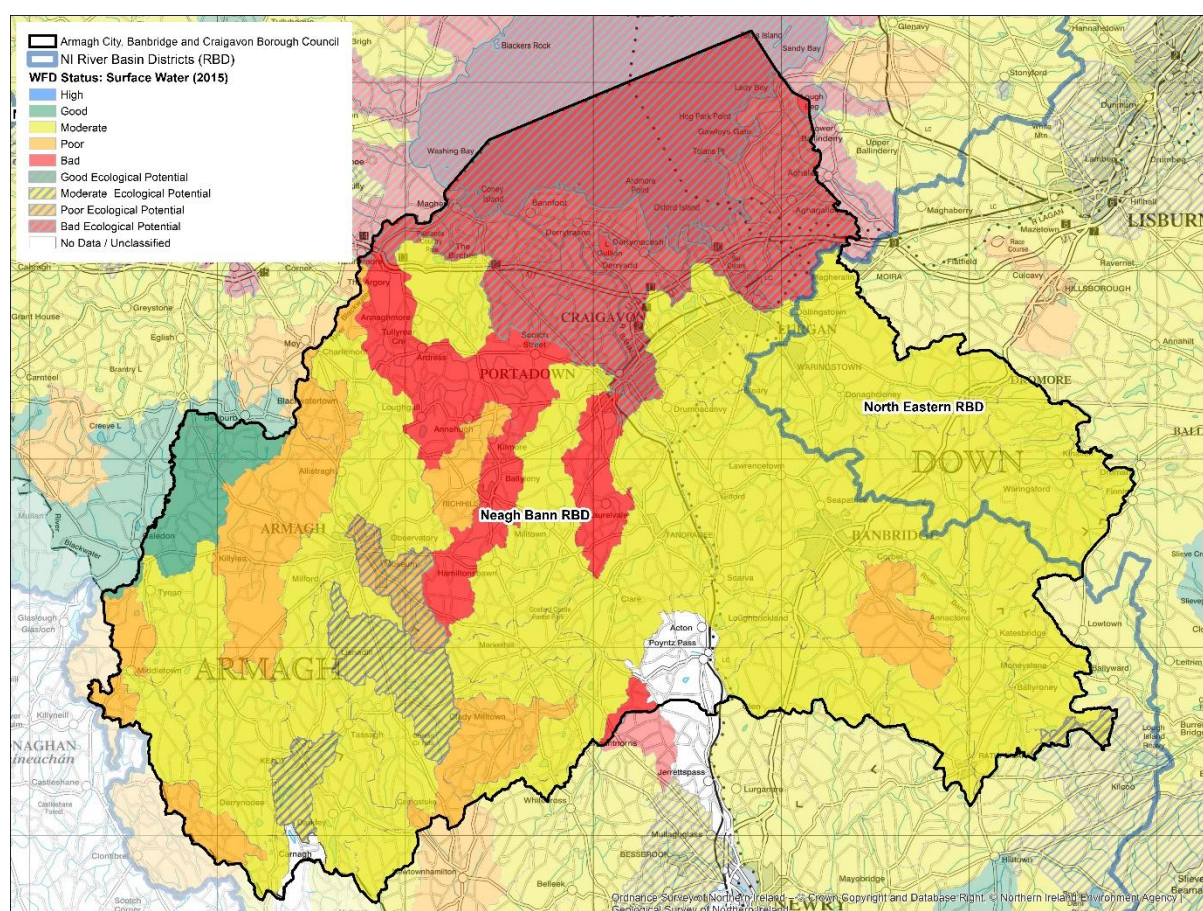
There are 50 river waterbodies (including five heavily modified waterbodies and one artificial waterbody) in the Borough. There are three lake waterbodies in the Borough: Lough Neagh (identified as a heavily modified waterbody), Lough Gullion and Portmore Lough.

Figure 29 shows the overall ecological status classification of the surface waterbodies within the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council area at the conclusion of the first WFD cycle in 2015. These results are summarised in Table 16.

¹ Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs WMU Digital Dataset Downloads

² Department for Infrastructure Mapping Portal

Figure 29: Water Framework Directive overall classification, 2018



Source: DAERA WMU Digital Dataset Downloads (Accessed 18/10/17)

Table 16 presents a summary of the ecological status for the surface waterbodies within the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council.

Table 16: Summary of 2015 WFD classification of surface water bodies

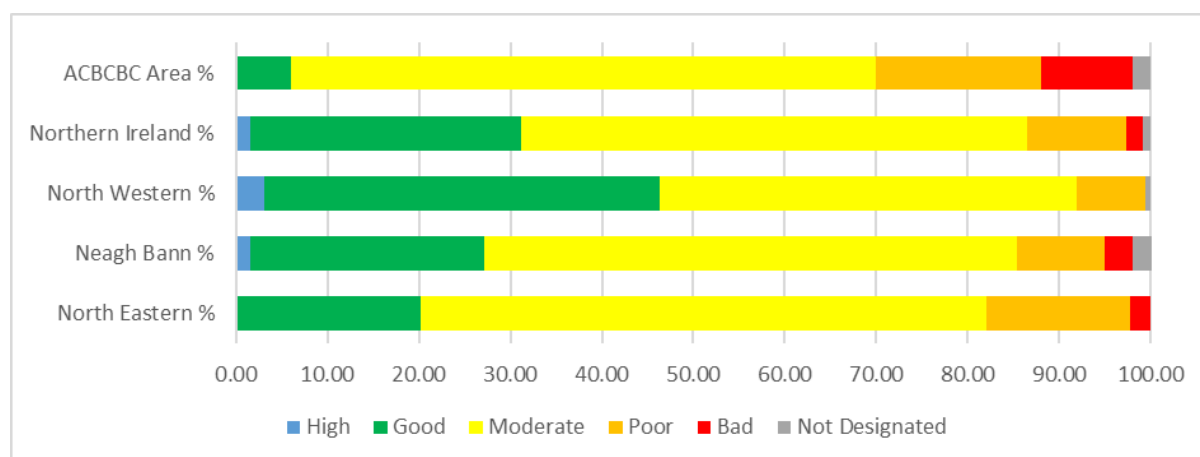
River Water Bodies		Lake Water Bodies		Heavily Modified* Water Bodies	
44	Total Number of RWB	2	Total Number of LWB	7	Total Number of HMWB
0	High Eco. Status	0	High Eco. Status	0	Good Eco. Potential
3	Good Eco. Status	0	Good Eco. Status	4	Moderate Eco. Potential
28	Moderate Eco. Status	0	Moderate Eco. Status	1	Poor Eco. Potential
8	Poor Eco. Status	0	Poor Eco. Status	2	Bad Eco. Potential
4	Bad Eco. Status	2	Bad Eco. Status	* includes AWB	

Source: DAERA WMU Digital Dataset Downloads (Accessed 18/10/17)

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council area had significantly worse river water quality in 2015 than the overall Northern Ireland average (Figure 30). Only three of the waterbodies (6%) in the Borough achieved good or better status compared with 31.2%¹ for all river water bodies in Northern Ireland. 65% of river waterbodies in the Borough were classified as 'moderate', 18% as 'poor' and 10% as 'bad' and are thus failing to meet the standard. There are five heavily modified river waterbodies in the Borough, one heavily modified lake waterbody and one artificial waterbody. None of these heavily modified water bodies have achieved 'good' status and all three of the lake waterbodies have been classified at 'bad' status or 'bad' ecological potential (compared with 26.11% of all lake waterbodies in NI achieving 'good' status and 49.72% achieving 'moderate' status).

¹ DAERA NI Northern Ireland Reported Water Body Status & Objective Figures 2015 (Published 07/11/2017)

Figure 30: Water Framework Directive River Waterbodies Overall Classification (%), 2015



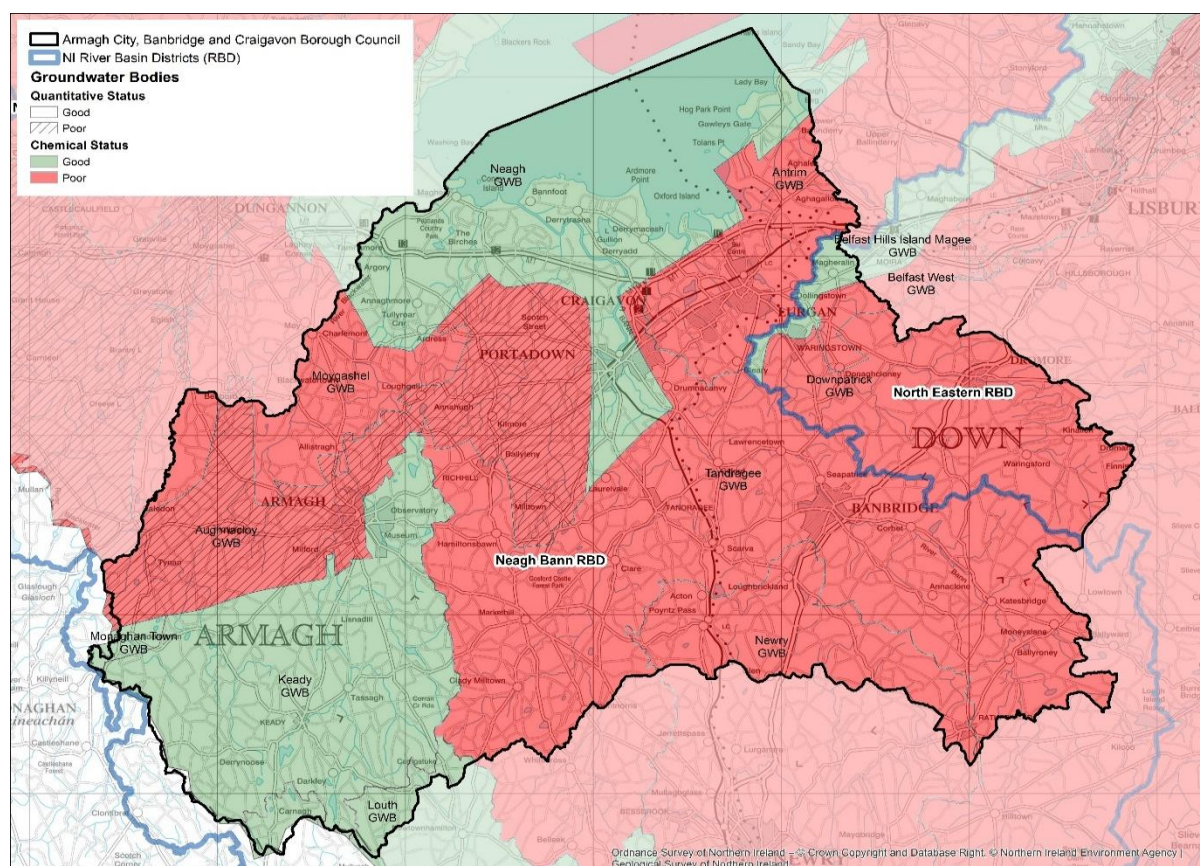
Source: DAERA WMU Digital Datasets and Northern Ireland Reported Water Body Status & Objective Figures 2015 (Published 07/11/2017)

Groundwater

There are 12 groundwater bodies intersecting the Borough (Figure 31). Unlike surface water, groundwater bodies are classified as 'good' or 'poor' for quantitative and chemical status, which combine to produce an overall status. Of these, five were classified as overall 'good' status in 2015 and seven were classified as having 'poor' status.

The main pressure in the Aughnacloy, Keady, Tandragee, Downpatrick and Antrim groundwater bodies is diffuse phosphorus which in turn contributes to phosphorus loading in surface water because of groundwater baseflow contributions. Possible sources include agricultural or septic tanks. Pesticides were detected in a monitoring well in Banbridge. Increased electrical conductivities and chloride concentrations, which can be an indicator for intrusion of water of different quality, are detected within monitoring wells in the Aughnacloy groundwater body. It is a core policy of the draft Marine Plan that public authorities must consider the ability of a proposal to co-exist with other marine activities. The Council recognise the potential for indirect effects from Wastewater Treatment Works capacity issues, settlements that are reliant on private septic tanks and settlements that have no network / catchment capacity, as effluent discharges into a drainage field or soakaway system, thereby mixing with ground water and river systems.

Figure 31: Groundwater Status, 2015



Source: DAERA WMU Digital Dataset Downloads (Accessed 18/10/17)

Many properties, especially in rural areas, possess a Private Water Supply (PWS) such as a well or borehole. There are approximately 24 PWS registered with the Drinking Water Inspectorate¹ in the Borough, but there are likely to be many more unregistered supplies. Consideration needs to be given to households using PWS as their primary drinking water source and measures to improve and maintain groundwater bodies. The Private Water Supplies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 establish the statutory framework for ensuring that all private water supplies used for drinking, domestic purposes, or food production meet defined standards of cleanliness and do not pose risks to human health. The Regulations apply to any water supply not provided by Northern Ireland Water, including shared domestic supplies, commercial premises, and larger private sources.

Drinking Water Protected Areas

There are three drinking water protected areas for surface water catchments used for the abstraction of drinking water and supplying Water Treatment Works (WTW) in the Borough:

- Lough Neagh (Dunore, Castor Bay, Moyola)
- Seaghan
- Clay Lake

The Lough Island Reavy catchment is also on the register of protected areas, however only 3.8 km² of this catchment is within the Borough and the majority is within Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. All groundwater bodies except the Lough Neagh groundwater body are also on the register of protected areas.

Economically Significant Aquatic Species – Freshwater Fish

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council has 780 km of rivers and three lakes designated for freshwater fish. Twenty four out of 37 monitored river waterbodies in the NB RBD and two out of three

¹ Opendata NI [online] Drinking Water Inspectorate Register of Private Water Supplies in Northern Ireland (23/02/2026)

lake waterbodies have their fish quality element failing to achieve 'good' status. Each RBMP has established a programme of measures to detail the improvements required to meet 'good' status, the actions required and the delivery mechanisms. Measures include addressing the various sources of diffuse and point source pollution and morphological enhancement such as the improvement of flows in rivers, levels in lakes and removing obstructions to fish migration.

Nutrient Sensitive Areas

A total territory approach has been adopted in Northern Ireland for the Nitrates Directives. There are three Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive sensitive areas in the Borough:

- North Eastern RBD – River Lagan Catchment
- Neagh Bann RBD – Lough Neagh Catchment, Newry River Catchment

There has been a trend toward significant reductions in mean nitrate concentrations in groundwater. Long-term trends show that average nitrate concentrations in rivers in Northern Ireland are predominantly decreasing or stable over the 20-year period, 1992-2012, which may be attributed to the measures implemented through the Nitrates Action Programme so that levels are well within EU standards.

Bathing Waters

The Borough has no recreational waters designated under the Bathing Water Quality Directive.

Flood Risk

The implementation of the Water Environment (Floods Directive) Regulations has resulted in strategic flood risk assessment and mapping being carried out for all of NI and the publication of detailed Flood Hazard and Risk Maps for the areas determined to be at potential significant flood risk. These maps are continuously updated and are accessible from the DfI website¹.

Three towns in the Borough have been identified as SFRA (Figure 32 overleaf). They are Lurgan, Portadown and Banbridge, all of which are in the NB RBD.

Four settlements, also shown in Figure 32, were identified in the PFRA as having a moderate risk of flooding and have been classified as Areas for Further Study. These are:

- Waringstown and Dromore in the North Eastern RBD; and
- Armagh and Keady in the Neagh Bann RBD.

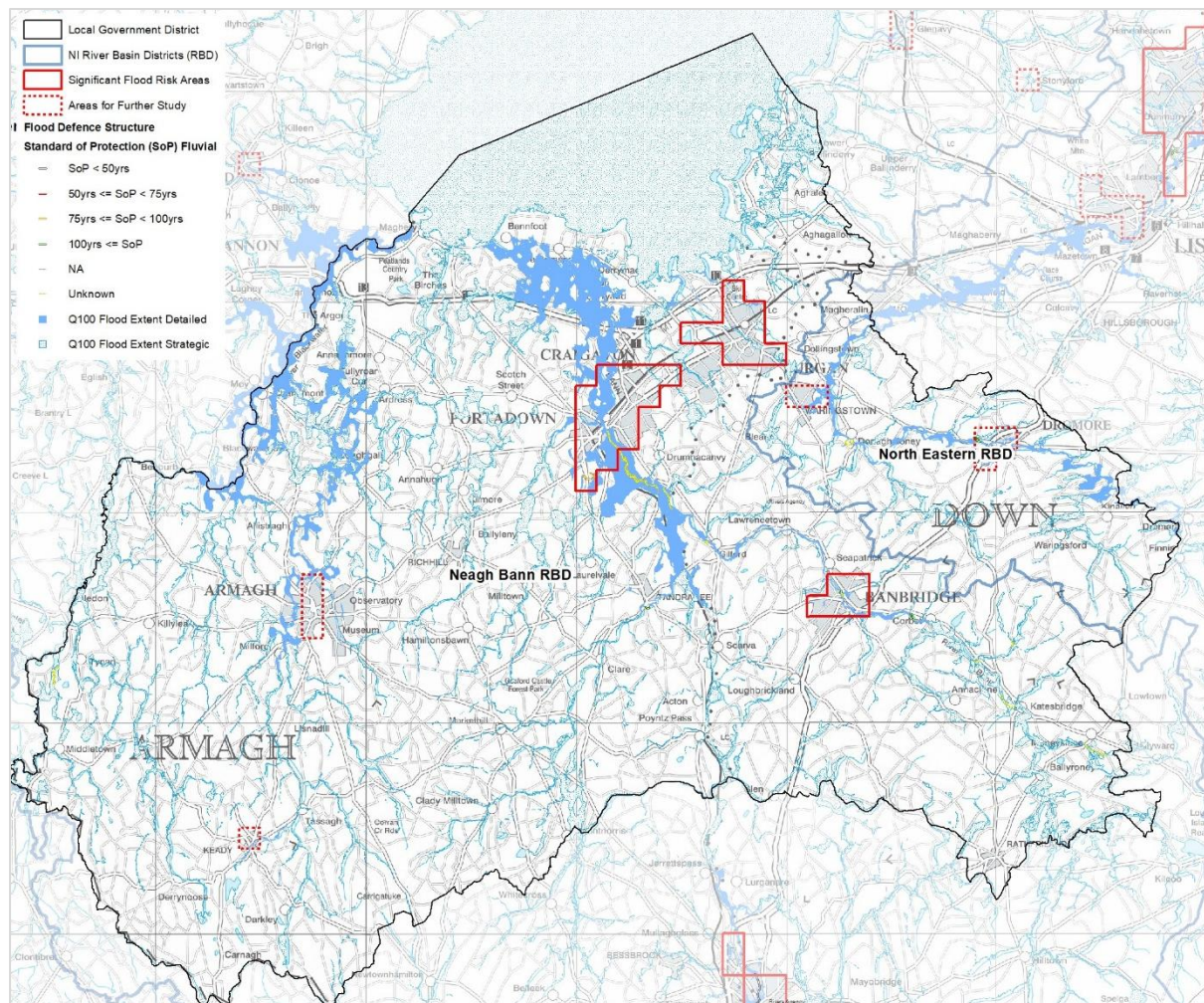
The Floods Directive aims to manage flood risk by:

- Prevention: avoiding construction of houses and industries in flood-prone areas; by adapting future developments to the risk of flooding; and by promoting appropriate land-use, agricultural and forestry practices.
- Protection: taking measures, both structural and non-structural, to reduce the likelihood and impact of floods.
- Preparedness: informing the public about flood risk and what to do in the event of a flood.

The multi-layered strategic Flood Hazard and Risk Maps provide information on flood defences, historical flood events and predicted extreme flood events for river and coastal flooding as well as the potential for surface water flooding. Additional information is available in Flood Maps NI showing the areas within the 1 per cent AEP1 floodplain, taking account of the impacts of climate change.

¹ DfI Rivers Agency: Flood Maps NI <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/topics/rivers-and-flooding/flood-maps-ni>

Figure 32: Significant Flood Risk Areas and Areas for Further Study with DfI Rivers Modelled Strategic and Detailed Q100 Fluvial Flood Extents



Source Department for Infrastructure (Rivers) Flood Maps (NI)

Increasingly, reliance on traditional drainage systems is proving inadequate to address the issue of storm drainage. Alone, such systems may not cope with the demands made by new development, in addition to the more intense and increasingly unpredictable rainfall arising from climate change. It is preferable that a range of SuDS solutions be employed as these are more sustainable and often less costly than using traditional piped infrastructure. They also offer multiple benefits such as biodiversity and amenity provision. Examples include localised source control measures such as green roofs, permeable paving and soakaways, or larger passive treatment areas such as ponds and wetlands which can be incorporated into wider green-blue infrastructure.

Water Supply

Information on water supply, quantity and quality is not reported at Council level and must be extracted from regional data sets or trends described at a Northern Ireland level.

Significant investment in water treatment works, service reservoirs and mains distribution has resulted in improvements in compliance across Northern Ireland with the drinking water standards, from 99.22% in 2004 to 99.9% in 2024. Within the Borough, the compliance rate at the customer tap was 99.9%¹.

The provision of water supply in Northern Ireland is the responsibility of NI Water. There are eight NIW water supply zones in the Borough which are supplied with water from four sources: Lough Neagh (Castor Bay), Fofanny & Spelga Dams, Clay Lake and Seagahan Dam with four associated Water Treatment Works

¹ <https://www.niwater.com/media/geso5q4o/2024-ni-water-drinking-water-quality-annual-report.pdf>

(WTW). There also are approximately 28 service reservoirs used in the distribution of water. Improvements to the distribution system in Portadown have been completed whilst improvements in the Lurgan area are currently ongoing.

The most recent Drinking Water Annual Quality Report lists 30 Capital Works Programmes affecting the Borough in 2024. The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 set the statutory framework for ensuring that all drinking water supplied to the public is safe, clean and compliant with defined quality standards.

Reservoirs

There are 14 'controlled reservoirs' (i.e. an impoundment $\geq 10,000$ cubic metres) in the Borough and these are detailed in Table 17 below.

Table 17: Controlled Reservoirs

NAME OF RESERVOIR	LOCATION
Castle Dillon Lake	NW of Armagh City
Clay Lake	SW of Keady
Darkley	Darkley
Lough Shark	West of Acton
Lowry's Lough	SE of Armagh City
Seagahan Dam	NE of Keady
Shaws Lake	North of Glenanne
Tullynawood Lake	East of Carnagh
Corbet Lough	Corbet
Lough Shark	West of Acton
Pond (Barronstown Road)	Between Dromore & Banbridge
Craigavon Lakes	Craigavon
Magheralin Pond (Drumnabreeze)	Magheralin
The Park Lake (Lurgan)	Lurgan

Reservoir Flood Mapping for Emergency Planning is also published on the DfI Rivers Agency GIS mapping portal <http://dfi-ni.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html>.

Wastewater Treatment

The provision of wastewater treatment works (WwTWs) in the Plan Area is also the responsibility of NI Water. NIW has provided the Council with information on the current planning status of WwTWs serving the Borough based on an estimate of future capacity based on growth factor (5-20%). Additionally NIW also detail the WwTW Network Current Planning Status.

The most recent NIW report (August 2025) states that there are 93 settlements in the Borough served by 'large' WwTWs. Of these, 70 settlements have capacity available (5-20%) and new connections permitted. Eleven settlements have no current capacity and restrictions are in place on new connections. No data is available for 13 settlements which have no linkage a public sewerage network and are currently reliant on private septic tanks. Additionally, 8 settlements have no network / catchment capacity.

Table 18: Capacity of Wastewater Treatment Works / Network

Settlements	No current WwTW capacity	Current WwTW capacity (5-20%)	No current Network / Catchment capacity
Hubs	00	03	00
Local Towns	02	04	1

Villages	9	21	5
Small Settlements	12	42	2
Small Settlements with no linkage to public sewerage network	0	13	0
Total	23	83	8

The larger settlements detailed as having no current WwTW capacity are Markethill, Rathfriland, Waringstown, Donaghcloney and Poyntzpass. The larger settlements detailed as having no current network/catchment capacity are Dromore, Waringstown and Donaghcloney.

The NIW August 2025 report states that the upgrade of Robinsonstown Wastewater Treatment Works is programmed for the 2025/26 financial year. NI Water is working with DfI on the funding required to facilitate the delivery of our capital investment programme for the remainder of the PC21 Price Control period (2025 – 2028).

The Council will continue to work closely with NI Water in its LDP production as the capacity of waste water treatment works may have an influence on the distribution of proposed development.

5.11.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

In the absence of a new plan there will be less certainty about the need for supply or treatment of water, therefore infrastructure may not be developed in the most efficient manner. There is a risk that cumulative effects from development will counteract the goals of plans such as the 2015 River Basin Management Plans to achieve 'good' ecological status. While planning policies address issues such as flood risk, the opportunity to take a more strategic approach would be missed. There is a risk that taking decisions in the absence of an up-to-date plan could result in development that does not make the most sustainable use of infrastructure or which subsequently requires further measures to address knock-on effects.

The plan will enable space for surface water management to be identified when zoning land. LDP policy could require, either generally or for specific zonings, that schemes are put in place that minimise surface water runoff as part of their design.

5.11.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Water Resources

- By comparison to the rest of Northern Ireland, surface water quality is generally lower in ACBCBC; a quarter of the waterbodies in the Council area are at 'poor' or 'bad' ecological status.
- Developments without access to mains sewers can incorporate sewage treatment on site, but it is important that there is capacity for safe disposal of treated discharges, that discharges do not impact on water quality or ecology and for maintenance of the treatment system to ensure that it remains effective in the long term.
- Other wastes may also cause pollution at the point where they are disposed of or utilised. Wastes from livestock, food processing or primary treatment such as sewage or anaerobic digesters have the potential to cause pollution elsewhere.
- Lurgan, Portadown and Banbridge are identified as SFRAs and there are four other settlements at moderate risk of flooding.
- Constructed flood alleviation and defence measures are expensive and should, where possible, be avoided and alternative methods of flood risk management considered.
- Climate change will increase the probability and extent of flood risk.
- Development should be planned to avoid areas at significant risk from flooding, now or in the future, or where development may increase the flood risk elsewhere.
- Development may lead to changes in the rate of surface water runoff, or the capacity of a receiving watercourse may be altered which in turn has the potential to increase flood risk.

- There are benefits in retaining and restoring natural flood plains and watercourses as a form of flood alleviation - this can support objectives of the Water Framework Directive.
- A safety issue arises because there are not currently legal requirements relating to impounded water therefore there are considered to be risks in potential inundation zones below reservoirs.
- Sustainable drainage (SuDS) measures should be incorporated and maintained in new development and redevelopment or regeneration schemes.
- Plan proposals should be compatible with the Flood Risk Management Plans published by Rivers Agency in December 2015.
- The high use of untargeted methods to apply herbicides and pesticides has caused pollution in waterbodies.
- There are issues with elevated levels of nutrients entering watercourses and polluting waterbodies.
- Development in general requires a water supply therefore can increase demands for sources, treatment and distribution infrastructure. This can be offset by measures to make more efficient use of water.
- There are capacity issues at a number of WwTWs and unless infrastructure is upgraded development requiring new connections to municipal treatment works will not be possible in certain areas. This may limit or delay potential for development.

5.12 Natural Resources

5.12.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

Natural resources covers biodiversity, fauna, flora, green/blue infrastructure, access and ecosystems services. It includes intertidal and coastal zones as well as the wider marine environment. Natural resources are protected in our regional policy that aims to conserve, protect and enhance our natural environment using a spatial approach. It also aims to reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate mitigation and adaptation to climate change whilst improving air quality.

There are several international measures which direct nature conservation legislation. The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (the 1971 Ramsar Convention) 'provides the framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.' Signatories committed to the Convention agree to use wetlands wisely, to designate and manage suitable wetlands, and to cooperate on transboundary wetlands and their species.

The Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (the Bern Convention), includes the objectives 'to ensure conservation and protection of wild plant and animal species and their natural habitats, to increase co-operation between contracting parties, and to regulate the exploitation of migratory species.' It is applicable to the natural heritage of the European continent and some African countries. The UK became a signatory to the Convention in 1982. It has been transposed into NI legislation via the Wildlife (NI) Order 1985 and the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (NI) Order 1985. Through these laws, Councils have the power to establish Local Nature Reserves and Wildlife Refuges to protect and enhance local biodiversity.

The Council also has a statutory duty to 'further the conservation of biodiversity', when exercising its functions under The Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (NI) 2011 ('WANE Act'). The WANE Act strengthened The Wildlife (NI) Order 1985 by enforcing a biodiversity duty on public bodies and adding species to Schedule 1, as well as providing specific protection for a new list of Schedule A1 bird species and generally improving enforcement powers. The A1 list includes species that are found in the Council area including red kite.

The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development also known as the 'Earth Summit' aimed to provide 'a new blueprint for international action on environmental and development issues. The Summit concluded that sustainable development could be achievable by all countries, but a new approach would be needed to ensure balance between economic, social and environmental concerns. One of the Summit's successful outcomes was The Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio 1992), which requires contracting parties to create and enforce national strategies and action plans to conserve, protect and enhance biological diversity. The UK is a signatory, and locally transposed legislation helps deliver on its commitments.

The UK's new National Site Network of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), replaced the European Union's network of sites 'Natura 2000' at the end of December 2020, seeks to conserve internationally important habitats for breeding, migrating and over wintering birds and to promote the maintenance of biodiversity. The Conservation (Natural Habitats etc) Regulations NI 1995 (as amended) transferred the European Commission's Habitats and Birds Directives into NI's domestic legislation. The Habitats Directive 1992 'aims to promote the maintenance of biodiversity' and along with the Birds Directive 2009 (as amended) is an integral part of nature conservation policy in Europe. Both Directives were transposed into NI's legislation so even with the UK leaving the EU in 2021, designated European sites remain within the Council's network of nature conservation sites. The Conservation Regulations also give effect to other site and species protection measures.

The Biodiversity Strategy for NI to 2020¹ sets out how Northern Ireland plans to meet its international obligations and local targets to protect biodiversity and ensure that the environment can continue to support our people and economy. It builds upon the first Biodiversity Strategy published in 2002 but adopts the modern and internationally agreed approach that emphasises the management of biological systems to deliver the materials and services upon which people depend – the ecosystem services approach. While protection of individual species and habitats is essential, the thrust of the Strategy is to manage natural and man-modified systems to deliver a multitude of outputs which support society and the economy. Protection of individual species and habitats is both a tool for delivery and a result of this approach. However, recognition of and a focus upon ensuring the interconnectedness and complexity of biological systems enables a more coherent approach, producing an intelligible and evocative Strategy that makes it clear that biodiversity protection is absolutely fundamental to society and the economy.

At a regional level, a spatial approach for the protection of natural resource is provided through four policies in the Regional Development Strategy 2035. RG9 aims to, ‘Reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate mitigation and adaptation to climate change whilst improving air quality.’ This is seen as a priority for NI not just because of the human health implications but because of the predicted effects on species and habitats. RG11 aims to ‘Conserve, protect and, where possible, enhance our built heritage and our natural environment.’ with inland waterways, the coast, ecological networks and biodiversity all incorporated to the guidance. The RDS guidance can deliver benefits not just for the natural environment but for people’s health and well-being, as well as the economy.

Regional strategies and policy highlight the diversity of NI’s natural environment. They provide protection of designated sites, priority species and habitats and other natural features as assets and directly link these to economic, social and environmental benefits. Planning Policy Statement 2: Natural Heritage sets out policy for protection of the natural environment from internationally important sites to local nature conservation sites, as well as areas with priority habitats and species. NI’s Strategic Planning Policy Statement2 (SPPS2) 2025 also applies, with the importance of NI’s natural heritage for a sustainable economy, and ‘to the overall health and well-being of our society’ recognised.

The natural heritage section of the SPPS2 provides strategic planning policy guidance for International designations (Ramsar sites, SACs, SPAs) and protected species, as well as national designations which includes Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) and nature reserves. The SPPS2 also guides on local designations and natural heritage features in non-designated areas because of the potential of all the natural environment in delivering ecosystem services which are ‘an integral part of sustainable development.’

Northern Ireland’s Programme for Government (PfG) 2024–27: Our Plan — Doing What Matters Most places environmental protection and sustainability at its core. As one of the three central missions, ‘Planet’ focusses on advancing a green growth economy and transition to a sustainable, low-carbon society. With the goal of improving the wellbeing of everyone living and working in Northern Ireland there is a commitment to nine immediate priorities, one of which is Protecting Lough Neagh and the Environment.

Sites containing specific standards of nature conservation value are designated under International, European and national legislation. Regional strategies and policy highlight the diversity of Northern Ireland’s natural environment. They provide protection for designated sites, species, habitats and other natural features as assets and directly link these to economic, social and environmental benefits. Programme for Government also commits to a Nature Recovery Plan to ensure Northern Ireland is in line to achieve the Global Biodiversity Framework aim to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and ensure 30% of land and sea is effectively managed for nature.

One mechanism to help achieve future protection of our natural resources is the LDP. The Plan can integrate natural heritage features and promote ecological networks and green/blue infrastructure (parks, green spaces, street trees, ponds, streams and lakes) creating or enhancing parks, planting native

¹ Biodiversity Strategy for NI to 2020 <https://www.daerani.gov.uk/publications/biodiversity-strategy-northern-ireland-2020-0>

trees/shrubs and incorporating waterways to help connect open and green space across urban and rural areas. These measures can deliver regional policy by helping to protect the natural environment and ecosystem services, as well as adapting to the effects of climate change

In our Corporate Plan's vision 2023-2027, there is a commitment to shape our places to be attractive, accessible, healthy, safe and clean. Although there is an overall sense of developing the local economy, there is also an awareness that the natural environment is a resource that can facilitate leisure and recreational activities. The Council priorities to help achieve this vision focus on community, economy and place and refer to completing environmental improvement and regeneration schemes, conserving architectural heritage and safeguarding the environment for future sustainable use. There is also a legislative duty on Councils, 'to further the conservation of biodiversity', as stated in the Wildlife and Natural Environment Act 2011.

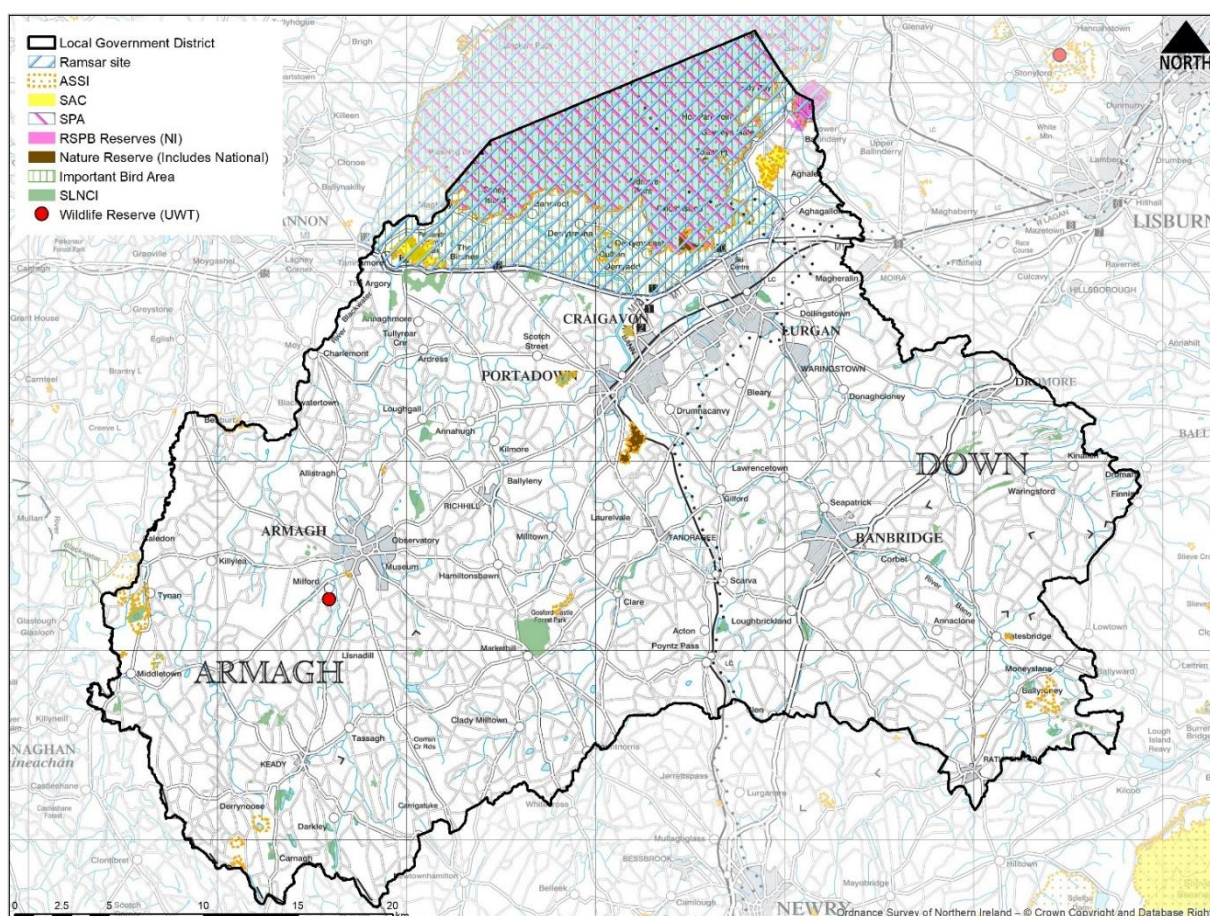
5.12.2 Baseline Information

Relevant information is presented in the LDP technical supplements. This topic also overlaps with the Health and Well-being, Material Assets, Physical Resources, Transport and Accessibility, Air Quality, Climate Change, Water and topics of this report.

Nature Conservation Sites

The Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council encompasses an area of around 1,338km² of land, plus part of Lough Neagh and has a variety of habitats including wetlands, woodlands and peatlands. Protection of the diverse natural environment is achieved using a variety of International, European, regional and local level designations that help to protect the most important areas for nature conservation and amenity value. At the same time, these sites help to maintain and enhance local biodiversity and green/blue infrastructure linkages across the Borough.

Figure 33: Natural Resources in Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council



Source: DAERA digital data, Ulster Wildlife Trust, RSPB.

Lough Neagh and Lough Beg is a Ramsar wetland of International importance and a Special Protection Area (SPA) of European importance and is recognised as an Important Bird Area. These wetland designations primarily denote the site's importance for wintering birds but it is also recognised regionally for its importance to breeding birds and specialist plants and animals through the Ramsar site and as an Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI). For the most part the Lough Neagh and Lough Beg Ramsar boundary is similar to the SPA boundary however in our council area it extends further south with the M1 forming its boundary. Portmore Lough which is part of these designations is an RSPB Reserve. Two wetland and peatland sites, Montiagh's Moss and Peatlands Park Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), are found north of the M1. There are several ASSIs concentrated around the north western and western parts of the Council and a few within centre. Oxford Island is located in the south eastern corner of Lough Neagh in the Borough and is an exemplar National Nature Reserve for conservation, public use, education and tourism. Peatlands Park is also important for public access.

As shown in Figure 21 woodland is particularly evident across the Borough, with larger tracts in the uplands of the west and east. These woodlands consist of Forest Service sites which include more biodiverse areas of semi-natural, native and ancient woodland. The Woodland Trust also has ancient woodland records across the Council. SLNCIs, which were identified by NIEA through the relevant legacy development plans for their local biodiversity value, are widespread across the Borough, as too are Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) that the Council has identified.

Biodiversity

A Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) for the Borough was published in 2014 to help reduce the loss of biodiversity across the Borough. There are a variety of habitats that range from the large open waterbody of Lough Neagh in the north, to the bogs, orchards, rivers and woodlands lying further south. In total, 14 animals and plants were identified as priorities for protection because of their local or regional importance. Some examples include the Irish damselfly, the Cryptic Wood-white, the Barn owl, bats, smooth newt and orchids. Six key habitat groups were identified. These are woodland, wetland, grassland, rivers and canals, peatlands and open mosaic habitats. Common threats to local biodiversity levels are development pressure from housing and associated infrastructure, agricultural improvement of land, nutrient enrichment, climate change and non-native species. More information on development pressure is in the Physical Resources topic. The vision of the LBAP is to provide a landscape rich in animals and plants that can be used and enjoyed by citizens. To help enable this, habitats and wildlife corridors need to be protected and have access where appropriate. The LBAP also refers to the benefits that the natural environment provides, be it resources, processes or amenity. More information on this is provided in the ecosystem services section of this chapter.

Green/blue Infrastructure

Green/blue infrastructure is promoted in the SPPS2 and all natural green and blue spaces and features can be classified as green/blue infrastructure. This includes all of the types of designation referred to in Figure 33 but also undesignated or unprotected ponds, streams, floodplains, parks, gardens, allotments and street trees.

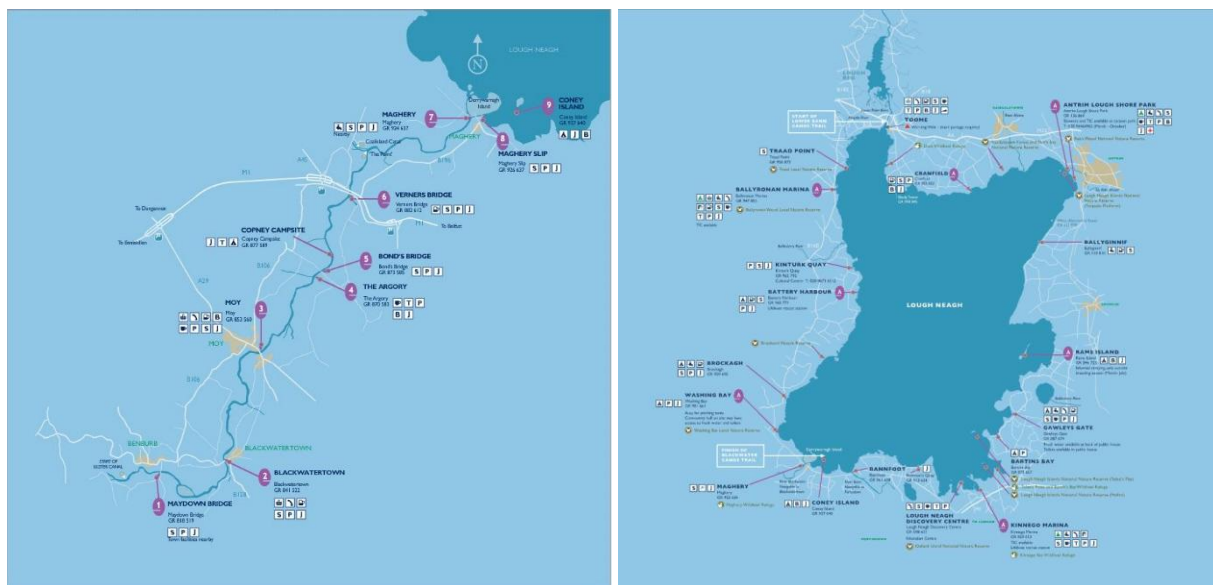
Green/blue infrastructure is often multifunctional land and may be able to integrate walking and cycling routes. These green spaces can also provide an amenity value and enable recreational use. Planning can help protect green/blue infrastructure to connect natural features and habitats together across landscapes. By doing so, this can help to maintain and enhance local biodiversity by creating wildlife corridors and help to strengthen natural infrastructure that may act as floodplain, or a carbon or water store. More information on active travel and greenways can be found in the Transport and Accessibility section of this report.

Canal network

The waterways in the Borough, including its canals, can be considered blue infrastructure. These include the Newry, Ulster and Lagan Canals. One of the proposals for green spaces in the Banbridge Town Centre Masterplan referred to a canoe trail on the Upper River Bann that could also connect to the area's linen

heritage. The Council has already been involved in plans to open sections of the Ulster Canal to Caledon, with further plans to connect to Lough Neagh. Canoe NI helps ensure the provision of canoe trails; current canoe trails are shown in Figure 34.

Figure 34: Canoe Trail and access points for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council



Source: CanoeNI

Additional note

Ecosystem Services

In recent years, the natural environment has become increasingly recognised for the range of beneficial services that it provides. These include providing food and materials, regulating the physical environment through water and carbon storage, supporting processes such as the water cycle and meeting other needs for people such as recreation and spiritual. These benefits can be referred to as ‘ecosystem services’ (ES) and are referred to in the SPPS2 as environmental processes that produce essential resources such as food, water and clean air.

In some Councils, there are landscape-scale ES projects that focus on more sustainable approaches to managing land that provide positive benefits for stakeholders like reduced costs and using fewer resources. An example of ecosystems services in the Borough is NI Water and Ulster Wildlife’s development of a wildflower meadow on a 7-ha site adjacent to the Ballynacor WwTW in Derrymacash, near Craigavon¹. The site previously accommodated sludge lagoons used in waste water treatment and is the first project of its kind in NI.

5.12.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without a Local Development Plan

In the absence of a new plan, there is the risk that development may occur in inappropriate locations that could negatively impact upon nature conservation sites or green/blue infrastructure including wildlife corridors. It may become increasingly difficult to spatially manage development to avoid these negative impacts on the local environment and to maintain and enhance local biodiversity. Without current spatial information, opportunities to protect green / blue infrastructure and ecosystems services would be more likely to be missed.

5.12.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Natural Resources

- Significant areas of Lough Neagh and Portmore Lough are within the Council and are protected under numerous nature conservation designations with varying features of interest.
- There is a lack of formally designated nature conservation areas through the majority of the Council’s interior, the focus of which is over the wetlands of Lough Neagh and its southern fringe and Portmore Lough.

¹ Ulster Wildlife “Former sewage lagoons to be transformed into wildlife haven” 25th August 2016.

- Local development pressure from rural housing and renewables is evident in some parts of the Council and in areas that are more sensitive, local level measures may be needed to help avoid environmental impacts.
- The three main non-governmental nature conservation organisations in Northern Ireland are present in the Council with National Trust sites mostly located in the north west, Ulster Wildlife present south of Armagh and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds located to the north east at Portmore Lough.
- The vision of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan presents an opportunity for partnership working, community involvement and environmental education to help combat threats to local biodiversity.
- The Council has a statutory duty to further biodiversity conservation within its functions.
- The LDP should use opportunities to increase the Council's green/blue infrastructure network by linking existing green and open space together and creating greenways with access whilst also investing in the canal network.
- The LDP should encourage the sustainable development of land as a multifunctional resource and promote ecosystems services with multiple benefits for stakeholders.

5.13 Landscape

5.13.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

Landscape protection in Northern Ireland is evident at the regional level with a key aim in the Regional Development Strategy to protect and enhance the environment for its own sake. The environment in Northern Ireland is seen as one of its greatest assets and regional policy encourages protection of natural heritage assets and landscape character.

The SPPS2 also recognises the importance of the countryside as a significant asset. It aims to avoid inappropriate development and provide a high standard of landscape protection that also reflects regional and local differences. Protection of landscape as a consideration is evident within several subject policies including development in the countryside, minerals, open space, sport and outdoor recreation, renewable energy, telecommunications and other utilities.

The landscape character assessment has concluded that two areas, Blackwater Valley and Lough Neagh environs will be designated as Strategic Landscape Policy areas as an acknowledgment of their unique landscape characteristics and sensitivity to inappropriate development.

Much of what is valued in a landscape is a blend of natural features and social and cultural history. It is the viewer's perception that provides an intrinsic value. This can help to define a region and provide a sense of place. Landscape is increasingly being realised in economic terms as an asset for tourism but also as a motivator to encourage people to purchase a home or to invest in a new location.

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2023-2027 includes 'Place' as one of its three themes. It acknowledges the unique tapestry and diversity of our city, towns, villages, nature reserve, waterways, rural hinterlands, parks and open spaces is not just important to our local flora and fauna. It is equally important to our local people and visitors.

5.13.2 Baseline Information

A detailed baseline of information is presented in the LDP Technical Supplements on Landscape Character Assessment, Environmental Assets and Pressure Analysis. This topic also overlaps with the Health and Well-being, Economy, Material Assets, Physical Resources, Natural Resources and the Historic Environment and Cultural heritage sections of this report.

Landscape Character

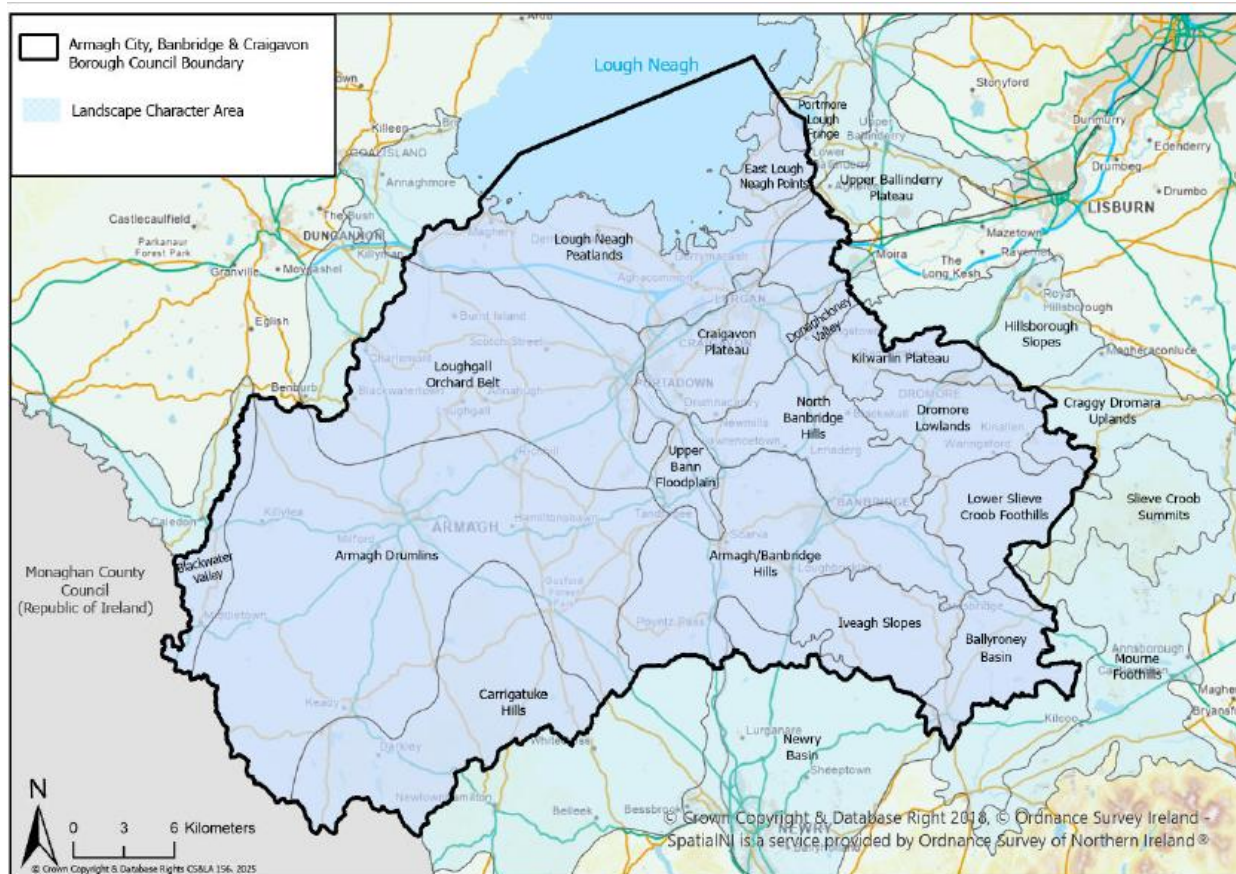
The Borough is covered by 23 Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) under the Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment (NILCA 2000). LCAs were developed as a means to identify and describe variations in the landscape. The 23 LCAs in the Borough range from the Portmore Lough Fringe and Lough Neagh Peatlands in the north, to the Loughgall Orchard Belt and the Armagh Drumlins towards the west. Several LCAs cover the rest of the Borough including the Craigavon Plateau, the Lower Slieve Croob Foothills and the Armagh/Banbridge Hills. These provide a diversity of landscapes that range from flat fenland to rolling drumlins with historic estates to rocky outcrops, rolling ridges to stone walled fields.

The majority of LCAs are of low to medium/high sensitivity to change but four LCAs are of high sensitivity. These are the Lough Neagh Peatlands, the Blackwater Valley, the Slieve Croob Foothills and the Mourne Foothills. A full list of LCAs is in the LDP Technical Supplement. Landscape Character Assessment and further information can be found at www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/landscape-character-northern-ireland.

Regional Landscape Character

The Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment (NIRLCA) divides the country into 26 distinct areas known as RLCA's, which provide a regional overview of landscape character. The RLCA's are based upon a combination of factors including people, place, nature, culture and perception. Descriptions for each RLCA include subjects like location, setting and key characteristics; forces and indicators of change and ecosystem services are also included.

Figure 35: Regional Landscape Character Areas Assessment for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council



Six RLCAs are represented in the Borough all of which extent into neighbouring councils. These are the Lough Neagh Basin, the Southern Drumlins and Orchards, the Slieve Gullion and South Armagh Hills, the Newry Valley and Upper Bann, Mourne and Slieve Croob, and the Down Drumlins and Holywood Hills. These range in character from low-lying, boggy ground, to rolling drumlins or rounded hills with characteristic open heath and bog. More information on the RLCAs can be found in the LDP Landscape Character Assessment technical supplement and on the DAERA website¹ and Regional Landscape Character Map viewer: <https://www.daerani.gov.uk/services/regional-landscape-character-areas-map-viewer>.

Areas of Scenic Quality

Areas of Scenic Quality (ASQ) are areas without major intrusion that are visually pleasing due to a combination of landscape features. They may also have important natural, cultural or historic features. The Borough has a small portion of AONBs and has two potential ASQs.

Local Landscape Policy Areas

Numerous Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs) in the Council have been designated to maintain the setting of local settlements. LLPAs protect natural features and spaces, as well as views from settlements to other landscape features. Together these aspects combine to help create a sense of place and the character of a settlement. LLPAs can protect features that are of value to the local setting and that make an area attractive. There is guidance on protection of the main features of each LLPA. In total, there are 101 LLPAs in the Borough however none were designated in the legacy Dungannon and South Tyrone Area Plan 2010. LLPAs contain features that are individual to that area and add to its character. There is likely to be an opportunity to review existing LLPAs and to add to these.

¹ Landscape Character of Northern Ireland <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/landscape-character-northern-ireland>

Tree Preservation Orders

Trees are an obvious natural feature that can be part of an LLPA that also provide biodiversity and amenity value. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) can be placed on trees that are considered under threat from development. There are 83 TPOs within the Borough.

Area of Significant Archaeological Interest

There is one Area of Significant Archaeological Interest (ASAI) in the Borough at Navan Fort. The ASAI adds a level of protection to the local landscape helping to maintain a cultural asset, which is important for local tourism and education. More information on the ASAI is in section 5.14.2 of this report.

Development Pressure

There is evidence of development pressure within the Borough from single rural dwellings. Planning applications for single dwellings peaked in 2005-2008 and approvals peaked in 2012 at 576. More recently applications and approvals have decreased but pressure in rural areas for housing remains and includes some areas more sensitive to change such as the Lough Neagh shore. More information on development pressure is in the Physical Resources section of this report.

5.13.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

In the absence of a new plan, there could be an increased risk of losing or degrading landscapes due to over development or inappropriate siting of structures. It could become increasingly difficult to spatially manage new development in the context of local landscape character.

5.13.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Landscape

- There is a small portion of AONB in the Council and there are a wide variety of landscape types across it including 23 Landscape Character Areas (LCAs), six Regional Landscape Character Areas (RLCAs) and 101 Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs) that make the Council unique in its own right and therefore attractive to investors for housing, recreation and business ventures.
- When considering landscapes within the borough, the Landscape Character Assessment concluded that two areas, Blackwater Valley and Lough Neagh environs should be as Strategic Landscape Policy areas as an acknowledgment of their unique landscape characteristics and sensitivity to inappropriate development.
- There is an opportunity to use the LDP process to designate more LLPAs across the Council and particularly in the Dungannon and South Tyrone legacy Council area where there are none.
- The Mourne Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) borders the Council on its south eastern flank and is an example of where management of landscape issues could particularly benefit from partnership working with other stakeholders including Newry, Mourne & Down Council.

5.14 Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage

5.14.1 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies

The European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe 1992 and the European Convention on the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe 1987 (known respectively as the 'Valetta Convention' and the 'Granada Convention') place responsibility on member states to consider the conservation of archaeological heritage and to reinforce and promote policies for the conservation and enhancement of Europe's heritage. The Xi'an Declaration on the Conservation of the Setting of Heritage Structures, Sites and Areas (2005) aims to contribute through legislation, policies, planning processes and management to better protect and conserve the world's heritage structures, sites and areas in their settings. The Faro Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (2005) places a requirement to enhance the value of cultural heritage through its identification, study, interpretation, protection, conservation and presentation. It also requires member states to promote cultural heritage protection as a central factor in the mutually supporting objectives of sustainable development, cultural diversity and contemporary creativity.

In the regional context, PPS 6: Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage, along with its addendum, sets out planning policies for the protection and conservation of archaeological remains and built heritage features. Supplementary planning guidance in the form of booklets incorporating local policies, design guides and baseline audits are published for Conservation Areas.

The SPPS2 provides policy relating to this objective in Chapter 6, paragraphs 6.1 - 6.30. The regional strategic objectives in the SPPS2 are to:

- Secure the protection, conservation, and, where possible, the enhancement of our built and archaeological heritage.
- Promote sustainable development and environmental stewardship with regard to our built and archaeological heritage.
- Encourage the link between conservation and economic prosperity.

Specific policy on the implementation of new LDPs is set out in paragraphs 6.28 and 6.29 of the SPPS2. These link directly with the aims of the above-mentioned European Conventions.

The overarching policy of the SPPS2 recognises that townscape, built heritage, archaeology and cultural heritage form an important part of the character and appearance of our cities, towns, villages, small settlements and countryside. They are also part of our culture and can contribute to our quality of life. The historic environment and cultural heritage have the potential to benefit our community and our economy in terms of tourism and regeneration. They contribute to the sense of place in our towns, villages and smaller settlements and are part of what is unique about places in the Borough.

Regional guidance recognises that quality natural assets, interesting architecture, and built heritage can contribute to a feeling of being somewhere unique, which contributes to the tourism offer. Reuse of both listed and locally important buildings can contribute to urban and rural renaissance, which can help vitality and footfall in settlement centres, supporting the local economy.

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2023-2027 has 'Environment and Place' and 'Community Wellbeing' as themes. The Corporate Plan outlines its commitment to seek investment to preserve the uniqueness of our heritage and places, such as supporting the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium and Navan Fort in their bid for World Heritage status. Furthermore, the Corporate Plan details that it will take action to provide a programme of high quality, nurturing opportunities to participate in arts, culture and heritage activities, which will help improve physical, mental and social wellbeing as part of its commitment to encourage participation in arts, culture, heritage and physical activity.

The Council's Draft Heritage Strategy 'Your Voice, Our Vision' 2025 has a strategy that sets a clear direction for the next decade. It will protect what matters, widen participation and harness heritage to strengthen wellbeing, place and prosperity. To deliver our vision, the strategy has three overarching themes:

- Establish & Advocate
- *Protect & Invest*
- Engage & Support

Alongside these themes, ten objectives have been identified to guide our strategic direction over the next decade. These are to:

- Establish collaborative governance, leadership and partnership structures to embed heritage as a priority across the Borough
- Enhance the sustainability of local heritage by celebrating new and existing contributions and providing recognition and networks
- Advocate and prioritise heritage across local, regional and national bodies
- Promote the Borough's identity to support heritage-led regeneration and attract investment
- Build a strong evidence base by auditing and mapping our heritage, giving us the tools to make informed decisions and unlock investment
- Champion collaborative action to ensure our built, natural and cultural heritage is revitalised and resilient for the future
- Identify, protect and enhance opportunities for growth and development of key designated sites within the Borough
- Create opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to engage with our heritage
- Increase participation by encouraging more volunteers and enhancing formal and informal learning opportunities
- Help and support communities to access the resources they need to explore their heritage

Informed by these objectives, a set of actions has been developed to respond directly to our communities' priorities, i.e. stronger leadership, visible investment in places and more inclusive participation.

5.14.2 Baseline Information

A detailed baseline of information is presented in a number of LDP Technical Supplements. The Historic Environment Division (HED) of the Department for Communities (DfC) has also published its digital datasets of the historic environment online¹ and has created a Historic Environment Map Viewer². This topic overlaps with the Economy and Employment and Landscape topics.

Overview

The Borough has a rich heritage of archaeological sites, monuments and buildings, representing the aspiration and achievements of past societies and providing evidence of settlements from 9,000 years ago to the present day. Highlights include the historic towns of Armagh City, Banbridge and Dromore, the many State Care and scheduled monuments, which include Navan Fort and associated sites, the Danes Cast and the Newry Canal. Several of the settlement patterns have their origins in the medieval period and the town of Armagh merits specific consideration as a settlement where complex and extensive below ground archaeological remains as well as historic fabric incorporated into later structures, are known to exist.

Evidence of occupation or activity at Armagh City dates back some 6,500 years and it has a unique sense of place with a significance and influence felt across the island. It has been the spiritual capital of Ireland

¹ Department for Communities Historic Environment Digital Datasets (Date published: 02 August 2017)

² <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/services/historic-environment-map-viewer>

since around 445AD. The historic centre of Armagh has a prime place in history as one of the earliest urban settlements, having formed as a hilltop settlement over a period of 1,500 years. The city is of great ecclesiastical, historical, architectural and archaeological importance, and is likely to owe its origin to the proximity of Navan, the capital of the Kings of Ulster. Banbridge has a strong industrial heritage, being a centre for flax and linen production in the 18th Century. The quality of the built heritage in parts of the Borough is therefore high and with this comes the need to protect and conserve it for our own and future generations to enjoy.

Listed Buildings

Listed Buildings are those designated through listing as being of ‘special architectural or historic interest’ under Section 80 of the Planning Act (NI) 2011. There are a total of approximately 1266 Listed Buildings² in the Borough, 33 of which have been assigned Grade A status. The majority (25) of the Grade A buildings are located in or close to Armagh City, including Armagh Observatory, St Patrick’s Cathedral, the Public Library and the Bank of Ireland building. Others outside Armagh City include Gosford Castle, Richhill House and Tynan Abbey. A further 194 (approx.) buildings are listed, but are ‘record only’ or have not yet been allocated a grade.

Buildings at Risk

The Ulster Architecture and Heritage Society in conjunction with the Department for Communities (DfC), has compiled an online list of Heritage at Risk in Northern Ireland (BHARNI)¹. The BHARNI register contains a selection of listed buildings, scheduled monuments and other historic structures, ranging from dwellings to large industrial complexes, which are may not have a sustainable future without intervention. It highlights the vulnerability of our historic built environment and will act as a catalyst for its restoration and reuse. Within the Borough there are a total of 193 ‘heritage at risk’, of which 149 are listed, 41 unlisted and 3 scheduled monuments.

Sites and Monuments Record

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council area has a rich record of archaeological sites and historic monuments. The NI Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), is maintained by the Historic Environment Division (HED) of the DfC and is regularly updated. As at October 2022, it lists 1,515 Sites and Monuments² located across the Council area.

Scheduled sites are archaeological and historic sites and monuments that are afforded protection under Article 3 of the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995 and there are 187³ such Scheduled sites in the Borough (Figure 36). Two sites, which are bridges of the Ulster Canal, are currently proposed for scheduling. The Schedule includes assets such as Neolithic tombs, earthworks and settlement sites, early Christian era raths and crannogs and more modern features such as World War II pillboxes and an air raid shelter. Works affecting scheduled monuments require Scheduled Monument Consent, a legislative permission, separate to and distinct from planning permissions. Potentially, more sites may be discovered through archaeological work, during development operations or through agricultural activity. The Borough has 15 Monuments in State Care; these are sites the ownership or guardianship of the Department.

Areas of Special Archaeological Interest

There is currently one Area of Special Archaeological Interest (ASAI) in the Borough, at the Navan complex (Figure 36). Navan Fort (Eamhain Mhacha) is the focus of a group of monuments which together form one of the most important areas of historic landscapes in Ireland. The main monuments in the Navan Complex as known at present are: Navan Fort, Haughey’s Fort, Loughnashade, the King’s Stables and a group of megalithic tombs. The Navan Fort complex is owned and managed by Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council. The site is of sufficient importance to merit its inclusion on the tentative list for nomination as a World Heritage Site as part of The Royal Sites of Ireland.

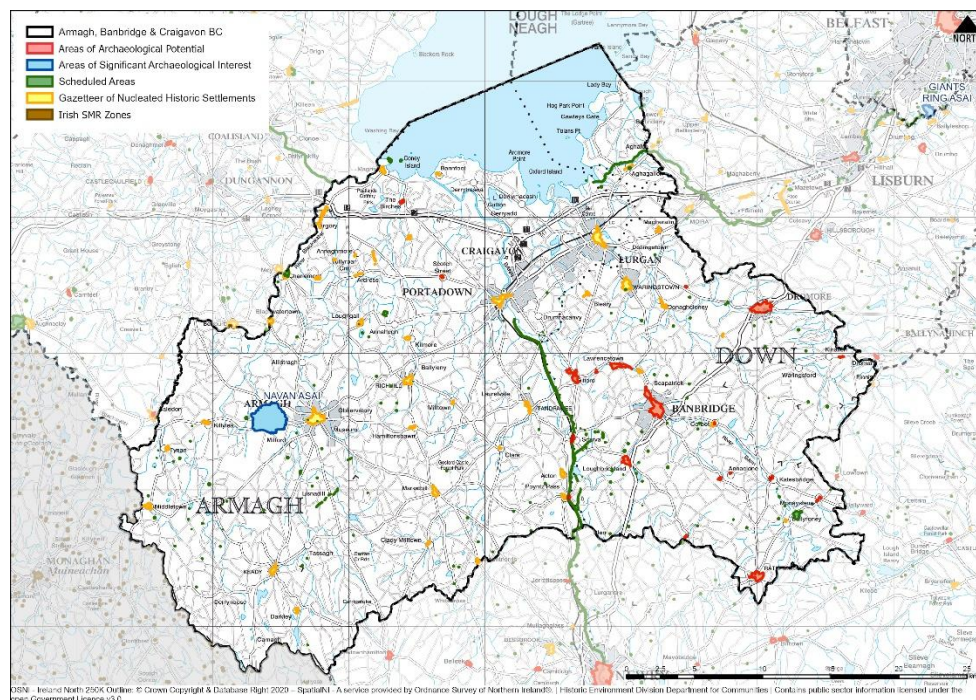
¹ Department for Communities Buildings at Risk Register for Northern Ireland (accessed March 2025)

² DfC Historic Environment Digital Datasets ‘Sites and Monuments Record’ (dataset dated: Dec 2025)

³ DfC Historic Environment Digital Datasets ‘Scheduled Zones’ (dataset dated: March 2025)

ASAs are designated by Councils through the LDP process. Two new candidate ASA have been identified by the Council at Lisnagade east of Scarva and Knock Iveagh north of Rathfriland. Statements of Significance and detailed maps have been prepared by HED for both sites. Both sites will be brought forward at Draft Plan Strategy Stage.

Figure 36: Historic Environment: ASA, AAP and Scheduled Zones



Source: Department for Communities Historic Environment Digital Datasets (Date updated: 03 October 2022)

Area of Archaeological Potential

There are 19 settlements in the Borough with identified Areas of Archaeological Potential (AAP). These are:

Annaclone	Glasker	Poyntzpass
Ardtannagh	Katesbridge	Rathfriland
Banbridge	Lawrencetown / Lenaderg	Scarva
Corbet Milltown	Loughbrickland	Scotch Street
Dromore	Moneyslane	The Birches
Gamblestown	Monteith	Tullylish
Gilford		

Source: Department for Communities Historic Environment Digital Datasets (digital dataset: March 2021)

The Gazetteer of Nucleated Historic Settlements is the result of a programme of work within the DfC to identify historic settlement centres and from these, in some cases, identify new AAP or modify existing AAP. The draft Gazetteer includes 55 entries within the Borough, of which 36 do not have an existing AAP associated. These include areas of Clonmore, Keady, Loughgall, Lurgan, Magheralin and Waringstown.

There are various existing policies for Areas of Archaeological Potential and Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest within the Armagh Area Plan 2004 (Alteration No 1) and the Banbridge/Newry & Mourne Area Plan 2015. The new LDP will consider the identification of AAPs through consultation with the DfC.

Industrial Heritage

The Borough also contains a wealth of remains from the industrial past, which are reminders of the economic as well as the social development of the area. Sites of industrial heritage can be found not only

in the city and main towns, but also in rural locations. They include many remnants of the former flax and linen industries, tanneries, quarries, windmills and gasworks. There are numerous bridges, tunnels and other engineering features remaining from the former Great Northern Railway and also bridges, aqueducts, locks and other features of the Ulster, Newry and Lagan canals, the latter two of which are Scheduled Monuments. As previously discussed parts of these former railway and canal routes are under consideration for the development of new greenways.

Defence Heritage

The Borough contains many defence heritage assets, largely associated with World War II and many of which are focused along the route of the Portadown- Newry railway. Defence heritage assets include pillboxes, observation posts, searchlight batteries and an air raid shelter. Several WWII Pillboxes within the Borough have been recognised as Scheduled Monuments, recognising the role that they played as part of the World War 2 “stopline” located in the borough. The majority of former airfields in the Borough are now derelict, some have been reused or altered, and others are in a state of decay or have been demolished.

Historic Parks and Gardens

Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes reflect planned and managed landscape enhancement carried out since the 17th Century. The historic parks, gardens and designed landscapes of Northern Ireland are a striking and important feature of our historic environment and are enjoyed as unique places for study, recreation, reflection and conservation. They represent a living record of social, cultural and economic change and values, as embodied in their landscaping, design, features and collections of trees, shrubs and flowers. The Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes Record and the Register of Parks, Gardens and Demesnes of Special Historic Interest are both maintained by the Historic Environment Division (HED) of the Department for Communities as part of the Historic Environment Record of Northern Ireland (HERoNI). Sites are graded as category A*, A, or B to reflect their heritage significance. Within the Borough there are a total of 32no sites which lie entirely within the Council Area and a further 3no sites which lie only partly

Table 19: Listed Buildings Within the Borough

Grade A*	■ Caledon* ■ Tynan Abbey		
Grade A	■ Ardress ■ Benburb Manor House* ■ Brownlow House (Lurgan Park) ■ Coney Island ■ Drumbanagher*	■ Elmfield ■ Gilford Castle ■ Gosford Castle ■ Hockley Lodge ■ Manor House (Loughgall)	■ Moyallon House ■ Summer Island ■ The Argory ■ The Mall ■ The Palace ■ Waringstown House
Grade B	■ Brookfield House ■ Castle Dillon ■ Darton Hall ■ Deans Hill ■ Eden Villa	■ Fairview House – Tannaghmaore Gardens ■ Fellows Hall ■ Gill Hall ■ Lawrencetown House ■ Loughbrickland House ■ Raughlan (Rocklands)	■ Scarva House ■ Straw Hill ■ Tandragee Castle ■ The Observatory ■ Umgola ■ Wood Bank

Source: Department for Communities Historic Environment Digital Datasets (Date published: 4th December 2025)

*These Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes have a small portion within the ACBCBC Plan Area, but mainly fall within an adjoining Council area.

Conservation Areas

A Conservation Area is an area deemed to be of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance, as designated under Section 104 of the Planning (NI) Act NI 2011. The Borough has a total of five Conservation Areas. They are:

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------|------------|
| ▪ Armagh City | ▪ Dromore | ▪ Richhill |
| ▪ Loughgall | ▪ Lurgan | |

Great importance is attached to the preservation of the existing character and appearance of such areas allied to the promotion of their economic well-being.

Areas of Townscape Character

Areas of Townscape and Village Character are designated by the Council through the local development plan with accompanying local policies for the control of development within these areas. There are currently 16 Areas of Townscape Character (ATC) within the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Boroughs as detailed below. There are currently no designated Areas of Village Character (AVC) in the Borough.

Armagh City District Council (AAP 2004)

None

Banbridge District Council (BNMAP 2015): 12

- Annaclone
- Banbridge Town: (3 areas)
- Dromore: (2 areas)
- Gilford: (2 areas)
- Loughbrickland
- Rathfriland
- Scarva
- Tullyish

Craigavon Borough Council (CAP 2010): 4

- Lurgan - College Walk, Lough Road
- Portadown – Bachelor's Walk, Bridge street
- Donaghcloney
- Charlestown.

Local Landscape Policy Areas

The features or combination of features that contribute to the environmental quality, integrity or character of a Local Landscape Policy Area (LLPA) are specific to individual settlements and differ from place to place. Within the Boroughs extant area plans (Armagh Area Plan 2004, Banbridge/Newry & Mourne Area Plan 2015 & Craigavon Area Plan 2010), there are 101 Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs) within and adjoining the majority of the settlements. No LLPAs were designated in the Dungannon and South Tyrone Area Plan 2010 within the three villages (Clonmore, Derrylee and part of Tamnamore) that transferred to ACBCBC post-RPA.

5.14.3 Likely Evolution of the Baseline without the Local Development Plan

Without the LDP in place, the RDS, the SPSS2, extant Area Plans and PPSs would all still be applied. Stakeholder consultation would also continue to inform decisions. However, in the absence of a new plan, opportunities to consider the historical and cultural assets in the Borough in future growth plans and place-shaping may be missed.

There are a very large number of strategic heritage assets in the Borough, dating from the Mesolithic period through to World War II. Without a new LDP in place, opportunities to designate new areas of special archaeological interest and areas of archaeological potential in the LDP might also be missed. Opportunities might also be missed to take advantage of the potential that archaeological, industrial, and defence heritage assets have as part of our tourism and visitor offer, leading to reduced economic benefit for local communities.

The protection, conservation and regeneration of historic places can contribute to well-being in society through providing people with enjoyment, inspiration, learning opportunities, mental and physical health benefits, and a sense of place and identity.

It has been recognised that there is evidence of incremental erosion of historic/architectural character and appearance within some of the designated conservation areas. In the absence of a LDP the 'setting' of historic assets or places, which may extend far beyond the boundary or curtilage of the site, may not be taken into consideration. A new LDP is an opportunity to consider the reasons for these issues and identify the positive role that planning can play.

5.14.4 Key Sustainability Issues for Historic Environment and Cultural heritage

- The Historic Environment and Cultural heritage play a role in maintaining and enhancing the sense of place in our settlements and rural locations which can be supported by building design recognising historic environment evidence in both urban and rural locations.
- Heritage assets are at risk from neglect, decay, development pressures and vacancy.
- Heritage at Risk should continue to be identified and efforts made to maintain their regular use and/or support their restoration.
- The Council area's rich cultural and heritage assets can contribute to a high-quality built environment that helps to create attractive places for living, investing in and visiting.
- The Council area contains centres, villages and towns which each have a unique sense of place, and character. Protecting this sense of place aspect has benefits for people and their pride in their community.
- Protecting built heritage features and recognising their value extends beyond listing and enforcement. Consideration should be given to the setting of those features, and the scale and context of surrounding buildings.
- The Council area has a rich archaeological heritage, and this could be further explored through identifying new Areas of Archaeological Potential.
- The Navan Fort Complex is of sufficient importance to merit its inclusion on the tentative list for nomination as a World Heritage Site. Development in this area should be managed to support nomination of the Navan site and the recently announced bid by Armagh Observatory and Planetarium (AOP) as part of the Astronomical Observatories of Ireland's bid for UNESCO World Heritage Status.
- The Council area has a rich industrial heritage through milling, linen and textiles production, its 18th and 19th Century transport engineering and defence heritage associated with World War II.
- Opportunities to link these heritage assets with present-day uses could be explored.
- Appreciating the value of built heritage should also apply to new buildings.
- There is ongoing loss of certain non-designated heritage assets such as historic farmsteads and buildings in the countryside, industrial and defence heritage, and historic shopfronts in some towns and settlements. Non-designated buildings which are of heritage or architectural importance in the context of overall landscape, townscape or heritage value should be recognised for their role in conserving these settings.
- A number of Conservation Areas and Townscape Character Areas may be at risk of flooding both with and without the effects of climate change.
- There may be opportunities to maintain or reflect historic routeways and townland boundaries.
- Traffic pollution, air quality, noise pollution and other problems are affecting the historic environment.

Sustainability objectives have been identified through consideration of intentional, national, regional and local policies, plans, programmes, strategies and initiatives; baseline information at regional and, where available, at local level and apparent trends.

The following Sustainability Objectives are informed by the topic review and key sustainability issues identified in Chapter 5. The rationale for selecting each is outlined. The prompts used to assess plan options against the Sustainability Objectives are presented in the Sustainability Appraisal Guide in Appendix 5.

6.1 The Sustainability Objectives

1.... improve health and well-being.

Public policy seeks to increase healthy life expectancy, reduce preventable deaths, improve mental health and reduce health inequalities. Evidence shows that there is a need to address obesity, increase physical activity and reduce inequalities in health. It is also necessary to provide for the needs of an ageing population and minimise the detrimental impacts of noise. This can be achieved by creating an environment that is clean and attractive; encourages healthy lifestyles and enables access to health care facilities for all.

2.... strengthen society.

Regional policy is directed towards improving community relations and creating a safe society which is more united. Success will be represented by places which are inclusive, respect culture and identity, promote social integration and create a sense of pride. They will also be designed to feel safe and to reduce opportunity for crime or anti-social behaviour.

3.... provide good quality, sustainable housing.

The population is growing and therefore there is ongoing need for new housing in locations that meet regional policy, are accessible and balance the needs of society and the environment. The make-up of households is changing therefore design needs to meet long-term requirements with good quality build to be sustainable. This objective should reduce homelessness and ensure decent, affordable homes with a mix of types.

4.... enable access to high quality education.

Good education improves opportunities for employment and contributes to the avoidance of poverty and to healthier lifestyles. The provision of suitable accommodation for educational establishments in appropriate, accessible locations should play a part in making them more sustainable and reducing inequalities in education.

5.... enable sustainable economic growth.

Regional policy seeks to develop a strong, competitive and regionally balanced economy. It is necessary to provide suitable locations for employment, with flexibility where necessary, to reflect current and future distribution of jobs across sectors, encourage new business start-ups, facilitate innovation, regenerate areas, attract investment and make employment as accessible as possible for all. This will reduce unemployment and poverty by helping more people to earn a living and increase their income.

6.... manage material assets sustainably.

Material assets such as infrastructure and sources of energy production are essential for society and the economy but need careful planning to ensure that they are designed for efficiency and to minimise adverse impacts. The concept of the circular economy treats waste as resource which should be managed sustainably to reduce production and increase recovery, recycling and composting rates. New or adapted facilities may be required.

7.... protect physical resources and use sustainably.

Land, minerals, geological features, geothermal energy and soil are resources which require protection from degradation and safeguarding for future use. Sustainable agriculture, sustainable tourism and the sustainable use of minerals, geological features, and geothermal energy can help to support the economy.

8.... encourage active and sustainable travel.

There is a common goal to reduce traffic emissions and congestion, which means reducing single-occupancy car use and increasing use of other forms of transport, especially at peak times. The location of housing and key services can facilitate better access to public transport. Opportunities for active travel make travel more affordable and may bring added health benefits, while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Measures to manage car demand, such as parking and re-allocation of roads space, which encourage a shift from car to public transport, walking and cycling will contribute to this goal.

9.... improve air quality.

Air pollution has serious impacts on human health as well as degrading the natural environment. This objective can be achieved through reducing sources of air pollution. Where air pollution cannot be totally excluded, careful siting of development should avoid impacts on sensitive receptors.

10.... reduce causes of and adapt to climate change.

International commitments require greenhouse gas emissions to be reduced to decrease their effects on climate. Measures that help reduce energy consumption and enable renewable energy help mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, however, climate change adaptation planning and implementation is essential to managing the resilience of our society and natural environment to an uncertain future, as well as for the known current and projected impacts of a changing climate.

11.... protect, manage and use water resources sustainably.

This objective encompasses reducing levels of water pollution, sustainable use of water resources, improving the physical state of the water environment and reducing the risk of flooding, now and in the future. It meets the requirements of Northern Ireland legislation, strategies and plans in support of the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations and other legislation that relates to water and it takes account of the future impacts of climate change.

12.... protect natural resources and enhance biodiversity.

International obligations which are adopted in Northern Ireland legislation, along with national legislation and policies, require the protection of biodiversity including flora, fauna and habitats. This is for their intrinsic value and for the wider services that they provide to people, the economy and the environment - for example, as carbon stores which can mitigate the effects of climate change. This objective includes protecting and enhancing biodiversity including in coastal and marine areas, as well as protection of green and blue infrastructure to enhance the services that natural resources provide.

13.... maintain and enhance landscape character.

International and national policies seek to conserve the natural character and landscape of the coast and countryside and protect them from excessive, inappropriate or obtrusive development. This objective seeks to maintain the character and distinctiveness of the area's landscapes and to protect and enhance open spaces and the setting of prominent features, settlements and transport corridors.

14.... protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage.

The historic environment and cultural heritage are resources that inform our history and bring character and sense of place. They also attract visitors and contribute to the economy and bring vibrancy to the places where we live, work and relax. This can be achieved by protecting and enhancing Conservation Areas, townscapes and other sites of historic and cultural value including their setting.

6.2 Compatibility of the Sustainability Objectives

A comparison has been drawn between all of the sustainability objectives to identify any conflicts between them and is presented in Appendix 3. No sustainability objectives were considered to be incompatible with the rest of the Sustainability Appraisal Framework. In some cases, however the effect is uncertain.

6.3 Next Steps

This scoping report provides the Sustainability Appraisal Framework that has been used to appraise the Draft Plan Strategy and prepare the Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report. The Scoping Report will be reviewed and updated at each subsequent step of plan preparation to reflect new context and baseline information.

6.4 Difficulties Encountered in Compiling the Scoping Report

With the establishment of Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council in 2015 and the new statutory Community Planning duty there has been a great deal of data collection for a variety of purposes including the Community Plan. It has not always been possible to align all of the evidence used for this scoping report with other evidence as timeframes and purpose for which data was collected may differ. The scoping report evidence will be reviewed and updated, where necessary, before publication of the Sustainability Report at Plan Strategy.

The extended timescale of the LDP development, and therefore environmental assessments, have meant that baseline information for the Plan, SEA and HRA has had to be updated to take account of real-world changes. Baseline updates for the draft Plan Strategy stage were collated in Spring 2022. As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of the NISRA datasets compiled from its Household Surveys had a reduced sample size. As a result, NISRA was unable to compile sub-Northern Ireland geographies from April 2020 to the time the scoping report baseline was reviewed and updated in mid-2022. LGD-scale results of the 2021 Census had not been published. Where more recent statistical data are not available, there remains confidence that the pre-2020 data provide a satisfactory baseline for the evaluation of significant effects.

Predicting effects and trends always involves an element of uncertainty or a need for assumptions to be made. The ability to predict effects accurately is also limited by gaps in the baseline and understanding of future trends. In some cases, information is either not available at Council level or there is not a series of data to inform trends. Considering the success of a policy when reliant on behavioural change is also difficult to consider objectively. As an iterative process, the SA may have different sources of available information than the Plan team, and vice versa.

APPENDIX 1: COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST FOR STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Schedule 2 of *The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004* lists the following information required for environmental reports, according to Regulation 11(3), (4). The location in this Scoping Report or the Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report is identified.

Requirement	Location
1. An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.	An introduction to the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council Local Development Plan (LDP) is presented in Chapter 3. The key plans, policies, programmes and strategies that have been considered in the SA are described at the introduction to each topic in Chapter 5 of the SA Scoping Report. A full list is included in Appendix 4 of the SA Scoping Report.
2. The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.	Baseline information is presented in Section 5 of the SA Scoping Report, under topic sections. Each topic sub-section highlights the likely evolution of the baseline without the LDP. The Key Sustainability Issues are summarised at the end of each topic in Section 5 of the SA Scoping Report.
3. The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.	The environmental characteristics of the Borough are presented in Section 5 of the SA Scoping Report, in baseline information and as Key Sustainability Issues.
4. Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds and the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.	Section 5 of the SA Scoping Report identifies environmental problems. A draft Habitats Regulations Assessment for the draft Plan Strategy has been published for consultation alongside the draft Plan Strategy.
5. The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.	Section 5 of the SA Scoping Report outlines the main policy themes in the introduction to each topic. Appendix 4 of the SA Scoping Report outlines the relationship of the LDP with other plans, programmes and policies.
6. The likely significant effects on the environment, including short, medium and long-term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive and negative effects, and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects, on issues such as – (i) biodiversity; (ii) population;	Likely significant effects are described in Sections 3 and 4 of the SA Report. They are reported in the context of the sustainability appraisal framework included in Appendix 5 of the SA Scoping Report. Interrelationships are discussed in Section 4 of the SA Report and Appendix 3 of the SA Scoping Report.

Requirement	Location
(iii) human health; (iv) fauna; (v) flora; (vi) soil; (vii) water; (viii) air; (ix) climatic factors; (x) material assets; (xi) cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage; (xii) landscape, and (xiii) the inter-relationship between the issues referred to in sub paragraphs (i) to (xii).	
7. The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme.	Measures are reported in Section 3 of the SA Report and also in the matrices presented in Appendix 4 of the SA Report.
8. An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.	Section 2 of the SA Report considers this in general. Section 3 and Appendix 4 of the SA Report provide more detail on the options appraised and any assumptions and limitations encountered in the appraisal.
9. A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with regulation 16.	A preliminary framework for potential monitoring is included in Section 5 of the SA Report.
10. A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 1 to 9.	A non-technical summary is provided as a separate document to accompany the SA Report and the SA Scoping Report.

APPENDIX 2: SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES AND RELATIONSHIP TO SEA TOPICS

The objectives for sustainable development are to...	SEA Directive Topic
1...improve health and well-being.	Population Human Health
2.... strengthen society.	Cultural Heritage including Architectural and Archaeological Heritage Population
3...provide good quality, sustainable housing.	Population Human Health
4...enable access to high quality education.	Population
5...enable sustainable economic growth.	Population Human Health
6... manage material assets sustainably.	Material Assets
7...protect physical resources and use sustainably.	Material Assets Soil
8...encourage active and sustainable travel.	Human Health Population Climatic Factors
9...improve air quality	Air
10...reduce causes of and adapt to climate change.	Climatic Factors
11...protect, manage and use water resources sustainably.	Water
12...protect natural resources and enhance biodiversity.	Biodiversity Flora, Fauna
13...maintain and enhance landscape character.	Landscape
14... protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage.	Cultural Heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage Landscape

APPENDIX 3: COMPATIBILITY OF THE SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES

	1 Improve health and well-being.	2 Strengthen society.	3 Provide good quality, sustainable housing.	4 Enable access to high quality education.	5 Enable sustainable economic growth.	6 Manage material assets sustainably.	7 Protect physical resources and use sustainably.	8 Encourage active and sustainable travel.	9 Improve air quality.	10 Reduce causes of and adapt to climate change.	11 Protect, manage and use water resources sustainably.	12 Protect natural resources and enhance biodiversity.	13 Maintain and enhance landscape character.	14 Protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage.
1. Improve health and well-being.														
2. Strengthen society.	✓													
3. Provide good quality, sustainable housing.	✓	✓												
4. Enable access to high quality education.	✓	✓	✓											
5. Enable sustainable economic growth.	✓	✓	✓	✓										
6. Manage material assets sustainably.	✓	0	0	0	✓									
7. Protect physical resources and use sustainably.	✓	0	0	0	✓	✓								
8. Encourage active and sustainable travel.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	0							
9. Improve air quality.	✓	✓	✓	0	?	✓	✓	✓						
10. Reduce causes of and adapt to climate change.	✓	✓	✓	0	?	✓	✓	✓	✓					
11. Protect, manage and use water resources sustainably.	✓	0	✓	0	?	✓	✓	0	✓	✓				
12. Protect natural resources and enhance biodiversity.	✓	✓	0	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
13. Maintain and enhance landscape character.	✓	✓	0	0	✓	?	✓	0	✓	✓	✓	✓		
14. Protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage.	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	0	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Compatible ✓ No relationship 0 Uncertain relationship ? Incompatible ✗

APPENDIX 4: REVIEW OF POLICIES, PLANS, PROGRAMMES AND STRATEGIES

Introduction

This is a list of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies that have been considered in scoping the Sustainability Appraisal. It will be updated at each stage of Plan preparation. Some additional documents, including local plans, may be referred to in the LDP evidence papers or the body of the SA Scoping Report and these will also be incorporated in this table.

A number of cross cutting publications are presented first. Following these, the publications are listed according to the most relevant topic, however it should be noted that some may apply to two or more topics. 'Lead' refers to the department or organisation currently responsible for the publication and is not necessarily the body responsible for preparation of the publication.

For each publication, a summary of the key objectives, requirements or advice is given with emphasis on what is most relevant to the LDP. A short comment is included on the implications of these for our LDP and/or how they have, or will be, addressed in Plan preparation.

Acknowledgement is given to work carried out in by Mid Ulster District Council, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and the Strategic Planning Division of the Department for Infrastructure, in collating much of the original source information for the review of plans, policies, programmes and strategies.

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
00. Sustainable Development	Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	Inter-national	2015	UN	Seeks to end poverty and hunger everywhere; to combat inequalities within and among countries; to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies; to protect human rights and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and to ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources. It also aims to create conditions for sustainable, inclusive and sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and decent work for all, taking into account different levels of national development and capacities. Expressed through 17 Global Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets.	Through the influence of the sustainability appraisal the LDP seeks to contribute to these goals where they are within the scope of development planning.
00. Sustainable Development	UK Marine Policy Statement	UK	2011	Four Nations (DAERA)	The MPS facilitates and supports the formulation of Marine Plans, ensuring that marine resources are used in a sustainable way in line with the high level marine objectives. These are to: • Promote sustainable economic development; • Enable the UK's move towards a low-carbon economy in order to mitigate the causes of climate change and ocean acidification and adapt to their effects; • Ensure a sustainable marine environment which promotes healthy, functioning marine ecosystems and protects marine habitats, species and our heritage assets; and • Contribute to the societal benefits of the marine area, including the sustainable use of marine resources to address local social and economic issues. Currently it is also the policy document to be used for decision making for any proposal which affects, or might affect, the NI marine area. It will be used in conjunction with the Marine Plan for NI, once the Marine Plan is published and adopted in its final form.	Any development arising from the LDP will need to be in conformity with the MPS and NI Marine Plan (once the latter is adopted) in order to protect the marine environment, inclusive of the historic environment and heritage assets. Section 58 of the MCAA 2009 and section 8 of the Marine Act (NI) 2013 state that "a public authority must take any authorisation or enforcement decision in accordance with the appropriate marine policy documents, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise". A public authority must have regard to the appropriate marine policy documents in taking any decision which relates to the exercise of any function capable of affecting the whole or any part of the UK marine area, but

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						which is not an authorisation or enforcement decision.
00. Sustainable Development	Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009	UK	2009	UK Gov.	The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 provides the legal mechanism to help ensure clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas by putting in place a new system for improved management and protection of the marine and coastal environment.	Section 58 of the MCAA 2009 and section 8 of the Marine Act (NI) 2013 states that "a public authority must take any authorisation or enforcement decision in accordance with the appropriate marine policy documents, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise". All construction or deposition works below the Mean High Water Spring Tide (MHWST) mark are subject to licensing under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. Developments in the inter-tidal area may require both planning permission and a marine licence.
00. Sustainable Development	Securing the Future - delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy	UK	2005	Four Nations (DAERA)	The Strategy takes account of developments since the 1999 Strategy, both domestically and internationally; the changed structure of government in the UK with devolution to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland; greater emphasis on delivery at regional level and the new relationship between government and local authorities. The five guiding principles are: living within environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance and using sound science responsibly. Four agreed priorities are sustainable consumption and production, climate change, natural resource protection and sustainable communities.	The SPSS has a strong sustainable development theme, which aligns with the priorities of this Strategy, most notably in terms of climate change, renewable energy, sustainable consumption, waste management etc. In complying with the SPSS and carrying out sustainability appraisal the LDP will support this.
00. Sustainable Development	Draft Marine Plan for Northern Ireland – Public Consultation	NI	2018	DAERA	The Marine Plan for Northern Ireland will inform and guide the regulation, management, use and protection of the NI	The Marine Plan uses an ecosystem-based

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					marine area. The Plan contains policies that reflect, clarify and signpost current legislation, policy measures and practices from the UK MPS and across NI and UK Government Departments and Agencies. Its policies will be used by public authorities in taking decisions which affect or might affect the marine area. The draft Marine Plan was published for consultation in May 2018.	approach that will assist public authorities in managing the competing demands on the marine area in a more sustainable manner. Achieving sustainable development is at the core of the Marine Plan. Section 58 of the MCAA 2009 and section 8 of the Marine Act (NI) 2013 states that "a public authority must take any authorisation or enforcement decision in accordance with the appropriate marine policy documents, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise". Public authorities must explain any decision not made in line with the UK Marine Policy Statement or an adopted Marine Plan.
000-Other / Cross-cutting	Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most Programme for Government 2024-2027	NI	2025	NI Executive	On 27 February 2025 the Executive agreed a Programme for Government 2024-2027 'Our Plan: Doing What Matters Most'. It outlines our priorities for making a real difference to the lives of people in Northern Ireland.	The LDP can help to support the priorities of the PfG.
00. Sustainable Development	Regional Development Strategy 2035	NI	2012	DfI	This document provides an overarching strategic planning framework influencing spatial development for the Region up to 2035, facilitating and guiding the public and private sectors. Taken into account are key drivers such as population growth and movement, demographic change, increasing number of households, transportation needs etc. It addresses economic, social and environmental issues aimed at achieving sustainable development and	The LDP will support the RDS as part of the wider Government policy framework and should therefore be closely aligned with its objectives.

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					social cohesion. The eight aims of the RDS are to: Support strong, sustainable growth for the benefit of all parts of NI; Strengthen Belfast as the regional economic driver and Derry/Londonderry as the principal city of the North West; Support our towns, villages and rural communities to maximise 7th Feb 2025 their potential; Promote development which improves the health and well-being of communities; Improve connectivity to enhance the movement of people, goods, energy and information between places; Protect and enhance the environment for its own sake; Take actions to reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate adaption to climate change; and Strengthen links between north and south, east and west, with Europe and the rest of the world. The RDS contains a Spatial Framework and Strategic guidelines.	
00. Sustainable Development	Focus on the Future -Sustainable Development Implementation Plan	NI	2011	NI Executive	While this implementation plan has expired some of the actions which have not been completed may be relevant in the future. DHSSPS committed to liaise with DOE Planners on the benefits of Health Impact Assessments and their potential to assist in encouraging the development of Healthy Urban Environments. DOE proposed to make legislation to enable the designation of National Parks by 2012.	The health impact assessment approach is not a statutory requirement but will be considered if there is development on this during plan preparation. Health and well-being is considered through sustainability appraisal.
00. Sustainable Development	Everyone's Involved – Sustainable Development Strategy (May 2010)	NI	2010	DAERA	The Sustainable Development Strategy aims to put in place economic, social and environmental measures to ensure that we can continue to grow our economy, improve our society and communities and use our natural resources in an environmentally sustainable manner. The Strategy also intends to strengthen the framework to address global issues such as climate change and sets out the following six principles: living within environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy, just and equal society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; using sound science responsibly; and promoting opportunity and innovation.	Plan objectives should support the strategy. The Sustainability Appraisal will help shape proposals and policies in the LDP to be sustainable.
00. Sustainable Development	Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006	NI	2006	NI Executive	Requires departments and district Councils to exercise their functions in the manner they consider best calculated to promote the achievement of sustainable development.	Implementing sustainability appraisal throughout plan preparation will help

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						achieve this requirement.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982)	Inter-national	1982	United Nations	The Law of the Sea Convention defines the rights and responsibilities of nations with respect to their use of the world's oceans, establishing guidelines for businesses, the environment, and the management of marine natural resources. The Convention sets out basic principles for the protection of underwater cultural heritage. Amongst its main principles are an obligation to preserve underwater cultural heritage, with in situ preservation as first option, and a ban on its inappropriate commercial exploitation.	The Convention sets the framework for protecting underwater cultural heritage at sea. Signatories "have a duty to protect objects of an archaeological and historical nature found at sea and shall cooperate for this purpose". The LDP should have regard for this principle.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Aarhus Convention - United Nations Economic Commission for Europe 1998	Europe	1998	UNECE	The Aarhus Convention and its Protocol empower people with the rights to access easily information, participate effectively in decision-making in environmental matters and to seek justice if their rights were violated. They protect every person's right to live in an environment adequate to his or her health and well-being. Ratified in UK in 2005. Established a number of rights of the public with regard to the environment. Local authorities should provide for: • The right of everyone to receive environmental information; • The right to participate from an early stage in environmental decision making; • The right to challenge in a court of law public decisions that have been made without respecting the two rights above or environmental law in general.	The plan will achieve this through the consultation process, as outlined in the Statement of Community Involvement. Ensure that public are involved and consulted at all relevant stages of SA production. This should be reflected in the Statement of the Community Involvement
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Today we act. Tomorrow we thrive. Green Growth: Draft Green Growth Strategy for Northern Ireland	NI	2021	NI Executive	Launched for consultation in October 2021, this is an overarching multi-decade Strategy which will set out the long-term vision and a solid framework for tackling the climate crisis by balancing climate action with the need for a clean, resilient environment and economy.	Sets out a framework for delivery with which all other NI government policies and strategies must align. New policies and programmes should align with the need to address climate change, develop green jobs and improve our environment.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council Agriculture Strategy – March 2022	Council	2022	ABC Council	In the development of the strategy, we explored the borough's agriculture industry from grass roots local farm enterprises to the businesses they support. With this knowledge, it was clear we had to design a strategy that	The plan will be taken account of and may assist in informing the LDP.

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					supported the farmers, agri-food and agribusinesses of tomorrow. With a focus on driving the future of farming, the strategy identifies key themes and challenges for the sector, sets out clear aspirations for council's ongoing role, and its collaboration with stakeholders to support the industry. The strategy is reflective of key messages from new policies such as Department for Agriculture and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Green Growth Strategy Framework and Future Agriculture Policy Proposals and Department for Economy 'A 10x Economy' Framework.	
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Sustainability for the future DAERA' Plan to 2050	NI	2021	DAERA	This high-level strategy sets out DAERA's mission for the next 3 decades and beyond, to promote sustainable economic growth whilst restoring and enhancing our environment for the next generation. Supported by robust science as our evidence base, we will continue to ensure the competitive development of the agri-food, fishing and forestry sectors of the Northern Ireland economy, having regard for the need of the consumers, the welfare of animals and the conservation and enhancement of the environment. Enhancing our environment matters, as a healthy environment is interlinked with our health and wellbeing.	The LDP can help to support the delivery of the Strategy's Strategic Priorities through policies which facilitate sustainable agriculture and forestry development, protect and enhance the natural environment and support sustainable rural communities.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Environment Improvement Plan for Northern Ireland	NI	2021	DAERA	The Draft Environment Strategy for Northern Ireland was adopted as the Environment Improvement Plan in 2024. It sets out six strategic objectives: • Excellent air, water and land quality. • A healthy and accessible environment and landscapes everyone can connect with and enjoy. • Thriving, resilient and connected nature and wildlife. • Sustainable production and consumption on land and at sea. • Zero waste and a highly developed circular economy. • Net zero greenhouse gas emissions and improved climate resilience and adaptability.	Adopted as the Environment Improvement Plan
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Draft Environment Strategy	NI	2021	DAERA	This Strategy sets out six Strategic Environmental Outcomes which encompass all of the main environmental challenges we will face in the coming decades. Outcomes are as follows 1. Excellent air, water, land and neighbourhood quality 2. Healthy and accessible environment and landscapes everyone can connect with and enjoy 3. Thriving, resilient and connected nature and wildlife 4. Sustainable production and consumption on land and at sea 5. Zero waste and highly developed circular economy 6. Fair Contribution to UK net zero greenhouse gas emissions and improved climate resilience and adaptability.	Adopted as the Environment Improvement Plan

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000. Other / Cross-cutting	Department for Infrastructure -Exercise Enjoy Explore – A Strategic Plan for Greenways	NI	2016	Dfi	This is the base report for 'Exercise Explore Enjoy: A Strategic plan for Greenways'. It presents a strategic approach and overview to the development of a shared greenway network which is planned at a regional level and allows people to link to places locally, regionally and nationally by active modes of travel. This document sets out the plans for a network of greenways, connecting towns and cities to the villages and countryside from east to west and north to south across all eleven councils.	Greenways can produce both environmental and social benefits, because they are easily accessible and can bring nature and people together. The development of traffic free infrastructure, particularly greenways, can also have a positive impact on social inclusion and encouraging new and harder to reach groups to take up cycling and walking. The LDP can help to support these objectives.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Department for Infrastructure Strategic Planning Policy Statement Edition 2 (SPPS 2): Planning for Sustainable Development	NI	2015	Dfi	Sets out the Department's regional strategic policies for securing the orderly and consistent development of land in Northern Ireland. Planning authorities should pursue social and economic priorities alongside the careful management of our built and natural environments in order to achieve sustainable development. The SPPS sets out five core planning principles: Improving health and well-being; Creating and enhancing shared space; Supporting sustainable economic growth; Supporting good design and positive place making; and Preserving and improving the built and natural environment. The only significant change brought about with the adoption of the 2 nd edition is a refocus on the requirements for renewable and low carbon energy development.	The provisions of the SPPS must be taken into account in the preparation of Local Development Plans, and are also material to all decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	NI Water Recreation and Access Policy	NI	2013	NI Water	NI Water is one of the largest land owners in Northern Ireland, having responsibility for approximately 8,600 hectares throughout the province. A significant proportion of this land has recreational appeal and is regularly accessed by members of the public. The Recreation and Access Policy sets out the way public access arrangements are communicated and controlled, and provides the public with clear guidance that governs recreational activities and access on NI Water-owned lands and waters. Appendix A lists facilities with public access, existing agreements and permitted activities.	This policy may identify sites with potential for recreation, contributing to health and well-being and/or economic growth.

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000. Other / Cross-cutting	Northern Ireland Water Public Recreation and Access Guidance	NI	2025	NI Water	This provides guidance to those wishing to use NI Water estates for recreational use. NI Water is Northern Ireland's second largest land owner, responsible for over 11,000 hectares. The guidance is developed to set out what NI Water expect from members of the public, organisations and groups who wish to use the lands and water bodies for recreational activities; listing the permitted activities, rules, licencing requirements application instructions for licences.	This guidance may identify sites with potential for recreation, with potential for health and wellbeing benefits, blue/green infrastructure and sport and recreation.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013	NI	2013	UK Gov.	The Marine Act sets out a new framework for Northern Ireland's seas based on: a system of marine planning that will balance conservation, energy and resource needs; improved management for marine nature conservation and the streamlining of marine licensing for some electricity projects. The Marine Act applies to the Northern Ireland inshore region comprising of the territorial sea out to twelve nautical miles. This area includes all the tidal rivers and sea loughs (including Lough Foyle and Carlingford Lough).	Section 58 of the MCAA 2009 and section 8 of the Marine Act (NI) 2013 states that "a public authority must take any authorisation or enforcement decision in accordance with the appropriate marine policy documents, unless relevant considerations indicate otherwise".
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Rural White Paper Action Plan	NI	2012	DAERA	This document sets out the vision for NI's rural areas and the actions which Departments will take in support of achieving that vision and to help ensure the future sustainability of rural areas. The vision includes vibrant and strong rural communities; improved infrastructure, transport and key services; strong community infrastructure which can avail of economic, social and cultural opportunities; and better linkages between rural and urban areas.	Policies are proposed in relation to sustainable development in the countryside, transport and land use. Planning policy will promote sustainable development, well-being and economic development which are aligned with the vision for rural areas. There does seem to be a focus on town centres and city centre vitality, which could take attention away from rural issues. The LDP objectives support this. It sets out to support vibrant rural communities, facilitate

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						development of new, accessible, community facilities, and improve connectivity between/within settlements in terms of telecommunications and transport infrastructure in particular. The Plan will promote sustainable development, well-being and economic development which are aligned with the vision for rural areas.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Our Passion, Our Place - Northern Ireland Environment Agency Strategic Priorities 2012 to 2022	NI	2012	DAERA	The plan outlines the strategic direction for NIEA. Four priority areas: healthy natural environment, people and places, sustainable economic growth and using resources well with a series of strategic goals. In respect of development planning NIEA will make sure planning decisions and business practices are guided by sound environmental principles and apply a risk based approach to its regulatory activities. Provide timely and authoritative input to strategic planning and development projects. Adopt an ecosystems approach in the advice it provides.	The majority of the sustainability appraisal objectives can be linked to the strategic aims of this document. NIEA advice and evidence will be used to inform plan preparation.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Delivering Social Change Framework	NI	2012	EO	The DSC framework was established to deliver a sustained reduction in poverty and associated issues across all ages and to improve children and young people's health, well-being and life opportunities. A Delivering Social Change Fund was established to support The Social Investment Fund; The Delivering Social Change Signature Programmes; Childcare. The six initial Signature Programmes included support for Family Support Hubs; Nurture Units, Social Enterprise Hubs. Three new Signature Programmes announced in 2014 include support for people with dementia and their families and carers; early intervention services for young families and expansion of shared education, supporting schools to share resources and people. The Social Investment Fund is under a separate entry in this register.	Delivering Social Change prompts collaboration and co-ordination among Government Departments to improve the manner in which they interact in the lives of children and young people. It also includes programmes for dementia services. The programme has resulted in some new and proposed community facilities that should be considered in plan preparation. It includes the establishment of Family Support Hubs,

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						Social Enterprise Hubs and Nurture Units. The Shared Education programme provides the opportunity for pupils from different community backgrounds to learn together and may require the development of new facilities. It may identify needs for new facilities to improve the lives of children and young people with disabilities. (Note - the Social Investment Fund is under a separate entry in this table).
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011	NI	2011	NI Executive	Part 2 of the Act details the requirements of Local Development Plans and Section 5 of the Act requires those who exercise any function in relation to Local Development Plans to do so with the objective of furthering sustainable development. Sections 8(6) and 9(7) of the Act requires an appraisal of sustainability to be carried out for the Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan, respectively.	The LDP will take account of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. This scoping report forms part of the Sustainability Appraisal process.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Building a Better Future: The Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021 (ISNI)	NI	2011	NI Executive	The Investment Strategy sets out the forward programme for investment in public infrastructure. It identifies priority areas for investment in sustainable 21st century infrastructure and is intended to assist government and private sector partners to plan ahead. The 'Procurement Pipeline' identifies 197 infrastructure projects across networks, environment, health and education and when they are anticipated to be procured.	The 'Procurement Pipeline' available on the home page identifies infrastructure projects across networks, environment, health and education and when they are anticipated to be procured.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Border Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022	RoI	2010	NWRA	The Guidelines are prescriptive in setting out a long term planning framework for the proper planning and development of the Region, and have been closely aligned with the National Spatial Strategy and National Development Plan in Ireland, and the Regional Development Strategy in Northern Ireland. The key aim of the Guidelines is to provide a good quality of life for the	This applies to all the border counties in Ireland. There is potential for both synergies and conflicts between the LDP and this document. In order

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					Region's population, through ensuring high quality residential, recreational and working environments, and improving water quality.	for cross-boundary issues to be effectively addressed, the Council should liaise with neighbouring authorities throughout the LDP process to address cross cutting issues and identify how these can be best taken forward as part of the Plan.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Framework for Co-operation Spatial Strategies of Northern Ireland & the Republic of Ireland	NI & RoI	2010	DfI	This document examines the key planning challenges faced by both jurisdictions on the island of Ireland and discusses the potential for co-operation in spatial planning. It sets out a framework for cooperation at different levels within the public sector which should result in mutual benefits. These benefits can be at the local border area level and at the wider level. Four priority areas for cooperation are: Enhancing Competitiveness, Competitive Places (i.e. linked cross-border cities), Environmental Quality and Spatial Analysis.	At the local level it will be important that the guidance in the RDS and [Irish] NSS is incorporated into regional planning guidelines, development plans, community plans and regeneration schemes and that there is support for cross border projects and initiatives for both urban and rural areas. Integrated planning processes at the local level, where agencies and authorities in both jurisdictions work together on a cross border basis, are essential in enhancing the potential and quality of strategic places on the island, that straddle such cross-border locations.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework	ROI	2018	Government of Ireland	The National Planning Framework is a planning framework to guide development and investment over the coming years. It does not provide every detail for every part of the country; rather it empowers each region to lead in the planning and development of their communities, containing a set of national objectives and key principles from which more detailed and refined plans will follow.	The Council shares a boundary with Ireland, therefore the LDP has the potential to impact on this framework. There are significant cross-border interactions

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					The plan changes how investment is made in public infrastructure in Ireland, moving away from the approach of the past, which saw public investment spread too thinly and investment decisions that didn't align with a well-thought-out and defined strategy. Alongside the development of physical infrastructure, Project Ireland 2040 supports business and communities across all of Ireland in realising their potential.	focused on key settlement networks, specifically Letterkenny-Derry in the context of the North-West Growth Partnership and Drogheda-Dundalk-Newry in the context of the Dublin-Belfast economic corridor. The growth potential associated with these interrelated networks is also important for regional development. Cross border dependencies between Donegal and Derry/Strabane include employment, education, healthcare and retail activity.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Border Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022	Rol	2010	NWRA	The Guidelines are prescriptive in setting out a long term planning framework for the proper planning and development of the Region, and have been closely aligned with the National Spatial Strategy and National Development Plan in Ireland, and the Regional Development Strategy in Northern Ireland. The key aim of the Guidelines is to provide a good quality of life for the Region's population, through ensuring high quality residential, recreational and working environments, and improving water quality.	This applies to all the border counties in Ireland. There is potential for both synergies and conflicts between the LDP and this document. In order for cross-boundary issues to be effectively addressed, the Council should liaise with neighbouring authorities throughout the LDP process to address cross cutting issues and identify how these can be best taken forward as part of the Plan.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	The Environmental Liability (Prevention and Remediation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 (as amended)	NI	2009	DAERA	Implements the Environmental Liability Directive in Northern Ireland and introduces financial liability on the 'polluter pays' principle for environmental damage which has significant adverse effects on reaching or maintaining favourable conservation status of species and natural	Development arising from the LDP will be subject to these regulations with the operator being

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					habitats protected under EC legislation; damage that significantly adversely affects the ecological, chemical and/or quantitative status and/or ecological potential of waters falling within the scope of the water framework Directive; land contamination that creates a significant risk of human health being adversely affected as a result of direct or indirect introduction in, on or under land of substances, preparations, organisms and micro-organisms. Note: subject to amendments.	responsible for liability, should damage within the terms of these regulations occur.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, Equality of opportunity	NI	1998	NI Executive	Section 75 promotes 'equality of opportunity' which means that everyone in society should be able to compete on equal terms. All government departments, agencies and Councils must also give the nine key groups consideration when creating a policy. These are people with different religious belief, people of political opinion, people of different racial groups, people of different ages, people of different marital status, people of different sexual orientation, men and women generally, people with a disability and people without, people with dependants and people without.	The Council is required to ensure that their Local Development Plans are prepared in accordance with Section 75 statutory obligations. Consequently, a Council will have to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) to determine if there will be any potential impacts upon Section 75 groups as a result of the policies and proposals contained in their Local Development Plans.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland	NI	1993	Dfi	In seeking to protect the environment and encourage sustainable development the PSRNI set out policies to meet the development needs of the rural area. The majority have been superseded by PPSs and SPPS, however Strategic Policies 2, 3, 4 and 18 still apply relating to Towns, Villages, Regeneration of Rural Settlements and Design in Towns and Villages.	The remaining provisions of 'A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland' will be cancelled when all eleven Councils have adopted a new Plan Strategy for the whole of their Council area. However, to ensure that there is continuity in planning policy for taking planning decisions whilst Councils bring forward operational policies tailored to local circumstances within new LDPs, transitional

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						arrangements shall apply.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Connected - A Community Plan for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough 2017-2030	Council	2017	Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon BC	The Community Planning Partnership for the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough will take a collaborative approach to achieving the outcomes outlined in 'Connected'. All community planning partners share an equal responsibility for the implementation and delivery of the plan.	The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 and the Planning Act (NI) 2011 create a statutory link between the Community Plan and the next Local Development Plan. The LDP will provide 'the spatial expression of the community plan' and to ensure this we will continue to develop these two processes as closely as possible to bring real opportunities for everyone in the borough to become fully involved in shaping the area.
000. Other / Cross-cutting	Connected - A Community Plan for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough 2017-2030 (Updated 2025)	Council	2025	Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon BC	The Community Plan was updated in 2025. The community plan sets out the long-term outcomes for the borough and the population indicators used to measure progress over time. Community planning partnerships also have a duty to work together on delivery and this action plan is currently being revisited in light of the review.	The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 and the Planning Act (NI) 2011 create a statutory link between the Community Plan and the next Local Development Plan. The LDP will provide 'the spatial expression of the community plan' and to ensure this we will continue to develop these two processes as closely as possible to bring real opportunities for everyone in the borough to become fully involved in shaping the area.

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000. Other / Cross-cutting	Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Our People, Our Place, Our Future, Corporate Plan 2023-2027	Council	2024	ABC Council	The Corporate Plan 2023-2027 outlines our identity and how we will make a positive impact within the Borough in the years ahead. It demonstrates our commitment to upholding the highest standards for the betterment of 'Our People, Our Place and Our Future'. Three values have been agreed to shape the culture, behaviour, decision making and overall identity of the Council. These values are; People-centred; Leaders; and Responsible. As a Council we will focus on and deliver services across five key priorities; Environment and Place; Community Wellbeing; Economic Growth; Service Delivery; and Staff, Leadership and Resources.	The LDP should take into consideration the Corporate Plan to develop ABC's potential.
	Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon Community Planning Partnership – Our Community Engagement Strategy	Council	2019	ABC Council	Communities having a greater say in how their services are delivered and how their area is planned is at the heart of community planning. This Community Engagement Strategy sets our community planning partnership's aspirations, along with the steps we will take together to make sure that people can be more involved in the decisions that affect their lives.	The LDP should take into consideration the Community Engagement Strategy Plan.
01. Health & Well-being	Health and Wellbeing 2026 - Delivering Together	NI	2017	DoH	This plan sets out a 10 year approach to transforming Health and Social Care. It builds on the strong foundations laid by 'Transforming Your Care' and other programmes of change and is the Executive's response to the 'Bengoa Report', a 2016 report prepared by an Expert Panel tasked with considering the best configuration of Health and Social Care Services in Northern Ireland.	The Plan includes proposals on reconfiguration and change, including the objective to bring forward proposals for the location and service specification for Elective Care Centres, and Assessment and Treatment Centres. The LDP can help to directly support the delivery of health and social care development where there is an identified need and can also indirectly support other objectives of the plan, such as facilitating the delivery of communications infrastructure for eHealth and Care. The consideration of policy

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						on adaptability and accessibility in homes may help to facilitate the Plan's aims to deliver 'acute care at home' in the future.
01. Health & Well-being	A Fitter Future For All - Outcomes framework 2015 - 2019	NI	2015	DoH	A 'Fitter Future for All' set a challenging target of reducing levels of obesity over its ten year life span – this is more demanding than previous targets which sought to halt the rise in levels of obesity. Following a review of the first years of the plan, an updated framework was published for 2015-2019.	Although expired, this framework can help to inform the LDP of target areas for reducing obesity levels in children and adults. The LDP can support objectives of creating a safe environment to encourage and promote increased physical activity.
01. Health & Well-being	Our Great Outdoors – The Outdoor Recreation Action Plan for Northern Ireland	NI	2014	Sport NI	It is necessary for the Government, businesses and voluntary organisations to work together to achieve greater accessibility to the outdoors in a sustainable and responsible manner in order to realise its full potential. The Outdoor Recreation Action Plan will be the key driver to make this happen. Activity and eco-tourism are growing in Northern Ireland and the Outdoor Recreation Action Plan recognises this and highlights the need for further development to continue to grow this important sector. New developments that get people outdoors and active, but those that also create opportunities for improved visitor services, short breaks, meals, and hospitality are important for growing this element of the economy.	LDP can support the delivery of aims, in particular: "There are increasing opportunities and improved access and infrastructure for sustained and increased participation for everyone in a broad range of outdoor recreation activities".
01. Health & Well-being	The Planning (Hazardous Substances) (No.2) Regulations (NI) 2015	NI	2015	DfI	The Regulations transpose Directive 2012/18/EU (The 'Seveso III Directive') on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances in respect of land-use planning in Northern Ireland.	The LDP must take account of the aims of the Directive in planning policies and decisions, including maintaining appropriate safety distances between major hazard sites (referred to as establishments") and other development and protecting areas of natural sensitivity.

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
01. Health & Well-being	Noise Policy Statement for Northern Ireland	NI	2014	DAERA	Through the effective management and control of environmental, neighbour and neighbourhood noise the Noise Policy aims to: (1.) Avoid or mitigate significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life; (2.) Mitigate and minimise adverse impacts on health and quality of life; and (3.) Where possible, contribute to the improvement of health and quality of life.	These LDP can help with applying the shared principles that underpin the Executive's Sustainable Development Strategy: Living within environmental limits - Ensuring a strong, healthy, just and equal society - Achieving a sustainable economy - Using sound science responsibly - Promoting opportunity and innovation - Promoting good governance.
01. Health & Well-being	Mountain Bike Strategy for Northern Ireland 2014 - 2024.	NI	2014	Outdoor NI	This strategy aims to generate approximately £25 Million per annum to the local economy by 2024, as a direct result of mountain biking.	Informs on a potential source of outdoor recreational activity and tourism opportunity and so is relevant to the sustainability theme of economy and employment as well as health and well-being.
01. Health & Well-being	Making Life Better: A Whole Strategic Framework for Public Health 2013-2023 Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (June 2014)	NI	2013	DoH	The strategic framework for public health designed to provide direction for policies and actions to improve the health and well-being of people in Northern Ireland and to reduce health inequalities. The framework is not just about actions and programmes at government level, but also provides direction for work at both regional and local levels with public agencies, including local government, local communities and others, working in partnership. Through strength of coordination and partnership, the framework will seek to create the conditions for individuals and communities to take control of their own lives, and move towards a vision for Northern Ireland where all people are enabled and supported in achieving their full health and well-being potential.	Many aspects are directly relevant to the LDP, for example promoting age-friendly environments and designating Quiet Areas.

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01. Health & Well-being	Connected Health Economy	NI	2013	DoH	Developing a connected health economy: the economy and jobs initiative included a number of measures to help support economic growth, including a commitment to establish a Task and Finish Group under the remit of the Connected Health and Prosperity Board, to exploit the economic opportunities from the health and social care (HSC) sector.	This may inform future economic investment in the health and social care sector.
01. Health & Well-being	A Fitter Future For All: Framework for Preventing and Addressing Overweight and Obesity in Northern Ireland	NI	2012	DoH	Fitter Future for All is a framework to help reduce the harm related to overweight and obesity. This framework aims to: empower the population of Northern Ireland to make health 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 and a healthy diet. New outcomes to aid implementation of the framework over the 2015-19 period have been developed.	The LDP can help to support and deliver the objectives of this framework by encouraging and enabling safe environments which promote increased physical activity.
01. Health & Well-being	Transforming Your Care Department for Health, Social Services and Public Safety	NI	2011	DoH	Twelve major principles for change including: providing the right care in the right place at the right time; population-based planning of services; ensuring sustainability of service provision; incentivising innovation at a local level. 99 separate proposals for change across the range of health and social care services. There is a Strategic Implementation Plan and Population Plan for each Health Care Trust.	Can inform where facilities may be required to improve access to and quality of health services.
01. Health & Well-being	Northern Ireland's Road Safety Strategy to 2020	NI	2011	DfI	Sets out the vision and presents measures for improving road safety in Northern Ireland up to 2020, including targets for reductions in deaths and serious injuries to be achieved over that period. Key Challenges most relevant to LDP include: • continuing to reduce the numbers of road deaths and serious injuries; • focusing specifically on improving safety on rural roads; • improving our knowledge and understanding of, and broadening involvement in, solving road safety problems.	The LDP may have scope to contribute to addressing the identified challenges in its transport, infrastructure and rural development policies.
01. Health & Well-being	Active Living - Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for Northern Ireland	NI	2022	DfC	Active Living, the new Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for Northern Ireland, through its Vision and associated key Themes and Goals, seeks to create a vibrant, welcoming, enjoyable, inclusive and successful sector for everyone, contributing significantly to a healthier and more resilient society. It recognises the important role that sport and physical activity plays across our island whether it is taking place on playing fields, in a stadium, a gym, on water, or in the mountains.	The LDP can help to support and deliver the objectives of this framework by encouraging and enabling safe environments which promote increased physical activity.

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01. Health & Well-being	The Environmental Noise Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006	NI	2006	NI Executive	Transposes into NI legislation the requirements of the European Noise Directive (END). The three main actions that the END requires of Member States are to: (1) determine the noise exposure of the population through noise mapping (2) make information on environmental noise and its effects available to the public (3) establish Action Plans based on the mapping results. The END requires that noise mapping and action planning be completed every five years. The END also requires Member States to 'preserve environmental noise quality where it is good' through the identification and protection of designated Quiet Areas within agglomerations (urban areas with a minimum population density).	Existing 'quiet areas' must be preserved. Further areas could be identified and designated. Zoning of residential areas should have regard for existing noise generators such as roads, rail, airports and industry.
01. Health & Well-being	Planning Policy Statement 8 Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation (DOE 2004)	NI	2004	DfI	This PPS sets out the Department's planning policies for the protection of open space, in association with residential development and the use of land for sport and outdoor recreation, and advises on the treatment of these issues in development plans.	Six policies are incorporated in SPPS. Incorporation of the policies will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
01. Health & Well-being	Southern Health and Social Care Trust Population Plan	Regional	2013	SHSCT	This sets out in detail the service transformation initiatives for delivery of the TYC proposals for this trust area. It includes the capital implications and requirements over the 3 year planning period. There will be continuing focus on reducing delayed discharge from hospital with investment in community infrastructure.	Although expired, this plan may inform unmet infrastructure requirements.
02. Strengthening Society	Northern Ireland Children and Young People's Strategy 2020-2030	NI	2021	NI Executive	The Strategy is a Plan for making life better for all children and young people in Northern Ireland and giving them the best start in life. This means providing good support and services for all children and young people, with extra help for children and young people who need more help or care in their lives. Outcomes include: — Children and young people are physically and mentally healthy, — Children and young people enjoy play and leisure, — Children and young people experience economic and environmental well-being; and — Children and young people live in safety and stability.	The LDP can complement many of the aims of this strategy. For example, policies may help with the Strategy's objective to provide all children, including those with a disability and those living in marginalised, vulnerable or disadvantaged situations, with safe, accessible, inclusive spaces for play.
02. Strengthening Society	Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Age-Friendly Strategy & Action Plan 2022-2025	Council	2022	ABC Council	The following strategy and action plan has been developed by the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Age-friendly Alliance, following extensive consultation with people aged 50 and over living in the Armagh City, Banbridge and	The LDP can complement many of the aims of this strategy.

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					Craigavon borough, and aims to benefit everyone living, working and visiting the area as they grow older. The eight age-friendly themes are: • Social participation • Respect and social inclusion • Civic participation and employment • Communication and information • Community support and health services • Outdoor spaces and buildings • Transportation • Housing.	
02. Strengthening Society	Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016	NI	2016	DAERA	The Act places a duty on public authorities, including district Councils, to have due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and designing and delivering public services. It also requires public authorities to provide information to DAERA on how they have fulfilled this duty on an annual basis to be published in a monitoring report to be laid before the Assembly.	Rural needs have been fully considered in plan preparation, assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal and appropriate provisions are or will be included in the plan.
02. Strengthening Society	Together: Building a United Community 2016/17 Update Report	NI	2016	EO	The Strategy outlines how we in Government, in communities and as individuals will work together to build a united community and facilitate change in the key priorities of: Our children and young people; Our shared community; Our safe community; and Our cultural expression.	By creating and shaping places spaces that are accessible and welcoming to all the plan will support this strategy. In some areas there will be specific requirements to address Interface Barriers.
02. Strengthening Society	Active Ageing Strategy 2016-2022	NI	2020	NI Executive	The Active Ageing Strategy 2016-2022 is to transform attitudes to, and services for, older people. It aims to increase the understanding of the issues affecting older people and promote an emphasis on rights, value and contribution. As this is a Strategy of the Executive, a range of departments contribute to its delivery and to the improvement of services for older people. All Strategy outcomes contribute to draft Programme for Government Indicator 49 – “the confidence of people over 60 years old as measured by self-efficacy”. This is the revised and updated version of the Strategy originally published in 2016.	The outcomes of the Strategy are informed by the five themes of the United Nations Principles for Older Persons. The themes are: Independence; Participation; Care; Self-fulfilment; and Dignity.
02. Strengthening Society	The Executive’s Draft Anti-Poverty Strategy (2025-2035)	NI	2025	NI Executive	The Executive’s Draft Anti-Poverty Strategy (2025-2035) focuses on three core pillars: minimising the risk of people and their families falling into poverty, minimising the impacts of poverty, and providing support and navigating ways to exit poverty. It provides detail of the factors that create the conditions for poverty to manifest, having due regard to all section 75 categories. Through focusing on these three pillars it aims to provide an opportunity to	Promotion of employment opportunities, provision for housing, increasing accessibility and creating safer environments will contribute to the

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					break the cycle of poverty in our society and improve the lives of all. Relevant to spatial planning, it acknowledges that where people live will also have an impact on how poverty affects them, whether it is in increased transport costs, difficulty in accessing services or being able to find affordable, comfortable and secure accommodation. This Strategy is overarching and replaces the Child Poverty Strategy.	objectives of this strategy.
02. Strengthening Society	Thinking Rural: The Essential Guide to Rural Proofing	NI	2015	DAERA	The objective is to ensure robust consideration and integration of rural issues at the outset of the policy making process. It should help to ensure fair and equitable treatment for rural areas through the development of policies which are proportionate to need.	The LDP can support the objective to provide for vital and vibrant rural communities whilst protecting the countryside in which they live, by accommodating sustainable growth within the countryside proportionate to the extent of existing rural communities.
02. Strengthening Society	Urban Regeneration and Community Development Policy Framework	NI	2013	DfC	This Policy Framework sets out the Department's policy objectives for urban regeneration and community development in Northern Ireland for at least the next decade. It will provide a clear strategic direction for the Department and inform its partners in central and local government and in the voluntary and community sector. The Framework sets out four Policy Objectives that will form the basis of any future policy or programme development in urban regeneration and community development: (1) To tackle area-based deprivation. (2) To strengthen the competitiveness of our towns and cities. (3) To improve linkages between areas of need and areas of opportunity. (4) To develop more cohesive and engaged communities. It also contains a set of four Supporting Actions: (1) We will maximise the potential of regeneration and community development by supporting an evidence-based policy environment. (2) We will maximise the resources available to regeneration and community development by supporting an innovative financial environment. (3) We will support the development of skilled and knowledgeable practitioners in regeneration and community development. (4) We will promote an effective and efficient voluntary and community sector	This Policy Framework is wide-reaching in terms of the subjects it covers, for example Policy Objective 3 contains key actions relating to environmental improvement, protection and improvement of (historic) buildings and open spaces and developing an integrated transport network, whilst other Objective actions include development of commercial sites. LDP objectives may align with this framework, in particular strengthening the hubs, improving connectivity and facilitating community

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						development. The LDP can indirectly support aims of the policy by, for example, accommodating development for disadvantaged groups, such as the elderly and disabled, with emphasis on 'sustainable growth', facilitating new community facilities and promoting 'shared spaces'. Also relevant to the sustainability topic of sustainable economic growth.
02. Strengthening Society	Together: Building a United Community	NI	2013	EO	The strategy outlines how government, community and individuals will work together to build a united community and achieve change against the following key priorities: our children and young people; our shared community; our safe community; and our cultural expression. Its vision is 'a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation - one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance'. Includes a commitment to Create a 10-year Programme to reduce, and remove by 2023, all interface barriers including an Interface Barrier Support Package.	By creating and shaping places spaces that are accessible and welcoming to all the plan will support this strategy. In some areas there will be specific requirements to address Interface Barriers.
02. Strengthening Society	Tackling Rural Poverty & Social Isolation – A New Framework	NI	2016	DAERA	This new TRPSI Framework is the third in a series of anti-poverty initiatives brought forward by DAERA and builds on the success of two previous initiatives, the Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Framework (APSI) 2008-2011 and the Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Framework 2011-15. The new Framework and 2016/17 Action Plan has been developed following consultation with stakeholders and has been informed by the report on the evaluation of the previous TRPSI Framework and the position paper produced by the ARD Committee following its review of the previous Framework.	Plan preparation includes consideration of the needs of those living in small settlements and the countryside to ensure that they have access to suitable and affordable housing as well as facilities. The Sustainability Appraisal

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						incorporates Rural Proofing.
02. Strengthening Society	Building Safer, Shared and Confident Communities: A Community Safety Strategy for Northern Ireland 2012-2017	NI	2012	DoJ	Building Safer, Shared and Confident Communities sets the direction for reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime in Northern Ireland over the next five years. It builds on the positive progress made in recent years in reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, both by continuing to focus on what works, as well as a stronger emphasis on the guiding principle that prevention is better than cure. This Strategy provides the overall direction for community safety in Northern Ireland and will help guide the work of a range of stakeholders including the Executive, local government, the voluntary and community sector and local communities.	Although expired, the LDP should take account of this Strategy and its related Action Plan(s). The LDP may have scope to contribute to encouraging and facilitating community safety through place shaping. It can also support the strategy's aim to create spaces that are for the community as a whole and which the community feel safe using or passing through, through encouraging good design. It can help support objectives to accommodate cultural differences between Catholic and Protestant communities whilst promoting "shared spaces" to bring people together with equality and opportunity.
02. Strengthening Society	Social Investment Fund	NI	2011	EO	The Social Investment Fund (SIF) was set up to deliver social change. It aims to make life better for people living in targeted areas by reducing poverty, unemployment and physical deterioration. The fund will run until March 2020 and all funding has been committed to projects prioritised by local Steering Groups. Some funding will capital support to enhance or create community and employment facilities.	Will however inform existing and proposed facilities that should be considered in plan preparation.
02. Strengthening Society	Planning Policy Statement 21: Sustainable Development in the Countryside	NI	2010	DfI	PPS 21 sets out planning policies for development in the countryside. For the purpose of this document the countryside is defined as land lying outside of settlement limits as identified in development plans. The provisions of	A series of 16 policies which allow for development in the countryside in tightly

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					this document apply to all areas of Northern Ireland's countryside.	defined circumstances. Many of these are carried forward through the SPPS. The LDP will have to comply with these and other regional policy in any variation of these policies. Also relevant to the topic of sustainable housing.
02. Strengthening Society	NIHE Good Relations Plan	NI	2007	NIHE	The Housing Executive commits to Respond quickly and effectively to the needs of people in danger as a result of community conflict; Work in partnership with others to address the complex housing needs of a divided society; Respect the rights of people who choose to live where they wish; Facilitate and encourage mixed housing as far as this is practicable, desirable and safe.	The LDP can help to promote and encourage mixed housing and shared spaces, to help bring people from different communities together.
02. Strengthening Society	NIHE - Race Relations Policy	NI	2006	NIHE	The five Race Relations Policy themes can be summarised as follows; Mainstreaming black and minority ethnic issues in policy development; Racial harassment and intimidation; Promoting black and minority ethnic social inclusion; Community participation and development; and Migrant worker issues.	The LDP can help to promote and encourage social inclusion.
02. Strengthening Society	Lifetime Opportunities – Government's Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Strategy for Northern Ireland	NI	2006	EO	As part of the Northern Ireland Executive's commitment to tackling poverty and social exclusion this document outlined what would be done by the Northern Ireland departments and the Northern Ireland Office in working towards its overall objectives of: working towards the elimination of poverty and social exclusion in Northern Ireland by 2020; and halving child poverty by 2010 on the way to eradicating child poverty by 2020. The strategy is structured into four key life stages – Early Years (0 – 4), Children and Young People (5 – 16), Working Age Adults and Older Citizens. Each of the life stages is expressed in terms of an overarching goal followed by a series of long-term targets that will work towards achieving the goal. This strategy overlaps with some more recent strategies but continues to be reported on.	Identifies the conditions for bringing people out of poverty, including fuel, employment, older people and those in the rural community and for promotion inclusion for all. The proposals and policies in the LDP should consider these needs and support delivery against them.
03. Housing	Housing Executive Community Involvement Strategy	NI	2018	NIHE	This strategy includes the aims to help deliver the Housing Executive's corporate objective of Building Stronger Communities. It has two specific aims: • Promote Community Involvement across all our communities. • Enabling our communities to challenge, influence and shape our housing service".	The LDP can support this strategy by providing an opportunity to cooperate in place shaping.

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03. Housing	Energising Communities – 2022/23 - 2024/25 Corporate Strategy	NI	2022	NIHE	NIHE's Corporate Strategy – 'Energising Communities', covers the period 2022/23 – 2024/25 and outlines the organisations six strategic objectives over the duration of the plan. These include: increase social housing supply; sustain and protect our environment; invest into our local economy; reduce poverty and improve health & wellbeing; and be an employer of choice.	The LDP can support this strategy.
03. Housing	Ending Homelessness Together: Homelessness Strategy 2022-2027	NI	2022	NIHE	The "Ending Homelessness Together" strategy is the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's (NIHE) approach to tackling homelessness from 2022 to 2027. This strategy emphasizes the importance of collaboration among various organizations to effectively address the complex issue of homelessness, which extends beyond merely providing shelter to include support for vulnerable populations.	In enabling housing need to be addressed, the LDP will contribute to delivery of the objectives of this strategy.
03. Housing	Delivering Sustainable Healthy Homes in Northern Ireland, NIHE, TPCA, Belfast Healthy Cities (March 2016)	NI	2016	NIHE	Guidance and good practice on how planning, health, housing and energy professionals can use new planning powers and responsibilities for community planning to support integrated local approaches to sustainable homes and communities, for energy and health and wellbeing.	This guidance should be taken into account in the preparation of the LDP.
03. Housing	Social Housing Development Programme, Unmet Social Housing Need Prospectus	NI	2016	NIHE	The Commissioning Prospectus provides housing associations, developers and other interested stakeholders detailed information on where there is unmet social/affordable housing need or a shortage of acquired development sites in the published SHDP and where NIHE would welcome suitable proposals. It presents data which will enable housing associations to make informed decisions about where to search for land and property to deliver new social and affordable housing within assessed housing need and strategic targets. The prospectus is updated and published annually to reflect the most recent assessment of local market issues and unmet housing needs.	The Commissioning Prospectus acts as key evidence for the LDP, containing the most up-to-date assessment of local affordable housing in the Borough (5 year rolling), with a breakdown by settlement. It will inform the formulation of a suitable affordable housing policy in the Plan Strategy, including an appropriate threshold, as well as social housing zonings in the Local Policies Plan.
03. Housing	Commissioning Prospectus (8 th Version) – Social & Intermediate Housing Requirements for the period 2024/2025 – 2026/27	NI/Council	2024	NIHE	As above, as part of annual update.	As above, based on annual rolling update.

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03. Housing	Design and Access Statements - A guide for Northern Ireland	NI	2015	DfI	Planning applications meeting certain criteria must be accompanied by a design and access statement. These include: An application which is a major development, or where any part of the development is in a designated area; and development consisting of – (a) the provision of one or more dwelling houses, or (ii) the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space created by the development is 100m ² or more.	Provides for early consideration of the need for and provision of open space, access and landscaping, and addressing external factors such as noise and traffic safety. Also relevant to the topics of health and well-being and transport and accessibility.
03. Housing	NIHE Social housing Development Programme (SHDP) - 2015/16 – 2017/18	NI	2015	NIHE	This strategy sets out how the government intends to fulfil the objectives over the next five years. The strategy also envisages housing playing a fourth role in driving regeneration within communities, particularly those suffering from blight and population decline. The Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP) is a three-year rolling programme of planned social housing construction and provision, that is managed by the NIHE's Development Programme Group (DPG). The SHDP is split into three individual programme years and is a mechanism used by DfC to inform social housing funding investment decisions. The DPG provides grant funding to housing associations, so that they can build or buy social housing. The SHDP provides details of new social housing schemes that are completed, where construction is on-going or where it is programmed to start for the next three years. Updated details will be uploaded on a monthly basis.	The LDP will take account of ongoing annual reporting in relation to planned social housing delivery.
03. Housing	Housing Executive Environmental Policy	NI	2015	NIHE	Includes commitments to prevent pollution of air, land and water; support initiatives to develop sustainable local communities; and enhance and protect biodiversity cross all Housing Executive landholdings.	The LDP can help to support these commitments.
03. Housing	Northern Ireland Empty Homes Strategy and Action Plan 2013 – 2018, including Review of the Strategy and Action Plan 2013-2018	NI	2013 2021 May (Review)	DfC	The Empty Homes Strategy is to ensure that the number of empty properties is kept to a minimum and to identify new opportunities to encourage owners to bring them back into use.	Although this strategy has expired and an updated version has not yet been published, the LDP can help to support

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					The review carried out in 2021 evaluated the success of the strategy against the 8 actions and key tasks that were identified to meet the objectives of the strategy.	the objectives of this strategy and its associated action plan , along with the findings of the 2021 review.
03. Housing	Facing the Future: Housing Strategy for Northern Ireland 2012 -2017	NI	2012	DfC	This Housing Strategy identifies four roles for government and five themes to help meet housing needs while supporting the most vulnerable. The themes are: (1) Ensuring access to decent, affordable, sustainable homes across all tenures; (2) Meeting housing needs and supporting the most vulnerable; (3) Housing and Welfare Reform; (4) Driving regeneration & sustaining communities through housing; and (5) Getting the structures right. This strategy sets out how the government intends to fulfil the objectives over the next five years. The strategy also envisages housing playing a role in driving regeneration within communities, particularly those suffering from blight and population decline. 'Facing the Future' was supported by an Action Plan, prepared in 2012 and updated in 2015.	Although now expired, the Housing Strategy along with its Action Plan may inform on unmet housing requirements. These themes align with a number of aspects of the LDP and sustainability appraisal, namely sustainable development, economic development, quality residential environments, etc. The strategy may complement a number of aspects of the proposed LDP, such as the provision of new homes which meets the needs of various groups, such as families, the elderly, and disabled. The strategy may put pressure on the environmental aspects of the LDP such as natural heritage, archaeology, flood risk, etc. A balance will need to be found through considered planning decisions. The LDP can help to support many of the actions identified in the action plan, such as: introducing developer contributions, developing work on energy efficiency,

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						increasing the availability of smaller social housing units and other initiatives for encouraging town and city centre regeneration such as living over shops
03. Housing	Housing Investment Plan 2019-2023	Council	2019	NIHE	The NIHE has prepared four-year Housing Investment Plans for each Council to provide a long term, holistic, cross tenure look at local housing markets. The Housing Investment Plans set out four high-level outcomes related to housing and associated services, which performance can be measured against. The themes are: • Helping people find housing support and solutions; • Delivering better homes; • Fostering vibrant sustainable communities; and • Delivering quality public services.	The HIP is an important evidence base for the LDP and will help facilitate discussion on housing issues within each district. In addition, a purpose of the HIP is to inform Councils on the various programmes and initiatives the Housing Executive and Housing Associations are developing to meet local housing needs. New housing may put pressure on the environmental aspects of the LDP such as natural heritage, archaeology, flood risk, etc. Similarly, the LDP may inhibit house building, due to environmental or design constraints. A balance will need to be found through considered planning decisions.
03. Housing	Housing Investment Plan 2023-2026 – Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	Council	2023	NIHE	The HIPs are three year plans which reports on progress made over the past twelve months and sets out our ambitions for the coming years. The HIPs inform Councils on the various programmes and initiatives that the Housing Executive and Housing Associations are developing to meet local housing needs. The Housing Investment Plans will also assist Councils in the Community Planning process – they are an important evidence base for the Community Plan and will help facilitate discussion on housing issues within each district, and demonstrate	The HIP is an important evidence base for the LDP and will help facilitate discussion on housing issues within each district. In addition, a purpose of the HIP is to inform Councils on the various programmes and initiatives the Housing

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					how the Housing Executive are working as a partner to deliver Community Plans. The plan identifies housing related objectives and actions and provided details of the issues and initiatives which we considered would affect the local housing environment during the following year.	Executive and Housing Associations are developing to meet local housing needs. New housing may put pressure on the environmental aspects of the LDP such as natural heritage, archaeology, flood risk, etc. Similarly, the LDP may inhibit house building, due to environmental or design constraints. A balance will need to be found through considered planning decisions.
03. Housing	Northern Ireland Housing Market Areas	Council	2010	NIHE	This report commissioned by NIHE presents the findings of a study into the structure of housing market areas (HMA) across Northern Ireland. A housing market area is defined as a geographical area where most people both live and work and where most people moving home (without changing job) seek a house. HMA can overlap, and often do not marry well with local authority boundaries. Moreover, they are dynamic and HMA boundaries can change over time. 11 major HMAs were identified as operating across Northern Ireland: Belfast, Craigavon, Newry, Ballymena, Coleraine, Derry, Strabane, Omagh, Mid-Ulster, Dungannon and Enniskillen.	Movement patterns to work can help to inform housing need. Reports for each HMA were prepared in 2011-2013 and are available on the home page.
03. Housing	Strategic Housing Market Analysis: South Eastern Area – Craigavon Urban Area and Newry HMAs, Final Report	South-Eastern Area (Craigavon and Newry)	2022 (June)	NIHE	The Strategic Housing Market Analysis (SHMA), commissioned by the NIHE, sets out projections of future housing need and demand for the Craigavon Urban Area and Newry Housing Market Areas (HMAs). It will assist policymakers in their understanding of the dynamics of the HMAs and to inform Local Development Plans. It builds on the previous use of the Net Stock Model by incorporating an affordability model that will, for the first time, make tenure estimates by local authority area. While different scenarios for the future evolution of housing need are identified, the report does not suggest targets or policy. The scenarios could change in a different economic/housing market context, over the life of the Plan. The scenarios are based on demographic trends and allow Councils to consider policy responses if they wish to	The SHM Analysis acts as important local evidence base, including for the formulation of appropriate housing policies to serve the needs of the Borough.

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					change the identified trends. It is also acknowledged that the LDP can set housing targets due to other factors, set out in the SPPS. The CUA HMA is coterminous with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council. The Newry HMA forms part of the Newry, Mourne and Down Local Government District (LGD), including all of the former Newry and Mourne LGD and 10 per cent of the former Down LGD. Based on the 2020 mid-year population estimates, the Newry HMA contains 63 per cent of the Newry, Mourne and Down LGD.	
03. Housing	Design Guide for Travellers' Sites in Northern Ireland	NI	2020 (Oct)	DfC	The guide provides technical guidance on the key issues that must be considered and identifies the main design and management elements necessary to create high quality and sustainable Traveller sites which meet residents' traditional and cultural needs. In 2020 DfC completed a review of the existing Design guide, thereby fulfilling a DfC recommendation from the NI Human Rights Commissions report "Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Travellers' Accommodation in Northern Ireland" published in March 2018. The Design Guide 2020 has been updated to include current health and safety requirements, fire safety guidance, legal and technical advice in relation to fitness standards, service provisions, adaptations and advice on site licencing. It is intended to support the provision of appropriate, cost-effective facilities for Travellers living in NI.	It will also help inform the review and update of the Council's Travellers Accommodation operational policy, currently contained in PPS 12, Policy HS 3 (Amended 2013).
03. Housing	Irish Travellers Accommodation Strategy 2021-2026	NI	2021	NIHE	The Strategy sets out how NIHE plans to provide Irish Travellers with access to affordable, good quality, culturally appropriate housing accommodation which fosters a sustainable, vibrant Irish Traveller community and promotes inclusion, a sense of belonging and security. The Strategy seeks to address the full range of accommodation needs based on the NIHE's latest assessment. It proposes a number of key actions and includes an implementation plan laying out a work programme over five years to achieve these. The Strategy is a priority for the NIHE. It acts as an update to the last Needs Assessment in 2015.	The Strategy acts as key evidence for the LDP both at Plan Strategy and Local Policies Plan stages. It will also help inform the review and update of the Council's Travellers Accommodation operational policy, currently contained in PPS 12, Policy HS 3 (Amended 2013).
03. Housing &	Commissioning Prospectus (8 th Version) – Social & Intermediate Housing	NI/Council	2024	NIHE	The Commissioning Prospectus provides housing associations, developers and other interested stakeholders detailed information about the requirements for the	The Commissioning Prospectus acts as key evidence for the LDP,

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
	Requirements for the period 2024/2025 – 2026/27				provision of new social and affordable housing throughout Northern Ireland. It presents data which will enable housing associations to make informed decisions about where to search for land and property to deliver new social and affordable housing within assessed housing need and strategic targets. It forms an integral part of the Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP) approved by the DfC Minister, identifying areas where there is a shortage of acquired development sites and where NIHE would welcome suitable scheme proposals. The prospectus is updated and published annually to reflect the most recent assessment of local market issues and unmet housing needs.	containing the most up-to-date assessment of local affordable housing in the Borough (5 year rolling), with a breakdown by settlement. It will inform the formulation of a suitable affordable housing policy in the Plan Strategy, including an appropriate threshold.
03. Housing	Position Paper on Affordable Housing Policy in Local Development Plans	NI	2020 (Oct)	NIHE	This position paper seeks to support local councils in formulating and implementing affordable housing policies within their LDPs. NIHE would like to see Councils bringing forward an affordable housing policy, which provides affordable housing units to meet need and to promote balanced and sustainable communities through mixed tenure development. The position paper includes preferred policy wording and advice on the overall approach to the issue within the LDP, including evidence gathering.	This position paper will help inform the Council's approach to delivering affordable housing in the LDP, including its operational policy.
03. Housing	Delivery of Affordable Housing Advice Note	NI	2025 (Sep)	NIHE	This advice note acts as an update to the 2020 Position Paper, to help support local councils in formulating and implementing affordable housing policies within their LDPs. The Advice Note offers a suggested approach that can be adapted by individual Councils to reflect their specific policy context. It is intended to foster shared understanding and alignment across planning and housing functions. It provides a strategic framework to guide the development of Supplementary Planning Guidance or inform Plan Strategies, while recognising that final decisions rest with individual Councils. NIHE highlights that it is a position statement, and developers should always refer to the relevant Council policy and guidance for site-specific requirements.	This position paper is a key document that will help inform the Council's approach to delivering affordable housing in the LDP, including its operational policy.
03. Housing	Older People's Housing Strategy 2021/22-2026/27	NI	2021	NIHE	The Older People's Housing Strategy is designed to address the evolving needs of an ageing population. The Strategy focusses on four key themes, 1. Planning for the future, 2. Promoting and Maintaining Dignity; 3. Providing Housing Advice for Older People; and 4. Promoting Participation:	The LDP can help support this strategy by facilitating the delivery of housing solutions more suited to an ageing population within the

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						Borough, as demonstrated by the LDP evidence base.
03. Housing	Housing Supply Strategy 2024-2039	NI	2024 (Dec)	DfC	The strategy provides a 15-year framework for the development and delivery of policies and actions needed to deliver our housing supply needs. It takes a whole system approach which recognises that there is not one single overarching challenge affecting housing supply here, but a series of interlinked challenges which will require a coordinated and collaborative approach to address. The strategy is guided by the vision that everybody has access to a good quality, affordable and sustainable home that is appropriate for their needs and is located within a thriving and inclusive community. That vision is supported by 5 key objectives which in turn set out a number of long-term policy commitments and enabling actions. The strategy aims to increase housing supply with a delivery of 100,000+ homes, including affordable housing, and to promote mixed tenure development.	The LDP can support this DfC strategy through its Housing Strategy and operational housing policies, to help meet the housing needs of the Borough over the plan period.
03. Housing	PPS 7: Quality Residential Environments	NI	2001	DfI	This PPS sets out the Department's planning policies for achieving quality in new residential development and advises on the treatment of this issue in development plans with a requirement for a Concept Master Plan for large developments.	This requires that all residential development is of good quality and sustainable and does result in unacceptable damage to the local character, environmental quality or residential amenity of these areas. The process of sustainability appraisal will help ensure this.
03. Housing	Planning Policy Statement 7 (Addendum): Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas	NI	2010	DfI	This document is a second addendum to PPS 7 'Quality Residential Environments' and must be read in conjunction with the policies contained within this PPS and within the previous addendum – 'Residential Extensions and Alterations' (published in March 2008). The addendum provides additional planning policies on the protection of local character, environmental quality and residential amenity within established residential areas, villages and smaller settlements. It also sets out regional policy on the conversion of existing buildings to flats or apartments. In addition, the addendum contains policy to promote greater use of permeable paving within new residential	This requires that all residential development is of good quality and sustainable and does result in unacceptable damage to the local character, environmental quality or residential amenity of these areas. The process of sustainability appraisal will help ensure this.

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					developments to reduce the risk of flooding from surface water run-off.	
03. Housing	Planning Policy Statement 7 (Addendum): Residential Extensions and Alterations	NI	2008	DfI	This document is a further Addendum to PPS 7 'Quality Residential Environments' and must be read in conjunction with the policies contained within that PPS. The Addendum provides an additional planning policy for the extension and/or alteration of a dwellinghouse or flat, including those in multiple occupancy. It embodies the Government's commitment to sustainable development and the Quality Initiative. However, it should be noted that unlike the other policies of PPS 7, the policy contained in this Addendum will apply to all dwellinghouses or flats throughout the Region, including single dwellings in the countryside.	This requires that all residential development is of good quality and sustainable and does result in unacceptable damage to the local character, environmental quality or residential amenity of these areas. The process of sustainability appraisal will help ensure this.
03. Housing	Planning Policy Statement 12 Housing in Settlements	NI	2005	DfI	PPS 12: Housing in Settlements Planning Policy Statement 12 'Housing in Settlements' has been prepared to assist in the implementation of the Regional Development Strategy to guide the future pattern on housing by managing future housing growth and distribution, support urban renaissance and achieve balanced communities. Development management policy for affordable housing is still contained within Planning Policy Statement 12 'Housing in Settlements' (PPS 12), published in July 2005. Under transitional arrangements, until a Plan Strategy is adopted, PPS 12 is still a material consideration for deciding planning applications. PPS 12 contains a development management policy, Policy HS 2, which "will be applied where a need for social housing is established through a local housing needs assessment and the development plan for the area has not provided for it."	This requires that all residential development is of good quality and sustainable and does result in unacceptable damage to the local character, environmental quality or residential amenity of these areas. The process of sustainability appraisal will help ensure this.
03. Housing	Planning Policy Statement 12, Housing in Settlements: Policy HS 3 (Amended) Travellers Accommodation	NI	2013	DfI	Amended Policy HS 3 that supersedes the policy contained in the original PPS 12. The policy contains minor amendments to address exceptional provision within the countryside, namely serviced sites and single-family transit sites.	This requires that all residential development is of good quality and sustainable and does result in unacceptable damage to the local character, environmental quality or residential amenity of these areas. The process of sustainability appraisal will help ensure this.

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
03. Housing	Creating Places: Achieving Quality in Residential Developments incorporating guidance on layout and access	NI	2000	DfI	Aims to promote: More sustainable patterns of living, working and travelling, more effective integration between land-use planning and transport, the creation of attractive places in which people are happy to live, work and take their leisure.	This extant regional Supplementary Planning Guidance may be relevant to drafting updated policy in the new LDP. The creation of attractive residential environments with a genuine sense of place is a prerequisite to achieving sustainability.
04. Education and Skills	Education Authority Annual Action Plan 2019-2021	NI	2019	Education Authority	The Education Authority Action Plans will provide details of the proposed actions to be taken to address key strategic issues in local areas and at local schools, all of which will be subject to detailed consultation. This Annual Action Plan covers the period April 2019 to March 2021 and identifies those schools for which developments are proposed. The Annual Action Plan includes schools where sustainability is now an issue but, also, includes some schools that are sustainable, as it is these schools who may form part of the solution to sustainability issues in other schools or areas.	The Action Plans can help inform the LDP on the areas where sustainability of schools is an issue and areas where there are insufficient places available to accommodate the local population.
04. Education and Skills	Department of Education Annual Business Plan 2019/2020	NI	2019	DE	This Plan contains a number of goals including: • 'Improving the Well-Being of Children and Young People' – includes rights, play and participation, • 'Raising Standards for All' – includes early years and childcare, • 'Closing the Performance Gap, Increasing Access and Equality' – includes Special Education Needs; youth work and sustainable schools, and • 'Improving the learning environment'. The plan aims to make sure that strategic investment supports the delivery of the area plans; that the premises in which young people grow and learn are safe, fit for purpose and conducive to learning; and that the environment provides opportunities for sharing and for building a more cohesive society. The Plan supports a number of indicators for education in the draft PfG.	This is a short term plan that is relevant to the facilities required for childcare, early years, primary and secondary school, special educational needs and youth. There is no current Corporate Plan for the Department. Regional education policies, programmes, strategies and action plans may be influenced and supported by spatial planning. This Plan may also have an influence on the sustainability theme of 'Community'.

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
04. Education and Skills	Education Authority Interim Strategic Plan 2017-2027	NI	2018	EA	The interim Strategic Plan 2017-2027 outlines what the EA will do over the next decade to achieve key goals, deliver consistently high-quality services to the community across Northern Ireland and produce positive outcomes for all children and young people. It will be supported by a three-year Corporate Plan and annual business plans which will enable EA to incorporate new priorities and respond to new challenges as they arise. The Strategic Plan has five main objectives (1) Meeting the learning needs of our children and young people (2) Providing excellent education support services (3) Developing all our people to carry out their jobs successfully (4) Managing our resources effectively and efficiently (5) Nurturing leadership across the EA to give clear direction in a dynamic and complex environment.	This plan will be considered in preparing new LDP policies. The LDP should enable development /expansion of education facilities where required.
04. Education and Skills	Providing Pathways - Strategic Area Plan for Schools 2017-2020	NI	2017	Education Authority	The plan identifies the challenges for the education system throughout each Local Government District (LGD) area. The challenges include reducing or increasing the number of available places in schools, matching provision to population trends, addressing school provision which is not sustainable and improving the quality of provision. In some areas of Northern Ireland there are too many school places for the size of the population, while in other areas, there are not enough places. Area planning aims to establish a network of viable schools that are of the right type, the right size, located in the right place, and have a focus on raising standards. Therefore, the aim of area planning is to ensure that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum in sustainable, fit-for-purpose schools.	This plan will be considered in preparing new LDP policies.
04. Education and Skills	Planning for Sustainable Provision: Draft Strategic Area Plan 2022-27 Primary and Post-Primary Schools	NI	2022	Education Authority	The Plan's mission is to: • address school provision which is not educationally and/or financially sustainable; • explore realistic, innovative, shared and collaborative solutions with a view to ensuring there is a viable and sustainable level of quality educational provision; • aim to find solutions which deliver sustainable education provision in rural areas; • address issues and challenges specific to local areas, by ensuring there are sufficient places which may result in increasing places in some areas while reducing places in others. • Provide a network of viable and sustainable schools that are of the right type, the right size, located in the right place at the right time with a focus on raising standards.	The LDP can assist in the delivery of some of the Plan's objectives, where new facilities are required.

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04. Education and Skills	Every school a good school - a policy for school improvement	NI	2009	DE	Mainly focused on delivery of quality education meeting needs of pupils. Recognises that school premises are a resource that could be better used by local communities and that providing for increased community use of school premises can be an effective way of building links between schools and their local communities. Legislation already provides for schools to make their premises available to outside groups and the Department wants to encourage more community use of school premises. Commits to identifying and disseminating good practice with a particular focus on community use of schools to help schools in building stronger links with their parents and local communities.	Creates the conditions for increased use of schools for community benefit which should be considered in planning for communities.
04. Education and Skills	Schools for the Future: A Policy for Sustainable Schools	NI	2009	DE	The policy has as its vision an estate of educationally sustainable schools planned on an area basis, with focus on sharing and collaboration. It provides a framework for early consideration of emerging problems and possible remedial action to address questions of viability. The primary objective of the policy is to ensure that all children get a first class education in fit for purpose facilities, regardless of background or where they live. The policy sets out six criteria to be considered in assessing a school's educational viability, as follows: quality educational experience; stable enrolment trends; sound financial position; strong leadership and management; accessibility; strong links with the community.	The LDP should enable development/expansion of school facilities where required to meet the needs of the policy.
04. Education and Skills	Development Control Advice Note 13: Crèches, Day Nurseries and Pre-School Play Groups	NI	1993	DfI	The purpose of this Advice Note is to give general guidance to intending developers, their professional advisors and agents. It is designed to provide advice on the Planning criteria to be applied when an application for this form of development is being considered. It is not a specific statement of Departmental policy, but rather one of advice and guidance.	If this is the most up to date advice on this type of development, it should be considered in LDP preparation. However, there may be changes in the sector that also need to be taken into account.
05. Economy & Employment	Economy 2030: an Industrial Strategy for Northern Ireland (Draft)	NI	2017	DfE	This strategy sets out a plan to turn Northern Ireland into one of the world's most innovative and competitive small advanced economies. Our ambition to build a globally competitive economy will be based around the following five priority pillars for growth: • Accelerating Innovation and Research; • Enhancing Education, Skills and Employability; • Driving Inclusive, Sustainable Growth; • Succeeding in Global Markets; • Building the Best Economic Infrastructure.	The LDP can help support opportunities that are most likely to lead to strong and sustained economic growth

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
05. Economy & Employment	Going for Growth - A Strategic Action Plan in Support of the Northern Ireland Agri-food Industry	NI	2014	DAERA	In May 2012, DARD and DETI appointed the industry led Agri-Food Strategy Board to make recommendations in respect of the growth targets, strategic priorities and actions to be included in that Plan. The report, 'Going for Growth', includes more than 100 recommendations aimed at accelerating the growth of farming, fishing and food and drink processing in Northern Ireland to 2020 and beyond. In response the NI Executive has agreed an action plan, outlining actions to be progressed across relevant Departments and Agencies. The Plan seeks to deliver "a best in class environmentally sustainable model for production".	The Plan calls for relevant authorities to streamline planning and IPPC application procedures, to speed up decision-making and to ensure the speed of successful processing of Agri-Food applications is equal to, or better than those in Great Britain. It proposes that greater weight should be applied to Agri-Food applications, reflecting the industry's strategic importance. It also calls for the rapid delivery of solutions for converting poultry waste to energy, removing a key uncertainty in expansion. However, the facilitation of agricultural expansion will need to be balanced against environmental considerations and cannot override other legislative requirements.
05. Economy & Employment	Planning Policy Statement 16 Tourism	NI	2013	DfI	Policies in relation to tourism and safeguarding tourism assets.	Retention of some or all of these policies will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
05. Economy & Employment	Northern Ireland Economic Strategy: Priorities for sustainable growth and prosperity. Building a better Future	NI	2012	NI Executive	Sets out how the Executive plans to grow a prosperous local economy over the short, medium and longer term to 2030. The economic vision for 2030 is: 'An economy characterised by a sustainable and growing private sector, where a greater number of firms compete in global markets and there is growing employment and prosperity for all'. There is an emphasis on redressing a dependency on the public sector through the following: stimulate innovation, R&D and creativity so that we widen and deepen our export base; improve the skills and	The LDP can support this strategy by enabling economic growth and shaping an environment with sustainable infrastructure that attracts investment and supports innovation.

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					employability of the entire workforce so that people can progress up the skills ladder, thereby delivering higher productivity and increased social inclusion; compete effectively within the global economy and be internationally regarded as a good place to live and do business; encourage business growth and increase the potential of our local companies, including within the social and rural economies; and develop a modern and sustainable economic infrastructure that supports economic growth.	
05. Economy & Employment	Economic Strategy Priorities for sustainable growth and prosperity - Building a better Future	NI	2012	NI Executive	The overarching goal of this Strategy is to improve the economic competitiveness of the Northern Ireland economy. In order to achieve this, we are committed to strengthening our competitiveness through a focus on export led economic growth. This means we are prioritising the need to deepen and diversify our export base in order to increase employment and wealth across Northern Ireland. The key drivers of this will be innovation, R&D and the skills of our workforce.	The LDP can support this strategy by enabling economic growth and shaping an environment with sustainable infrastructure that attracts investment and supports innovation. This Strategy is also relevant to the sustainability theme of education and skills.
05. Economy & Employment	DETI (2010) Draft Northern Ireland Tourism Strategy	NI	2010	DfE	The original 2010 draft is not available. The vision was to: create the new NI experience; get it on everyone's destination wish list; and double the income earned from tourism by 2020. The draft strategy, had the aim of providing the strategic direction for the development of NI's tourism experience to the year 2020 and a targeted Action Plan to deliver it. At the core of the strategy was the intention to grow income from visitor numbers with tourist revenue increased from £536 million in 2010 to £1 billion by 2020. An updated draft strategy, is currently being developed by the Department for the Economy and was due for consultation by the end of 2016, however the absence of Ministers has delayed public consultation on, and therefore finalisation of, the draft Strategy within the original timescale.	By encouraging sustainable development, the LDP may also indirectly support development that enables tourism, e.g. visitor centres, attractions, services, transport etc. As with any development, environmental considerations will need to be considered.
05. Economy & Employment	A Draft Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2020	NI	2010	DfE	Aims to provide strategic direction and targets for the development of NI's tourism experience to the year 2020 and a targeted Action Plan to deliver it. At the core of the strategy was the intention to grow income from visitor numbers with tourist revenue increased from £536 million in 2010 to £1 billion by 2020.	The Draft Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2020 identified nine key tourism destinations. The LDP can indirectly

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						support development that enables tourism.
05. Economy & Employment	Draft Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland: 10 Year Plan	NI	2024	DfE	The Tourism Strategy: 10 Year Plan establishes a vision and mission for the growth of the tourism sector in Northern Ireland over the next decade. It will be a key enabler of the Department's 10x Economic Vision to help position the region internationally as an attractive place to visit, making our visitors feel welcome whilst at the same time helping to make the lives better of all our citizens. It will seek to deliver on the objectives of 10x by generating economic growth that is sustainable, inclusive and innovative. It is designed to be a roadmap, premised on five themes, which seeks to strive for a new and ambitious growth trajectory that is Innovative, Inclusive, Sustainable, Attractive and Collaborative over the next decade.	The LDP can indirectly support development that enables tourism.
05. Economy & Employment	Planning Policy Statement 4 – Planning and Economic Development (DOE 2010)	NI	2010	DfI	Policies for sustainable economic development and stipulates how these can be brought forward in development plans.	Incorporation of the policies in this PPS will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
05. Economy & Employment	Mid South West Economic Engine Regional Economic Strategy 2020	Regional	2020	Mid South West Region	Mid South West – a collaboration between Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon; Fermanagh and Omagh and Mid Ulster – acts as the backbone of Northern Ireland's economy, exporting its products and services to the far corners of the world. The Regional Economic Strategy (RES) for the Mid-South West (MSW) region sets out our vision and ambition for the region; it identifies the opportunities and challenges faced; and sets out the priority pillars around which future investment and actions to realise our ambitions will be framed. Furthermore, it provides an early, high level indication of potential specific projects/interventions that may sit under each of these pillars - which will be subject to ongoing development.	LDP will take account of this strategy.
05. Economy & Employment	The Armagh Place Plan	Local	2022	Armagh Banbridge and Craigavon Community Planning Partnership	The Armagh Place Plan has been developed to help us understand and align key messages from policies such as Council's Connected – A Community Plan, and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland 2015 which identifies 'supporting good design and positive place making' as one its five core planning principles and what these may mean for local places. The Armagh Place Plan is designed around four outcomes; a connected city, a green city, an engaging city and a healthy city. Collectively the plan developed seven typologies and thirty actions	LDP will take account of this plan

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					which will be delivered collaboratively across the partners to embrace the vision of the outcomes.	
05. Economy & Employment	The Banbridge Place Plan	Local	2024	Armagh Banbridge and Craigavon Community Planning Partnership	The Plan is designed around 5 outcomes; Bridging Banbridge, Green Banbridge, Healthy Banbridge, Creative Banbridge, and Growing Banbridge. The plan identifies 56 actions to bring about positive change in Banbridge. These actions include physical and non-physical interventions and they have been thematically clustered; • Arts, Heritage and Leisure; • Green Innovation; • Spaces, Places and Natural Environment; • Living Here; • High Street and Investing.	LDP will take account of this plan
05. Economy & Employment	The Dromore Place Plan	Local	2025	Armagh Banbridge and Craigavon Community Planning Partnership	The Dromore Place Plan outlines a strategic vision for the place and sets out five outcomes which are aimed at enhancing the quality of life for the residents, preserving the unique character of the area whilst stimulating economic growth. The plan details four big ideas, and six thematic clusters comprising of thirty seven suggested actions, serving as a road map for the community planning partners, stakeholders, businesses and local community groups, designed to help with the shaping, transformation and development of Dromore into the future.	LDP will take account of this plan
05. Economy & Employment	Central Craigavon Masterplan Report	Local	2010	Tribal (on behalf of Craigavon Borough Council / Department for Social Development)	The Craigavon masterplan is conceptual masterplan for central Craigavon in the context of the wider Craigavon Integrated Development Framework (CIDF).	LDP will take account of this plan
05. Economy & Employment	Craigavon Integrated Development Framework	Local	2010	Craigavon Borough Council / Department for Social Development	The CIDF will guide how the urban area's three town centres – Central Craigavon, Lurgan and Portadown – develop and thrive over the next 20 years.	LDP will take account of this plan
06. Material Assets	National Renewable Energy Action Plan for the United Kingdom	UK	2010	BEIS	Aims to provide a framework which enables the land based and rural sectors to realise the potential opportunities in the development of renewable energy. Focus is on assisting meeting targets for renewable energy production at a regional, national and EU level in a balanced and sustainable way. Other key objectives of the development include energy security, emissions reductions and wider economic advantages.	Policies relating to renewable energy are proposed, helping to meet the objectives of this plan. Design and sustainable development policies should also encourage renewable energy as part of these developments. Planning decisions will have to balance need for renewables with environmental concerns and it may be that the need for renewable

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						developments is outweighed by environmental protection.
06. Material Assets	The UK Renewable Energy Strategy	UK	2009	BEIS	This UK Roadmap shows where we are now; analysis of how deployment may evolve by 2020, together with separate estimates of the market's view of the potential; and the actions required to set us on the path to achieve the deployment levels anticipated in our analysis. While renewable deployment across all technologies will be important, the Roadmap focuses in particular on the technologies that have either the greatest potential to help the UK meet the 2020 target in a cost effective and sustainable way, or offer great potential for the decades that follow. These are Onshore wind, Offshore wind, Marine energy, Biomass electricity, Biomass heat, Ground source and air source heat pumps and Renewable transport.	The LDP should take into account evidence that informs future energy needs and renewable provision.
06. Material Assets	Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015 - 2030	Rol	2015	DfE	The White Paper is a complete energy policy update, which sets out a framework to guide policy between now and 2030. Its objective is to guide a transition to a low carbon energy system, which provides secure supplies of competitive and affordable energy. It does not set out detailed proposals, which can be found in specific work programmes that are either in place or under development. It places great value on the relationship with Northern Ireland and will continue close cooperation on a range of energy matters including the regulation of the all-island single electricity market (SEM) (in which Northern Ireland and Ireland are equal partners) the development of the Integrated-Single Electricity Market (I-SEM), energy transmission and the proposed North-South transmission line.	This paper will influence the overall energy production requirement in Ireland. The establishment of an all-island single electricity market may necessitate cross-border distribution network infrastructure. This paper may also have an influence on the sustainability topic of climate change.
06. Material Assets	Envisioning the Future: Considering Energy in Northern Ireland to 2050	NI	2015	DfE	A vision of what might happen by 2050: the outcomes are neither a prediction nor a plan and the study does not, therefore, propose a strategy. Instead, the vision is intended to guide thinking on what can be achieved in 2050 and what early decisions and activities may be needed to support development towards 2050.	This vision may provide information on anticipated future energy needs and provision and may help to inform policy.
06. Material Assets	Ireland's Third National Energy Efficiency Action Plan	Rol	2014	DCCA	Ireland's third National Energy Efficiency Action Plan to 2020. The Department has reviewed, updated and	The Single Electricity Market for the island of

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					replaced certain actions from the first Plan as appropriate to ensure it remains on track to meet national and EU targets. The plan sets a clear vision for each of the six areas covered by the Action Plan: Public Sector, Residential, Business, Transport, Energy Supply, and Cross Sectoral.	Ireland means that delivery of renewable energy in Ireland will benefit Northern Ireland and vice versa.
06. Material Assets	Renewable Energy in the Land Based Sector A way forward. Interim Renewable Energy Action Plan 2013/14	NI	2013	DAERA	Follow up to the Renewable Energy Action Plan 2010. Strategic aim to Promote sustainable farming and forestry practices to deliver greater resource efficiency and reduced environmental impact, by supporting the sector to make a contribution to and benefit from renewable energy opportunities. Focus on enabling the land based and rural sectors to realise the potential opportunities in the development of renewable energy through capacity building, research and promotion of opportunities.	LDP preparation will have to balance need for renewables with environmental concerns and it may be that the need for renewable developments is outweighed by environmental protection.
06. Material Assets	Draft Onshore Renewable Electricity Action Plan	NI	2013	DfE	The aim of the Action Plan is to maximise the amount of renewable electricity generated from onshore renewable sources in order to enhance diversity and security of supply, reduce carbon emissions, contribute to the 40% renewable electricity target by 2020 and beyond and develop business and employment opportunities for Northern Ireland companies.	Provision in the LDP to support delivery of this will need to align with the renewable energy subject policy of the SPPS, though it could conflict with the natural heritage and other environmental policies.
06. Material Assets	The Revised Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy "Delivering Resource Efficiency"	NI	2013	DAERA	The revised Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy sets the policy framework for the management of waste in Northern Ireland and contains actions and targets to meet EU Directive requirements and the Department's Programme for Government commitments. It builds on and retains the core principles of the 2006 Strategy and places a renewed emphasis on the Waste Hierarchy. The new Strategy moves the emphasis of waste management in Northern Ireland from resource management, with landfill diversion as the key driver, to resource efficiency i.e. using resources in the most effective way while minimising the impact of their use on the environment.	The SPPS supports this strategy, namely with development making sustainable use of available resources and having a sustainable approach to waste designed in. Waste management is one of the Subject Policies. The economic considerations of the SPPS will support 'green jobs' and ensure that the economy will benefit from planning decisions. Improved waste management will be good for the environment. The LDP is

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						therefore likely to support this strategy, namely with development making sustainable use of available resources and having a sustainable approach to waste designed in. The economic considerations of the LDP will support employment and ensure that the economy will benefit from planning decisions. Improved waste management will be good for the environment.
06. Material Assets	Strategy for Renewable Energy: 2012-2020	Rol	2012	DCCA	The strategy outlines how it is planned that sustainable power, when developed, is maximised as it is returned to the State. Five strategic goals are set out in the document, these include increasing on and offshore wind, building a sustainable bioenergy sector, fostering R&D in renewables, growing sustainable transport and building out robust and efficient networks.	There is little information on whether renewable energy generation and networks will focus on use within NI or whether cross-border outcomes will also be sought.
06. Material Assets	A Resource Opportunity: Waste Management Policy in Ireland	Rol	2012	DECLG	This policy document sets out the measure through which Ireland will make the further progress necessary to become a recycling society, with a clear focus on resource efficiency and the virtual elimination of landfilling of municipal waste.	There may be cross-border relationships for waste management, for example recycling facilities.
06. Material Assets	DETI (2012) Sustainable Energy Action Plan 2012-2015 and beyond	NI	2012	DfE	The Action Plan aims to assist with the implementation of the Strategic Energy Framework (2010-2020). DETI sets out numerous 'main actions for the future' regarding renewables and other aspects of sustainable energy. Of particular relevance are the commitments to: • Contribute to the growth of the NI sustainable energy sector (through Invest NI) to 8.9% of NI GVA by 2015: • Work with DOE, developers, planners and those responsible for environmental consents to ensure that the need for renewable energy to address the environmental impacts of climate change is recognised, that good quality applications are made and that clear, consistent and proportionate procedures are in place for the consenting	A number of socio-economic objectives are included in the Action Plan requiring the development of facilities and service infrastructure, as well as proposing funding for additional development such as renewables or farm diversification.

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					of renewable installations; • Undertake “capacity studies” (including landscape capacity study, ecological study and bird migration study, with DOE and others) in order to determine with more accuracy how much development could be accommodated in different locations across Northern Ireland before significant cumulative effects start to emerge; and • Develop a continuous monitoring framework (with DOE and others) where the key potential cumulative effects identified from the assessment are reviewed on a regular basis in response to growth of the onshore wind industry. There are also a number of socio-economic commitments, such as supporting construction of electricity network, or refurbishing schools with renewable technologies.	
06. Material Assets	DETI (2010) Energy: A Strategic Framework for Northern Ireland	NI	2010	DfE	Contains goals and targets, but does not include the detail of how targets could be achieved. It does aim to ensure future access to secure, competitively priced and sustainable energy supplies for all of NI. It also provides a direction for NI energy policy over the next ten years concentrating on key areas of electricity, natural gas and renewable energy sources. Under review in 2016.	Renewable and sustainable development policies will indirectly accord with this framework, by providing for renewable development. There may be a conflict between this framework and environmental policies (natural heritage, cultural heritage, flood risk etc.) when it comes to developing gas facilities and electrical networks.
06. Material Assets	Planning Policy Statement 18 Renewable Energy (2009) Supplementary Planning Guidance Wind Energy Development in Northern Ireland's Landscapes.	NI	2010	DfI	The SPG provides broad, strategic guidance in relation to the visual and landscape impacts of wind energy development. The guidance is based on the sensitivity of Northern Ireland's landscapes to wind energy development and contains an assessment of each of the 130 Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) in Northern Ireland by referencing the characteristics and values associated with each LCA.	This PPS informs the relative capacity for wind energy in respect of landscape. It is therefore also relevant to the sustainability topic of landscape.
06. Material Assets	Planning Policy Statement 10 Telecommunications	NI	2002	DfI	This PPS sets out the Department's planning policies for telecommunications development. It embodies the Government's commitment to facilitate the growth of new and existing telecommunications systems whilst keeping the environmental impact to a minimum. The PPS also	Retention of this will be considered in preparing LDP policies.

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					addresses health issues associated with telecommunications development.	
06. Material Assets	Planning Policy Statement 11 Planning and Waste Management (DOE 2002)	NI	2002	DfI	This PPS sets out the Department's planning policies for the development of waste management facilities. It seeks to promote the highest environmental standards in development proposals for waste management facilities and includes guidance on the issues likely to be considered in the determination of planning applications. In addition, it explains the relationship between the planning system and authorities responsible for the regulation and management of waste.	Retention of this will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
06. Material Assets	The Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997	NI	1997	NI Executive	Implements the European Commission (EC) Framework on Waste in NI. The Order makes a number of provisions such as: transfer of responsibility for waste regulation from the district Councils to the Department of Environment (DOE), focused within the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) introduction of measures designed to increase control over the processing and handling of waste including Waste Management Licensing, Duty of Care, Registration of Carriers, Special Waste and Producer Responsibility introduction of measures relating to the identification of contaminated land, designation of special sites, duties of enforcing authorities to require remediation, determination of appropriate persons to bear responsibility for remediation, liability of contaminating substances which escape to other land and contaminated land registers.	The legislation is relevant to LDP through the potential requirements for redevelopment of sites which may have had previous industrial land use and for the identification and development (or redevelopment) of sites for the processing, handling and disposal of waste. The Contaminated Land regime which is set out in Part 3 of the Waste Management and Contaminated Land Order (Northern Ireland) 1997, has been enacted but is not yet in force.
06. Material Assets	Joint Waste Management Plan for Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council; Fermanagh & Omagh District Council; & Mid Ulster District Council (Version 02 – July 2016)	Regional	2016	ABC Council, Fermanagh & Omagh District Council; & Mid Ulster District Council	The purpose of the Plan is to set out the arrangements for the management of controlled wastes arising within the joint councils over the period 2016 to 2020. This includes the services and infrastructure needed for the collection, treatment and disposal of the wastes. To develop a waste management system that meets the joint councils needs and contributes to economic and sustainable development.	There is a need to reflect the arrangements for the management of waste.
06. Material Assets	Energy Strategy - Path to Net Zero Energy - Action Plan	NI	2022	DfE	Outlines a roadmap to 2030 aiming to deliver a 56% reduction in our energy-related emissions, on the pathway to deliver the 2050 vision of net zero carbon and affordable energy.	The Actions set out are generally about improving the energy efficiency of existing

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						buildings, but also about improving the energy efficiency of new buildings and to replace fossil fuels with renewable energy. It also aims to create a flexible, resilient and integrated energy system. The Action Plan may lead to a renewable energy support scheme and will also initiate a review in permitted development legislation for low carbon heat installations; the LDP must ensure that its policies can be applied to existing, new and emerging low carbon technologies, such as hydrogen and biomethane which are potential energy sources identified in the Action Plan. It should align with regional and national policy, such as for proposals requiring consent from more than one authority (e.g. onshore connections for offshore developments).
07. Physical Resources	UK Geodiversity Action Plan	UK	2011	Natural England	The UKGAP sets out a framework for geodiversity action across the UK. It encompasses six themes: (1) Furthering our understanding of geodiversity, (2) Influencing planning policy, legislation and development design, (3) Gathering and maintaining information on our geodiversity, (4) Conserving and managing our geodiversity, (5) Inspiring people to value and care for our geodiversity, (6) Sustaining resources for our geodiversity.	Geodiversity can play a role in planning for and mitigating the effects of climate change, coastal erosion and flooding. It can also help support Ecosystem Services such as soil formation, flood management, pollution control, mineral resources and the enjoyment of our

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						environment. The LDP should recognise that geodiversity is cross-cutting across several themes including transport, housing, mineral extraction and waste. It should also recognise the sustainable socio-economic benefits that geodiversity brings for people and the cultural services it provides across a range of sectors and social agenda (for example, contributing to sense of place and a healthy lifestyle). Geodiversity information can help to support the delivery of wider environmental and landscape initiatives (including landscape characterisation and delivery of the European Landscape Convention).
07. Physical Resources	Delivering our Future, Valuing our Soils: A Sustainable Agricultural Land Management Strategy for Northern Ireland	NI	2016	independent Expert Working Group on Sustainable Land Management	Improving the health of Northern Ireland's agricultural soils is the central focus of this strategy. Healthier soils will deliver better yields of crops and grass which are higher in quality. This will provide the raw material necessary for the increased productivity and profitability envisaged by 'Going for Growth' and will also deliver environmental improvement simultaneously.	This strategy document is mainly targeted at agricultural practitioners adopting more sustainable land use practices. It contains some information on best practice for sustainable land management which may be translatable to the use of public lands, e.g. blue/green infrastructure and enhancement of biodiversity.

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08. Transport & Accessibility	Exercise Explore Enjoy: A Strategic Plan for Greenways	NI	2016	DfI	Sets out the plans for a network of greenways, connecting towns and cities to the villages and countryside from east to west and north to south across all eleven Councils. Objectives include: improving health and wellbeing, increasing access to greenways, improving safety, improving social inclusion, economic development.	Greenways can produce both environmental and social benefits, because they are easily accessible and can bring nature and people together. The development of traffic free infrastructure, particularly greenways, can also have a positive impact on social inclusion and encouraging new and harder to reach groups to take up cycling and walking. The LDP can help to support these objectives. This strategic plan is also highly relevant to the sustainability themes of health and wellbeing, natural resources and landscape.
08. Transport & Accessibility	Strategic Park & Ride Delivery Programme 2016-2020 (Draft)	NI	2016	DfI	The Department for Infrastructure is developing a Strategic Park & Ride Delivery Programme for the next four years which will deliver additional Park & Ride and Park & Share spaces	May inform policies relating to provision of park and ride facilities and connectivity between transport modes.
08. Transport & Accessibility	Translink Strategy 'Get on Board' 2016-2021	NI	2016	Translink	Translink's plan to transform public transport and support the growth and prosperity of Northern Ireland. 'Get on Board' has been developed in the context of the Regional Development Strategy 2035 and The New Approach to Regional Transportation. It aims to deliver a transformation in public transport, providing integrated services which connect people, enhance the economy and improve the environment, enabling a thriving Northern Ireland" Incorporates a number of key goals including: • Making services inclusive and accessible to all; • Working with all stakeholders to support social inclusion in local communities; • Support modal shift toward sustainable transport; and • Forging partnerships to deliver cost	The LDP will support this strategy and will consider measures to make public transport services and sustainable transport more accessible and more integrated with other transport modes.

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					effective and integrated travel solutions to rural communities.	
08. Transport & Accessibility	Northern Ireland Changing Gear: A Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland	NI	2015	Dfi	The Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland is the first step in achieving the Minister's vision for cycling. It aims to set out progressively how we can transform Northern Ireland into a place where travelling by bicycle is a healthy, every day activity. It will be supported by a Bicycle Strategy Delivery Plan which will outline specific time bound actions to realise this vision. It takes a 3 pillar approach: • 'Build' [a comprehensive network for the bicycle], • 'Support' [People who choose to travel by bicycle] and • 'Promote' [The bicycle as a mode of transport for everyday journeys].	This strategy is closely linked with 'Exercise Explore Enjoy: A Strategic Plan for Greenways'. The LDP can help to support the objectives of the strategy by supporting the establishment of new or improved cycle routes and cycling infrastructure.
08. Transport & Accessibility	Railway Investment Prioritisation Strategy May 2014	NI	2015	Dfi	The Strategy sets out the strategic direction for future railway investment over the next 20 years and the high level initiatives that need to be delivered to support the Strategy. Objectives include: maintain and improve passenger capacity, remove bottlenecks and assist development along TEN-T (Trans European) core network corridor; enhance or extend TEN-T comprehensive network. The Strategy will also look at new halts and opportunities to develop out-of-town rail-based park and ride at new halts.	The LDP can support aspects of the Strategy, such as the aim to build additional park and ride facilities and station upgrades/ refurbishment which include enhancing accessibility and safety features.
08. Transport & Accessibility	Network Utilisation Strategy, Translink NI Railways, (Published October 2015)	NI	2015	Translink	The Network Utilisation Strategy (NUS) seeks to find a balance between supply and demand. It sets out a long Term vision for rail in Northern Ireland for the next 30 years. It provides the evidence base to support targeted investment in infrastructure, rolling stock and services such that the network is fit for the purpose of supporting the growth of the Northern Ireland economy.	Indicates potential future investment in railway infrastructure.
08. Transport & Accessibility	Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future - A New Approach to Regional Transportation.	NI	2011	Dfi	How the Department will develop regional transportation beyond 2015, when the current transport plans reach their conclusion. The new approach to regional transportation complements the Regional Development Strategy and aims to achieve the transportation vision: "to have a modern, sustainable, safe transportation system which benefits society, the economy and the environment and which actively contributes to social inclusion and everyone's quality of life." The new approach starts with the assumption that the decision to travel has been made. It seeks to provide the infrastructure and services that will ensure that travel and transport are as sustainable as possible.	The SPPS includes seven Subject Policies specific to transport and others that address the 'High Level Transport Aims' and 'Strategic Objectives of Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future', so in meeting the requirements of the SPPS the requirements of this strategy will also be met. Planning to

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						enable people to live and work near the services and facilities they require and policies that allow more people to work from home will support this strategy and the LDP will also need to consider any requirement for new or improved transport infrastructure. The LDP will support this Plan. The need for new or improved infrastructure will need to be assessed against environmental policies, though following good design and sustainable development should achieve the best possible solutions to the need.
08. Transport & Accessibility	Transport Strategy 2035 (Consultation Draft June 2025)	NI	2025	DfI	The Department has prepared a draft Transport Strategy to 2035. The Transport Strategy sets out a new vision and strategic priorities for our transport system through to 2035. It articulates the role of transport as a social, economic and environmental enabler and establishes a set of transport priorities for the Department to deliver against. The Strategy aims to deliver a cleaner, smarter, and more inclusive transport network by 2035, with an emphasis on sustainability, innovation, and accessibility. This strategy is developed around four Strategic Priorities for Transport, each of which contribute to Sustainable Development Goals. These Strategic Priorities for Transport reflect the contribution that the transport system can make to the improvement of people's everyday lives, and to our society in general. The priorities reflect the collective responsibility of everyone - government, business, and individuals, to embed sustainability into the decisions we make. Under each strategic priority there are a range of transport measures. They do not operate in isolation rather they will work	The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS), councils' Local Development Plans (LDPs), and guidance within Living Places will continue to guide decision making to improve connectivity and promote more sustainable patterns of transport and travel. The LDP will enable the Transport Strategy to meet its priorities by close working with DfI transport planners to ensure that the policies, land use allocations, and key site requirements of LDPs are closely linked with the transport

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					together to holistically achieve the Transport Vision for 2035. Our Strategic priorities are that Transport: • Is Resilient and Sustainable • Supports Connected and Inclusive Communities • Is Safe and Healthy • Supports Green Growth	policies, proposals and investment identified in the transport plans.
08. Transport & Accessibility	Sub-Regional Transport Plan 2015 (S RTP)	NI	2007	DfI	While this implementation plan has expired, some of the actions which have not been completed may be relevant in the future. The Sub-Regional Transport Plan deals with the transport needs of the whole of Northern Ireland with the exception of the Belfast Metropolitan Area and the rail and trunk road networks which are covered in earlier transport plans. The purpose of the S RTP is to study the needs of the designated areas in detail and to confirm a package of transport schemes, consistent with the general principles and indicative levels of spend in the RTS. This package of schemes and initiatives must aim to service the future transport demands taking account of financial allocation, planned developments and any changes in Government policy.	Although expired, the S RTP may inform unmet transport and infrastructure requirements.
08. Transport & Accessibility	Planning Policy Statement 3 – Access, Movement and Parking (2005) & PPS3 clarification (DOE 2006)	NI	2005	DfI	Policies for vehicular and pedestrian access, transport assessments, the protection of transport routes and parking. Provides for a sustainable transport system which promotes road safety.	Incorporation of the policies in this PPS will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
08. Transport & Accessibility	Planning Policy Statement 13 Transportation and Land Use	NI	2005	DfI	Assists in bringing forward the integration of transportation and land use as per the RDS.	Incorporation of the policies in this PPS will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
08. Transport & Accessibility	Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015	NI	2004	DfI	While this implementation plan has expired, some of the actions which have not been completed may be relevant in the future. The RSTN of Northern Ireland comprises the complete rail network, five Key Transport Corridors (KTCs), four Link Corridors, the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Corridors and the remainder of the trunk road network. The Plan consists of proposals for the maintenance, management and development of this transport network up to the end of 2015.	Although expired, the RSTN may inform unmet transport and infrastructure requirements.
08. Transport & Accessibility	Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) for Northern Ireland 2002-2012	NI	2002	DfI	The Regional Transport Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012 identifies strategic transportation investment	Although expired, and replaced by 'Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future', the RTS may

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					priorities and considers potential funding sources and affordability of planned initiatives over the strategy period.	inform unmet transport and infrastructure requirements.
08. Transport & Accessibility	Planning for the Future of Transport – Time for Change	NI	2021	DfI	Concerns refocusing and reprioritising the aims of the Department for Infrastructure to meet the needs of new and emerging challenges facing our communities. Reprioritisation of our aims and actions is necessary to meet the needs of new and emerging challenges. Climate change is a key and obvious driver for change.	Plan aims to reduce the need to travel and then to change behaviour away from polluting and carbon intensive modes to cleaner and more healthy ways of getting around – the best is walking, wheeling and cycling. LDPs can align with and assist in delivering these objectives.
08. Transport & Accessibility	Sub Regional Transport Study - Local Transport Studies for Mid Ulster, Fermanagh and Omagh, Armagh City Banbridge and Craigavon, Causeway Coast and Glens, Newry Mourne and Down.	Council	2021	DfI	Sets out an objective evidence-based assessment in relation to current and future transport issues, in the context of Council growth ambitions and future illustrative transport measures required to facilitate growth ambitions during the LDP period to 2030 in each Council area. Presents the range of illustrative measures for active travel, public transport and roads for the period up to 2030, in addition to the linkages with the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP), which will look at how best to develop the key transport corridors and other main routes.	The LTS has been developed to inform the LDP. Illustrative measures are described in terms of strategic locations. Detail and specific schemes will be added at LDP LPP stage, when land use zonings are identified.
09. Air Quality	Defra, Scottish Executive, Welsh Assembly Government and DOE (2007) The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland	UK	2007	Four Nations (DoE & DEFRA)	This updated strategy sets out a way forward for work and planning on air quality issues; sets out the air quality standards and objectives to be achieved; introduces a new policy framework for tackling fine particles and identifies potential new national policy measures which modelling indicates could give further health benefits and move closer towards meeting the Strategy's objectives. It includes the requirement, under the local air quality management, for every local authority to regularly review and assess air quality in their area which is a statutory requirement under the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002. If national objectives are not met, or at risk of not being met, the local authority concerned must declare an air quality management area and prepare an air quality action plan. This identifies measures that will be	Local Development Plans can affect air quality in a number of ways, including through what development is proposed and where, and the encouragement given to sustainable transport. Therefore in plan making, it is important to take into account air quality management areas and other areas where there could be specific requirements or

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					introduced in pursuit of the objectives and can have implications for planning.	limitations on new development because of air quality. Drawing on the review of air quality carried out for the local air quality management regime, the LDP needs to consider the potential cumulative impact of a number of smaller developments on air quality as well as the effect of more substantial developments; the impact of point sources of air pollution (pollution that originates from one place); and ways in which new development would be appropriate in locations where air quality is or likely to be a concern and not give rise to unacceptable risks from pollution.
09. Air Quality	Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland A Public Discussion Document	NI	2020	DAERA	This Discussion Document forms part of a two-stage approach to developing the first Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland has not had its own dedicated Clean Air Strategy before now. There is, however, increasing recognition that existing air quality policy and frameworks are not delivering the expected improvements in air quality. Responses to the consultation will be used to shape future policies for Ministerial consideration.	The document sets out the challenges faced in NI via emissions from transport, household emissions, agriculture and industry. It aims to deliver on the PfG's Outcome 2: 'We live and work sustainably, protecting the environment'. New policies and programmes should align with the need to protect air quality, and improve it in areas where it is not at an acceptable level.

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10. Climate Change	Paris Agreement Under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	Inter-national	2015	UN	The Paris agreement entered into force in November 2016. It set out to improve upon and replace the Kyoto Protocol, an earlier international treaty designed to curb the release of greenhouse gases. It provides an international framework to hold the increase in global temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to keep the more stringent target of below 1.5 degrees in sight. The agreement provides a broad framework for countries to work together, share information and build experience to increase the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience. It aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change. To reach these ambitious goals, appropriate financial flows, a new technology framework and an enhanced capacity building framework will be put in place, thus supporting action by developing countries and the most vulnerable countries, in line with their own national objectives. The Paris Agreement requires all Parties to put forward their best efforts through “nationally determined contributions” (NDCs) and to strengthen these efforts in the years ahead. This includes requirements that all Parties report regularly on their emissions and on their implementation efforts.	The application of sustainable development principles and measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will support this.
10. Climate Change	The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	Inter-national	1994	UN	The UNFCCC entered into force on 21 March 1994 and has near-universal membership. The UNFCCC is a “Rio Convention”, one of three adopted at the “Rio Earth Summit” in 1992. Its sister Rio Conventions are the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification. It now also incorporates the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. Preventing “dangerous” human interference with the climate system is the ultimate aim of the UNFCCC.	The application of sustainable development principles, along with measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, will support the UNFCCC.
10. Climate Change	Industrial Decarbonisation and Energy Efficiency Roadmaps to 2050	UK	2015	BEIS	Reports that set out potential pathways for the eight most heat-intensive industrial sectors to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve energy efficiency. The cross-sectoral report suggests clustering as a long term strategy to deliver energy savings and more efficient use of waste and by-products.	Zoning and enabling infrastructure investments (in roads, ports, pipelines, etc.) would strengthen existing clusters and enable new ones to develop.
10. Climate Change	Climate Change Act 2008	UK	2008	UK Gov.	The Climate Change Act 2008 covers all of the UK, with targets set at the UK level. The Act established a legislative framework to enable the reduction of UK GHG emissions by 34% from 1990 levels by 2020 and 80% by 2050. It also	The achievement of these targets can be supported by the application of

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					introduced legally binding five-year carbon budgets, which set a ceiling on the levels of GHGs the UK can emit on course to the longer-term target. Climate Change Risk Assessment is a statutory requirement of the Act. While there are no specific targets for NI in the UK Climate Change Act 2008; it is implicit that NI contributes to the UK effort of reducing emissions by at least 80% in 2050 from 1990 levels. In 2019, the UK Government committed to a target amendment of Net Zero emissions by 2050 (amending the 80% target to a 100% reduction). To achieve Net Zero, the UK needs to achieve an average emissions reduction of around 15.5 MtCO ₂ e per year over the 30 years from 2020 onwards, similar to the 16 MtCO ₂ e achieved in 2019.	sustainable development principles. Supporting and encouraging development which incorporates measures for energy efficiency and which enables reduced consumption of fossil fuels and other resources, alongside other measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, will also assist in achieving targets. The LDP can also have a role in encouraging societal choices that lead to a lower demand for carbon-intensive activities.
10. Climate Change	Climate Change Act (Northern Ireland) 2022	NI	2022	NI Executive	Imposes a duty on all Northern Ireland departments to ensure that the net Northern Ireland emissions account for the year 2050 is at least 100% lower than the baseline. The Department must set targets for the years 2030 and 2040 that are in line with the target for the year 2050.	Northern Ireland departments are required to develop and publish sectoral plans setting out how sectors will contribute to achieving the targets in the Act. The Sectoral Plans included in the Act are: Sectoral plans for energy, Renewable electricity consumption, Sectoral plans for infrastructure, Sectoral plans for industrial processes, Sectoral plans for waste management, Sectoral plans for agriculture, Sectoral plans for fisheries, Sectoral plans for transport, Active travel. The LDP should aim to support (and not conflict with) objectives

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						identified within the sectoral plans, once they are developed and published.
10. Climate Change	UK Climate Risk: Evidence for the third UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3) Summary for Northern Ireland	NI	2021	CCC	The CCRA is a statutory requirement of the UK Climate Change Act 2008 and is published every 5 years. The objective of the Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) summary for NI is to inform adaptation policy by assessing the current and future risks and opportunities posed by the impacts of climate for NI to the year 2100, based on the latest understanding of the impacts. The Independent Assessment used to help inform the third UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3) assesses 61 risks and opportunities from climate change to Northern Ireland, including o business, infrastructure, housing, the natural environment, our health and from the impacts of climate change internationally. Risks categorised as “More action needed” and “Further investigation” are more urgent than “Watching brief” and “Sustain current action”. Of these 61 risks and opportunities, more action is needed now to address 31 of them, further investigation is needed for 19, sustaining current adaptation action is only deemed appropriate for five of the risks or opportunities and six have been classified as watching brief. Of the 61, six issues are deemed to be both a risk and opportunity, four of which are associated with the natural environment and each of these require more action or further investigation. There are also eight opportunities that could arise from climate change in Northern Ireland, with four of these also related to the natural environment.	The Strategic Planning Policy Statement states that planning systems should help adapt to climate change through avoiding development in sites vulnerable to climate impacts.. The LDP should take account of the up to date summaries of relevant risks identified as "more action required" in this CCRA and consideration is given to the long term sustainability of development. For new infrastructure, there are opportunities for mainstreaming climate change adaptation into planning and design, to avoid retrofitting later. The CCRA states that effective spatial planning remains the only measure that can avoid flood risk caused by development. This is also relevant to coastal flooding and erosion
10. Climate Change	Forests for our Future’ programme	NI	2020	DAERA	The ‘Forests for our Future’ programme pledges to plant 18 million trees (9,000 hectares of new woodland) over 10 years - 10 trees per person in Northern Ireland. The aims are to: • improve the resilience of our forests and woodlands; • Increase their contribution to a sustainable, healthy environment; • Increase their contribution to NI’s sustainable economic growth; • Enable more people to improve their health, wellbeing and life chances; and • Contribute to the UK Net Zero by 2050 target.	Existing publicly owned land, including local government land, has the greatest potential for woodland creation in the short term. The LDP can support the objectives of this programme. Also relevant to the

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						sustainability themes of natural resources and economy and employment.
10. Climate Change	Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP). 2014-2019	NI	2014	DAERA	Contains the Northern Ireland Executive's response to the risks and opportunities identified in the Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) for Northern Ireland, which was published in January 2012, as part of the overall UK CCRA. The Adaptation Programme provides the strategic objectives in relation to adaptation to climate change, the proposals and policies by which each department will meet these objectives, and the timescales associated with the proposals and policies identified in the period up to 2019. The priority areas are flooding, natural environment, water and agriculture and forestry.	The LDP will need to consider areas at risk from coastal erosion and vulnerable to flooding and to promote use of SuDS and protect peatlands. Some infrastructure such as clean and waste water treatment will be more vulnerable to flooding therefore may need to be modified or relocated.
10. Climate Change	Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme (2019–2024)	NI	2019	DAERA	NICCAP2 contains the response to the risks and opportunities relevant to Northern Ireland, as identified in the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017 and as required by the UK Climate Change Act 2008. NICCAP2 is a continuation of the process of adapting to a changing climate in NI that was commenced by the first NICCAP 2014-19. It incorporates lessons learnt and findings of an end-of-programme evaluation of NICCAP1. The Key Priority Areas are Natural Capital (including Terrestrial Coastal/Marine/Freshwater ecosystems, soils and biodiversity), Infrastructure Services, People and Built Environment, Disruption to Business and Supply Chains, and Flood Security / Global Food Production. A series of seven outcome objectives and visions have been established covering these areas.	NICCAP 2 includes a commitment by local government stakeholders to delivering its outcome objectives by developing local council strategies and activities which will increase the resilience in the built and natural environment, and local communities. Chapter 14 of NICCAP 2 provides a summary of the contributions planned by civil society and local government. This includes the action that in bringing forward their Local Development Plans, Councils will take account of climate change adaptation considerations as indicated in the Strategic Planning Policy

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						Statement. The programme also includes a series of steps which a local council could follow to increase their resilience to the impacts of climate area, including the consideration of vulnerability to past weather events and projected climate change. The LDP can take account of these recommendations.
10. Climate Change	Third Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP3) Public Consultation	NI	2025	DAERA	The Climate Change Act 2008 (the 2008 Act) places a statutory duty on Northern Ireland Executive Departments to lay programmes before the Northern Ireland Assembly, which set out their objectives, policies, proposals and timelines for introducing those policies and proposals in response to the most recent UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA). To fulfil this legal requirement the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has led on the development of a series of single coordinated adaptation programmes, which are known as the Northern Ireland Climate Change Adaptation Programme (NICCAP), since the 2008 Act came into effect. This consultation document seeks the views of stakeholders on the draft third iteration of these programmes (NICCAP3) which has been developed, with input from all Departments and a range of key stakeholders, in response to the latest Third UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3).	The document retains its consistency with NICCAP 2, following the same 13 thematic areas grouped into 5 key areas. The consultation questions will provide an idea of the direction the third NICCAP will take and provide an insight that the LDP can use to pre-empt the direction of the final document from a land-use perspective.
10. Climate Change	National Adaptation Framework: Planning for a Climate Resilient Ireland 2018	Rol	2018	DCCAE	Ireland's first statutory National Adaptation Framework set out a pathway to achieving a more resilient economy and society which is capable of dealing with the enormous challenges climate change is likely to present. The Climate Action Plan sets out actions across every sector of society which will ensure Ireland meets its 2030 climate commitments and is on the correct trajectory for net zero emissions by 2050.	There may be cross-border influences with the Framework's Sectoral Adaptation Plans, in particular for those associated with Agriculture, Forestry and Seafood, Biodiversity, Transport infrastructure, Electricity and Gas Networks, Communications

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						Networks, Flood Risk Management and Water Quality and Water Services Infrastructure. These need to be taken into account to ensure that development in Northern Ireland does not conflict. Measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and facilitate climate change adaptation in NI LDPs may help support this Framework.
10. Climate Change	National Adaptation Framework: Planning for a Climate Resilient Ireland 2024	Rol	2025	DECC	Ireland's second statutory National Adaptation Framework (NAF) was published by Minister Eamon Ryan TD on 5 June 2024. This latest NAF replaces the first iteration of the framework published in 2018, which was reviewed in 2022 in line with the five year requirement of the 2015 Climate and Low Carbon Development Act (the Climate Act).	The second NAF follows consistent themes to the first, providing a more updated review. As such, the potential cross border implications must be considered and any conflict that may exist between Rol's framework and the UK's CCRA but be recognised and accounted for within the LDP regarding issues that fall under direct and indirect influence of land-use planning.
10. Climate Change	UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017 Evidence Report, Summary for Northern Ireland	NI	2017	CCC	The CCRA is a statutory requirement of the UK Climate Change Act 2008 and is published every 5 years. The objective of the Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) summary for NI is to inform adaptation policy by assessing the current and future risks and opportunities posed by the impacts of climate for NI to the year 2100, based on the latest understanding of the impacts. The main finding is that extreme weather is still predominant among potential risks related to climate change but that other risks, such as water scarcity are becoming increasingly important. Highlights need for more strategic planning for increased water scarcity in vulnerable locations, including re-evaluation of land use options and if necessary	The SPPS states that no development should take place in areas known to be at risk from coastal erosion. The SPPS promotes and encourages developers to use SuDS and also indicates that Councils should

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					investment in storage infrastructure to maximise use of surplus winter rainfall. Notes that land use planning is mainly based upon protecting prime agricultural land from development, on the assumption that prime land will remain in current locations into the future which may not be the case. Advises that more action is needed to manage current risks to people from cold temperatures through addressing fuel poverty. Highlights that there have been requests for new sea defence structures around the coast. There will need to be a system in place to decide which areas must be protected and where realignment is more appropriate however no shoreline management plans or other policies that assess and plan for changes to coastal communities have been developed for Northern Ireland.	continue to promote the use of SuDS through their Local Development Plans. The SPPS recognises the importance of peatlands to Northern Ireland for biodiversity, water and carbon storage. The LDP will need to consider areas at risk from coastal erosion and vulnerable to flooding and to promote use of SuDS and protect peatlands. Measures that help to reduce fuel poverty can help address some social impacts of cold temperatures. Some infrastructure such as clean and waste water treatment may be vulnerable to flooding and therefore may need to be modified or relocated.
10. Climate Change	UK Climate Risk: Evidence for NI the third UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3) Summary for Northern Ireland	NI	2021	CCC	The CCRA is a statutory requirement of the UK Climate Change Act 2008 and is published every 5 years. The objective of the Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) summary for NI is to inform adaptation policy by assessing the current and future risks and opportunities posed by the impacts of climate for NI to the year 2100, based on the latest understanding of the impacts. The Independent	The Strategic Planning Policy Statement states that planning systems should help adapt to climate change through avoiding development in sites vulnerable to

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					Assessment used to help inform the third UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3) assesses 61 risks and opportunities from climate change to Northern Ireland, including to business, infrastructure, housing, the natural environment, our health and from the impacts of climate change internationally. Risks categorised as “More action needed” and “Further investigation” are more urgent than “Watching brief” and “Sustain current action”. Of these 61 risks and opportunities, more action is needed now to address 31 of them, further investigation is needed for 19, sustaining current adaptation action is only deemed appropriate for five of the risks or opportunities and six have been classified as watching brief. Of the 61, six issues are deemed to be both a risk and opportunity, four of which are associated with the natural environment and each of these require more action or further investigation. There are also eight opportunities that could arise from climate change in Northern Ireland, with four of these also related to the natural environment.	climate impacts.. The LDP should take account of the up to date summaries of relevant risks identified as "more action required" in this CCRA and consideration is given to the long term sustainability of development. For new infrastructure, there are opportunities for mainstreaming climate change adaptation into planning and design, to avoid retrofitting later. The CCRA states that effective spatial planning remains the only measure that can avoid flood risk caused by development. This is also relevant to coastal flooding and erosion.
10. Climate Change	Local Authority Adaptation Strategy Development Guidelines Ireland	Rol	2016	EPA	The purpose of this guideline is to support local authorities in the development of a local climate change adaptation strategy. In its structure and content, the guideline draws heavily on the 2013 Guidelines on Developing Adaptation Strategies provided to European Union Member States by the European Commission (SWD(2013) 134 final), with the aim of fostering coherence between strategies developed at local and national scale.	This will result in due course to the development of Adaptation Strategies in local authorities in Ireland which will also need to be taken into account to ensure that development in Northern Ireland does not conflict. May inform any approach that the Council may wish to take form climate change adaptation.
10. Climate Change	Northern Ireland Climate Action Plan -Draft Climate Action Plan 2023-2027	NI	2025	DAERA	This first draft Climate Action Plan sets out 52 policies and proposals designed to reduce emissions across nine sectors: energy production and supply; transport; business and industrial processes; residential buildings; public buildings; waste management; agriculture; land use, land-	The direction set by the Northern Ireland Climate Change Action Plan will inform policy direction including building design,

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					use change and forestry; and fisheries. Some sectors are expected to contribute more than others; some policies and proposals have a greater impact than others; some contribute to emissions savings across more than one sector. Together, these policies and proposals set a roadmap of action needed to reduce emissions and keep us on track for future targets.	natural and built heritage, transport and economic and residential development as well as zonings. This will feed directly into the approach to be taken by the LDP in terms of adaptation to the effects of climate change.
10. Climate Change	Discussion Paper – Proposals for Taking Forward NI Climate Change Legislation - DOE on 1 December 2015	NI	2015	DAERA	The aim of a NI Climate Change Bill, which is still in development, is to establish a long-term framework for future action on climate change to drive greater efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and so help ensure that Northern Ireland is better prepared to adapt to the impacts of unavoidable climate change. Proposals include: setting a long term target of 80% reduction in GHG emissions by 2050 (compared to 1990 baseline levels); setting interim targets that are consistent with achieving the 2050 targets; placing a duty to set limits in 5-year carbon budgets on the total amounts of GHG emissions that can be emitted in NI.	The application of sustainable development principles and measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will support this.
10. Climate Change	The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015	Rol	2015	Irish Parliament	Ireland's national policy in response to climate change is determined, in part, by legislation. In particular, Ireland's first-ever dedicated climate change law, the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, provides for the making of: five-yearly National Mitigation Plans to specify the policy measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and a National Adaptation Framework to specify the national strategy for the application of adaptation measures in different sectors and by local authorities to reduce the vulnerability of the State to the negative effects of climate change.	While the legislation is for Ireland measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and facilitate climate change adaptation in response to NI policy and strategies will also support the objectives of this legislation.
10. Climate Change	Climate Action and Low-Carbon Development - National Policy Position Ireland	Rol	2014	Irish Parliament	The National Policy Position provides a high-level policy direction for the adoption and implementation by Government of plans to enable the State to move to a low carbon economy by 2050. Statutory authority for the plans is set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015.	Measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and facilitate climate change adaptation in response to NI plans will also support this.
10. Climate Change	Efficient Farming Cuts Greenhouse Gases Implementation Plan 2016-2020	NI	2013	DAERA	The plan is focused on encouraging the implementation of a series of on-farm efficiency measures which can improve farm performance and reduce the carbon intensity of local	Aspects of this implementation plan relevant to planning include the promotion of

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					food production. The plan signposts the support available to facilitate this.	renewable energy, and certain aspects of farming practice including development for nutrient management (including anaerobic digestion) and energy efficiency.
10. Climate Change	Northern Ireland Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Action Plan (revised 2016/17 Mitigation Plan)	NI	2012	DAERA	This document sets out a Cross-Departmental Action Plan to tackle the established strategies together, including how Northern Ireland is and will continue to reduce its carbon footprint. Specifically, how the Programme for Government target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25% below 1990 levels by 2025 will be delivered. Status is not clear as not available on any departmental website. Plan has been updated with a Mitigation Action Plan in 2016/17.	Encouraging sustainable development, good standards of design, renewable energy and overall sustainability will contribute to this action plan. Although an increase in economic development could inhibit a reduction in greenhouse gases, the application of sustainability principles in development will lead to more efficient infrastructure. There is potential scope for the protection of (or increase of) carbon sinks in soil and trees.
10. Climate Change	Reducing Emissions in Northern Ireland	NI	2019	CCC	In this report, the Committee sets out how Northern Ireland can reduce its greenhouse gas emissions between now and 2030 in order to meet UK-wide climate change targets. Overall, Northern Ireland's fair contribution to the UK's fifth carbon budget requires emissions reductions of at least 35% against 1990 levels by 2030.	Delivering emissions can be achieved in a cost-effective way if effective policy is implemented. This will require action across the power, buildings and industry, transport, agriculture and land use, and waste sectors. Suggested policy measures to reduce GHG emissions include promotion of and support for low-cost intermittent renewables and low-carbon heating,

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						tree planting, energy efficiency improvements in homes and transport behavioural change.
11. Water Resources	Draft 3rd cycle River Basin Management Plan: For the North Western, Neagh Bann and North Eastern River Basin Districts (2021 – 2027)	NI	2021	DAERA	When adopted, the RBMP will replace the 3 separate plans from the 2nd cycle. The draft plan provides an update on the health of Northern Ireland's water environment (the status of water bodies), but also sets out our targets (objectives) and actions (programme of measures) on how we want to improve our water environment in the next six years.	Northern Ireland's water resources are managed and protected using a catchment based approach which includes rivers, lakes and groundwater as well as coastal and transitional water bodies. Land use influences water bodies and their status. The LDP will need to take account of the RBMP and not act contrary to achieving its objectives, where relevant.
11. Water Resources	Northern Ireland Water PC 21 Business Plan	NI	2021	NI Water	NIW's Business Plan sets out the step change in investment required to address the most critical needs and enable Northern Ireland to thrive from its water and sewerage infrastructure. It identifies 'Economic Constrained Areas' and areas with 'Serious Development Restriction' where development constraints currently exist and identifies the settlements where it is expected that these issues will be addressed through infrastructure improvements during the PC21 period.	The LDP may need to accommodate the development of new or improved water and wastewater infrastructure. Capacity for new development may be constrained by lack of capacity for water supply and waste water treatment
11. Water Resources	Our Draft Strategy 2021-2046	NI	2021	NI Water	Provides a longer term view across the next quarter of a century (2021-2046) and updates NI Water's existing long term strategy (2015-2040). Strategic risks posing threats to resilience in maintaining services include climate change, rising customer expectations, changes to legislation and customer demographics.	The LDP can support the Strategy in helping to reduce pollutants entering our waterways and the millions spent on removing them through water treatment; to work with nature rather than against it to support sustainable economic growth; to be ready for more extreme weather conditions and to better

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						design our homes to use less high quality drinking water.
11. Water Resources	Second Cycle Northern Ireland Flood Risk Management Plan 2021-2027	NI	2021	DfI	The Plan focuses on the 12 Areas of Potential Significant Flood Risk (APSFR), and highlights the flood hazards and risks in these areas, with specific measures tailored to manage flood risk in particular locations. The Plan also sets out a series of Regional Measures, which apply across all of Northern Ireland, supporting the sustainable management of flood risk for both APSFR and the wider River Basin Districts.	One of the aims of the FRMP is to inform the development planning process to ensure, as far as possible and new zonings within Local Development Plans are located outside flood risk areas. Northern Ireland's planning policies, informed by PPS15 and the SPPS adopt a precautionary approach to development that aims to prevent future development that may be at risk of flooding or which may increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. It also aims to ensure that any development which is located "by exception" in flood risk areas is appropriately built with flood resistance/resilience measures. In accordance with the Long Term Water Strategy, the FRMP promotes the use of SuDS, as the preferred means of surface water management, for all new developments, where feasible. This will be reflected in the LDP.
11. Water Resources	Sustainable Water - A Long-Term Water Strategy for Northern Ireland (2015-2040)	NI	2016	DfI	The Strategy presents a framework for action which will facilitate implementation of a range of initiatives aimed at delivering the long term vision to have a sustainable water	The strategy will inform the provision of infrastructure for water

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					sector in Northern Ireland. The following high level aims have been developed by government to cover the key water needs within a catchment and they form the chapters of the Long-Term Water Strategy: (1) Provide high quality sustainable supplies of drinking water to households, industry and agriculture; (2) Manage flood risk and drainage in a sustainable manner; (3) Achieve the environmental requirements of the Water Framework Directive in a sustainable manner; (4) Provide sustainable reliable water and sewerage services that meet customers' needs. A strategy implementation action plan will now be prepared containing actions aimed at delivering the high level proposed measures in the Strategy.	supply and treatment and future approaches to flood risk management and environmental protection. These elements will all inform the spatial capacity for development. The LDP will need to consider potential future requirements for development of infrastructure, for example by accommodating investment in power, water and sewerage infrastructure in the interests of public health and to support measures relating to flood risk management and environmental protection.
11. Water Resources	Water and Sewerage Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2016	NI	2016	NI Executive	The Water and Sewerage Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 confers a power on NI Water to require the construction of sustainable drainage systems as a condition of agreeing to adopt a drain or sewer. The Act also introduces new restrictions to the right to connect surface water sewers to the public sewer network. NI Water is able to take account of upstream sustainable drainage systems and is also able to refuse connection to the public sewer network if other suitable alternative means of dealing with surface water exist or could reasonably be provided. Suitable alternative means of dealing with surface water can include natural features or other arrangements known as soft sustainable drainage systems.	The overall aim of the Act is to make sustainable drainage the preferred option for dealing with surface water in all new developments, where possible. This aim should be reflected in all Local Development Plans.
11. Water Resources	Reservoirs Act (Northern Ireland) 2015	NI	2015	NI Executive	The Reservoirs Act aims to ensure that reservoirs are managed and operated to minimise any risk of flooding due to an uncontrolled release of water resulting from	Reservoirs falling under this Act may require to be identified in the LDP.

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					dam failure and therefore protecting people, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity. The legislation will apply to reservoirs that are capable of holding 10,000 cubic metres or more of water above the natural level of the surrounding land. These reservoirs will be known as 'controlled reservoirs'.	
11. Water Resources	Planning Policy Statement 15 (Revised) – Planning and Flood Risk	NI	2014	DfI	Planning policies to minimise and manage flood risk to people, property and the environment.	Retention of this will be considered in preparing LDP policies.
11. Water Resources	NI Water: Water Resources Management Plan 2012	NI	2012	NI Water	The Water Resources Management Plan explains how NIW intends to meet the drinking water needs of the population of Northern Ireland over the period 2010 to 2035. The WRMP takes into account expected demands from forecast changes in population, housing and water usage and incorporates any predicted changes to our climate. The WRMP will be complemented by the company's Drought Plan (not published) that will set out the short-term operational steps that the company will take if a drought develops which increases the risk to security of supplies and whether capital investment is needed to mitigate such events. It provides a strategic plan for managing water resources by setting the framework at the Water Resource Zone level within which investment decisions should be taken. Investment at smaller spatial scales will still need to be justified through other more local studies, such as trunk main studies, detailed zonal studies and targeted leakage initiatives. Preparation of a Water Resource and Supply Resilience Plan is currently under way.	The LDP may need to accommodate the development of new or improved water and wastewater infrastructure. Capacity for new development may be constrained by lack of capacity for water supply and waste water treatment
11. Water Resources	Northern Ireland Message on Water	NI	2011	DfI, DAERA	In 2011 the UKCIP (formerly UK Climate Impacts Programme) decided to create a number of messages which could be used to engage with policy makers across the UK. NI Water, NIEA and Rivers Agency worked together to help prepare a headline message for Northern Ireland focused on Water and climate impacts. This describes the potential impacts of climate change on flood risk and stormwater capacity and identifies the need for investment to provide capacity to store and transfer surface water. This includes measures to deal with surface water runoff such as sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). It also considers potential effects on water quality and	Highlights potential long term problems and relating to water supply and flow, including flooding investment needs to mitigate these.

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					supply which may require the construction of more impounding reservoirs and raw water transfer pipelines.	
11. Water Resources	Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment for NI	NI	2011	DfI	A key objective of the PFRA was to identify areas of potentially significant flood risk for which detailed flood maps would be produced. On the basis of the PFRA, it was determined that detailed flood maps should be produced for 20 Significant Flood Risk Areas and 49 Areas for Further Study and this work was completed as required by the EU Directive in December 2013.	Identifies areas of potentially significant flood risk which informs constraints on development.
11. Water Resources	Flood Risk Management Plans	Rol	2018	OPW	The 29 Flood Risk Management Plans set out the proposed measures, both structural and non-structural, to manage the flood risk in each of the 300 AFAs (Areas for Further Assessment). Responsibility for implementing the full suite of measures, both structural and non-structural, contained in the 29 Flood Risk Management Plans rests with a range of State Bodies. Delivery of new relief measures proposed in the Plans will build on the significant investment in flood relief capital works that has already taken place since 1995 and will take place concurrently with delivery of flood relief schemes currently in design and construction. On-structural measures can potentially benefit all properties at risk.	Provides information on the vulnerability of identified settlements to flooding. There are a number of river catchments where transboundary impacts may need to be considered.
11. Water Resources	Guidelines for Planning Authorities 20: The Planning System and Flood Risk Management	Rol	2009	OPW	These guidelines require the planning system at national, regional and local levels to: (1) Avoid development in areas at risk of flooding, particularly floodplains, unless there are proven wider sustainability grounds that justify appropriate development and where the flood risk can be reduced or managed to an acceptable level without increasing flood risk elsewhere; (2) Adopt a sequential approach to flood risk management when assessing the location for new development based on avoidance, reduction and mitigation of flood risk; and (3) Incorporate flood risk assessment into the process of making decisions on planning applications and planning appeals.	There are a small number of river catchments where transboundary impacts may need to be considered.
11. Water Resources	North Eastern River Basin Management Plan 2015 -2021	Regional	2015	DAERA	River Basin Management is a key element in implementing the Water Framework Directive (WFD), taking an integrated approach to the protection, improvement and sustainable use of the water environment. It applies to groundwater and to all surface water bodies, including rivers, lakes, transitional (estuarine) and coastal waters out to one nautical mile. This plan aims to: Provide at least good status for all water bodies; Prevent deterioration in status; Promote sustainable development; Achieve specific standards for protected areas. The north eastern river	The objectives of this plan will be taken into account in plan preparation so that development does not adversely affect its delivery. The siting and extent of development and measures to prevent pollution can help

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					basin district (NE RBD) covers an area of around 4,000 km ² , including 1,000km ² of marine waters. It takes in large parts of Counties Antrim and Down and a smaller portion of Londonderry. The principal river systems are the Lagan, Bush and Quoile as well as the smaller systems draining from the glens of Antrim, and the County Down Coastline. The NE RBD has an extensive coastline including Larne, Belfast and Strangford Loughs, with Lough Mourne, Clea Lakes and Silent Valley the main lakes.	support delivery of the River Basin Management Plan objectives. Good water quality and aquatic habitats contribute to health and well-being and the economy.
11. Water Resources	Neagh Bann River Basin Management Plan 2015 -2021	Regional	2015	DAERA	River Basin Management is a key element in implementing the Water Framework Directive (WFD), taking an integrated approach to the protection, improvement and sustainable use of the water environment. It applies to groundwater and to all surface water bodies, including rivers, lakes, transitional (estuarine) and coastal waters out to one nautical mile. This plan aims to: Provide at least good status for all water bodies; Prevent deterioration in status; Promote sustainable development; Achieve specific standards for protected areas. The Neagh Bann river basin district (NB RBD) covers an area of around 5,740 km ² . It includes all of County Armagh, large parts of Counties Antrim, Londonderry, Down and Tyrone and a small area of County Fermanagh. The principal river system is the Bann, with its tributaries the Moyola, Ballinderry, Blackwater, Six Mile Water and Main. The Newry river system drains into Carlingford Lough. Lough Neagh, located in the centre of the district is the main lake, with other smaller ones include Lough Fea, Portmore, Ross and Beg. This district has a limited coastline to the north where the River Bann enters the Atlantic and to the south where the Newry system enters Carlingford Lough.	The objectives will be taken into account in LDP preparation so that development does not adversely affect its delivery. The siting and extent of development and measures to prevent pollution can help support delivery of the River Basin Management Plan objectives. Good water quality and aquatic habitats contribute to health and well-being and the economy.
11. Water Resources	The Marine Strategy Regulations 2010	NI	2010	DAERA	The Regulations require the production of a "Marine Strategy" for all UK waters and that the approach is coordinated across all four UK Administrations. It also requires cooperation with other countries sharing our seas. The objective of the UK Marine Strategy reflects the UK's vision of having "clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas". The Marine Strategy Regulations 2010 require action to be taken to achieve or maintain Good Environmental Status (GES) in our seas.	The Strategy applies an ecosystem-based approach to the management of human activities. In doing so, it seeks to keep the collective pressure of human activities within levels compatible with the achievement of GES. Achieving GES will maintain the capacity of marine ecosystems to

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						respond to human-induced changes and enable the sustainable use of marine goods and services by present and future generations
11. Water Resources	River Basin Management Plan for Northern Ireland 2021 – 2027	Regional	2025	DAERA	Northern Ireland’s water resources are managed and protected using a catchment-based approach which includes rivers, lakes and groundwater as well as coastal and transitional water bodies. The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 require the production and implementation of a RBMP in six yearly cycles. The RBMP takes an integrated approach, identifying those water bodies which can be classified as being at ‘good or better’ status. It also sets the objectives and a programme of measures for the next six-year cycle to help improve those water bodies which are classified as below ‘good’ status.	The LDP can support the delivery of land contamination remediation.
11. Water Resources	Eel management plan: North Eastern River Basin District	Regional	2010	DAERA	Measures to be carried out for the recovery of the stock of European eel including mitigation of hydropower and other barriers to passage.	May inform policies relating to hydropower and in-river works. Also relevant to the theme of sustainable use of natural resources.
12. Natural Resources	Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (as amended)	NI	2011	DAERA	The Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (the WANE Act) places a statutory duty on public bodies to conserve biodiversity. Following publication of a revised Biodiversity Strategy in July 2015, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has decided to publish this guidance document to assist public bodies in fulfilling their biodiversity duty.	
11. Water Resources	The Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 (as amended)	NI	1985	DAERA	This Order prohibits the intentional killing, taking or injuring of certain wild birds and wild animals or the intentional destruction, uprooting or picking of certain wild plants.	The LDP must reflect the legal requirement that if a development site is known or is likely to support a protected plant and animal species, the developer is obliged

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						under legislation not to harm those species.
12. Natural Resources	The Fourth Ramsar Strategic Plan for 2016-2024	Inter-national	2016	Ramsar Convention	The Fourth Ramsar Strategic plan lays out a new vision under the Convention mission, with four overall goals and 19 specific targets which are designed to support the efforts of Parties, partners and other stakeholders in preventing, stopping and reversing the global decline of wetlands. The strategic goals are • Addressing the Drivers of Wetland Loss And Degradation; • Effectively Conserving and Managing the Ramsar Site Network; • Wisely Using All Wetlands; and • Enhancing Implementation.	These objectives are reflected in NI strategies and plans.
12. Natural Resources	UN Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio 1992)	Inter-national	1992	United Nations	Led to Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD's) Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its five strategic goals and 20 'Aichi Targets', published in October 2010; and the EU Biodiversity Strategy (EUBS), released in May 2011. Implemented in the UK via the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (revised 2018). 20 'Aichi Targets', the strategic goals of which are: Strategic Goal A: Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society Strategic Goal B: Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use Strategic Goal C: To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity Strategic Goal D: Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services Strategic Goal E: Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building	The LDP can help to support the delivery of the strategic goals.
12. Natural Resources	North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO) Commission Precautionary Approach Agreement	Inter-national	1982	NASCO	NASCO and its Contracting Parties agree to adopt and apply a Precautionary Approach to the conservation, management and exploitation of salmon in order to protect the resource and preserve the environments in which it lives. Accordingly, NASCO and its Contracting Parties should be more cautious when information is uncertain, unreliable or inadequate. The absence of adequate scientific information should not be used as a reason for postponing or failing to take conservation and management measures.	The LDP will take account of this. Increased fisheries resource will result in increased angling opportunities in the Council area with the economic and social benefits this will bring.
12. Natural Resources	North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO) Commission	Inter-national	1982	NASCO	Aims to promote the conservation, restoration, enhancement and rational management of salmon stocks	The LDP will take account of this. DAERA is the lead authority in NI

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
	Convention For The Conservation Of Salmon In The North Atlantic Ocean				in the North Atlantic Ocean through international co-operation.	to take this forward and reports annually to the commission as to status of populations and actions taken to maintain and enhance them. Increased fisheries resource will result in increased angling opportunities in the Council area with the economic and social benefits this will bring.
12. Natural Resources	The Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (the Bern Convention)	Inter-national	1979	Council of Europe	The Bern Convention was the first international treaty to protect both species and habitats and to bring countries together to decide how to act on nature conservation. It covers most of the natural heritage of the European continent and extends to some States of Africa. It aims to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats, as well as to promote European co-operation in this field. The treaty also takes account of the impact that other policies may have on natural heritage and recognises the intrinsic value of wild flora and fauna, which needs to be preserved and passed to future generations.	The LDP can help to support the delivery of the Convention's mission which includes ensuring that wild flora, fauna and habitats are maintained at, or restored to, a favourable conservation status.
12. Natural Resources	The Ramsar Convention. The convention of Wetland of International Importance (1971 and amendments)	Inter-national	1971	Ramsar Convention	Seeks to protect and conserve wetlands, particularly those established as a habitat for waterfowl. The Convention uses a broad definition of wetlands which includes all lakes and rivers, underground aquifers, swamps and marshes, wet grasslands, peatlands, estuaries, tidal flats, and all human-made sites such as artificial coastal lagoons.	The LDP must reflect the Ramsar designations, and the need to protect and conserve them. Many Ramsar designated sites are also SACs or SPAs.
12. Natural Resources	Northern Ireland's Geodiversity Charter 2021-2024	NI	2021	DfE	Guidance document that sets out a clear ambition to recognise geodiversity as a vital and integral part of the economy, environment heritage and future sustainable development. Updates the first Charter published 2017. This is necessary to safeguard and manage geodiversity for both current and future generations.	May inform decision making and support policy at strategic level for the conservation management of geodiversity in terms of physical resources. It may also influence the themes of landscape, natural resources and water resources. The LDP can support the Charter's vision that

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						"geodiversity is recognised as a vital part of our sustainable development, with benefits for the economy, for society and for the environment, and it should be managed appropriately and safeguarded for the benefit of current and future generations of Northern Ireland citizens" and its action that geodiversity should be integrated into policy.
12. Natural Resources	All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2021-2025	NI & Rol	2021	National Biodiversity Data Centre	A five-year road map that aims to help bees, other pollinating insects and our wider biodiversity. Aims to bring all stakeholders including farmers, local authorities, schools, gardeners and businesses together to try to create an Ireland where pollinators can survive and thrive.	Councils can play a leading role in implementing the Plan by making their land more pollinator friendly. This Plan contains guidance on what actions Councils can take, of which the most important is "to identify and protect existing areas that are already good for pollinators".
12. Natural Resources	Draft Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy 2021-2040 (Consultation)	NI	2021	DAERA	The vision of this Strategy is to ensure that all semi-natural peatlands are protected, managed and where possible, prioritised for restoration, so that they can maintain their natural functions, biodiversity and ecosystem services. It has 6 objectives: 1) Conserve peatlands & prevent degradation 2) Restoration of degraded areas to functioning peatland ecosystems (designated & non-designated sites) 3) Supporting Sustainable Peatland Management 4) Knowledge Sharing & Research 5) Communication, Education & Access 6) Governance, Implementation & Funding	The LDP can help to support the Strategy's objective to conserve peatland and prevent degradation.
12. Natural Resources	National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021	Rol	2017	NPWS	The Plan sets out actions through which a range of government, civil and private sectors will undertake to achieve Ireland's 'Vision for Biodiversity', and follows on	Biodiversity is a cross-border objective. Developments either

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					from the work of the first and second National Biodiversity Action Plans. It has been developed in line with the EU and International Biodiversity strategies and policies.	side of the border will have cross-border impacts. In addition, nature conservation species, in particular, will not necessarily respect this border. Therefore, the LDP may have an impact on the implementation of this plan. This may be positive or negative depending on how the LDP is implemented locally and the nature of any developments consented under relevant policy.
12. Natural Resources	Valuing Nature - A Biodiversity Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2020	NI	2015	DAERA	A strategy for Northern Ireland to meet its international obligations and local targets to protect biodiversity and ensure that the environment can continue to support our people and economy. Contains 57 actions to impact positively on the loss of biodiversity up to 2020.	Actions include: Restoring ancient woodland and encouraging peatland and wetland habitat restoration with emphasis on an ecosystems approach. LDP proposals and policies should support delivery of actions, where appropriate.
12. Natural Resources	An Invasive Alien Species Strategy for Northern Ireland	NI	2013	DAERA	The aim of the Strategy is to minimise the risk posed, and reduce the negative impacts caused, by invasive alien species in Northern Ireland, increasing awareness and understanding of the risks and issues involved in tackling invasive alien species is a central overarching issue. This Strategy is accompanied by the Northern Ireland Invasive Alien Species Implementation Plan (Revised 2018). It includes the objective to maximise organisational effectiveness and collaboration on invasive alien species issues among Government Departments and Agencies, Local Government, non-governmental organisations, industry and individuals.	Invasive species may be a constraint for some sites. Consideration will need to be given to measures to minimise the risks caused by invasive species.
12. Natural Resources	Planning Policy Statement 2 – Natural Heritage	NI	2013	DfI	Policies for the conservation of natural heritage.	Incorporation of the policies in this PPS will be

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						considered in preparing LDP policies.
12. Natural Resources	Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth - An Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland	Rol	2012	MCG	The vision for this plan is 'Our ocean wealth will be a key element of our economic recovery and sustainable growth, generating benefits for all our citizens, supported by coherent policy, planning and regulation, and managed in an integrated manner.' It includes an action: Continue to foster a North/South and East/West approach in developing/enabling the marine sector (e.g. grid/all-island energy strategy, marine tourism and leisure) through existing structures and bodies.	Should an LDP have specific proposals for its coastline, including facilitating developments that overlap into or make use of the marine area, these could be either supportive or in conflict with this plan.
12. Natural Resources	The Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002	NI	2002	UK Gov.	Covers several environmental issues, including pollution prevention control, assessment and management of air quality, and designation of areas of special scientific interest (ASSIs).	The LDP must reflect the ASSI designations, and the need to protect and conserve them. It should also have regard for the need to regulate activities which are capable of causing any environmental pollution.
12. Natural Resources	Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Northern Ireland) Order 1995	NI	1985	UK Gov.	Makes provision with respect to nature conservation, enjoyment and conservation of the countryside, and amenity lands. Places particular emphasis on the establishment of a network of Areas of Special Scientific Interest and Nature Reserves. Nature Reserves including (National, Marine and Local Nature Reserves) are declared under this legislation, as well as ASSIs and some AONBs.	The LDP must reflect the existing designations, and the need to protect and conserve them.
12. Natural Resources	Forest Service - Down Plan 2015	Regional	2015	DAERA	Forest Management plans set out the management objectives for the forests and woodlands Forest Service looks after. Plans are currently prepared for Down, Armagh, Sperrin, West Tyrone, East Fermanagh and East Tyrone.	Relevant plans may inform land use, landscape and recreational use of forests in the plan area.
12. Natural Resources	Lough Neagh Fishery Management Plan	Regional	2015	DAERA	The aim of the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) is to provide this strategic approach to the sustainable management of the fisheries resources and its habitat whilst also maximising its value to the economy and the environment and ensuring stakeholder input to it. The FMP sets out how DAERA Inland Fisheries will seek to manage the fishery and what scientific information is required to fully inform this process. It also highlights many of the key issues / concerns raised by stakeholder in	The LDP should take account of this plan which aims to protect and promote a natural resource, but also has linkages with the topic of sustainable economy and employment.

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					consultation meetings that have taken place to date. There is wide recognition that the Lough Neagh catchment has the potential to play an even more significant role in contributing to the development of the local economy.	
12. Natural Resources	Forest Service - Armagh Planning Review 2014	Regional	2014	DAERA	Forest Management plans set out the management objectives for the forests and woodlands Forest Service looks after. Plans are currently prepared for Down, Armagh, Sperrin, West Tyrone, East Fermanagh and East Tyrone.	Relevant plans may inform land use, landscape and recreational use of forests in the plan area alongside the commercial aspects of managed forestry. There are potential crossovers between the natural resources, landscape, economy and employment and health and well-being sustainability objectives.
13. Landscape	European Landscape Convention (Florence, 2000)	Europe	2000	Council of Europe	The European Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe promotes the protection, management and planning of European landscapes and organises European co-operation on landscape issues. It covers all landscapes, including natural, managed, urban and peri-urban areas, and special, everyday and also degraded landscape. Articles 5 and 6 commit signatory states to a number of actions which include the need to recognise landscapes in law, to establish policies aimed at landscape planning, protection and management and the integration of landscape into other policy areas.	The LDP should support the aims of the convention, seeking to protect, manage and enhance the landscape.
13. Landscape	Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment	NI	2016	DAERA	The purpose of the Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment (NIRLCA) is to provide an evidence base which can be used equally by planners, developers and the public. It describes forces for change through climate change, land use, agriculture, energy and invasive species and outlines the types of ecosystem services provided in each region. The assessment provides a strategic overview of the landscape and subdivides the countryside into 26 Regional Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) based upon information on people and place and the combinations of nature, culture and perception which make each part of Northern Ireland unique. This evidence base can be used to enable informed decisions to be made about the future protection, management and sustainable	The RLCA is not policy, but it provides analysis of all of Northern Ireland Landscapes at a regional level which provides further evidence to inform the LDP. It helps to indicate the linkages between the landscape and other assets, such as the historic environment and natural resources. Landscape character assessments and review

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					development of Northern Ireland's landscapes and can be complemented by more detailed local studies.	of these is regarded as being important to inform the understanding of "place" and positive place making.
13. Landscape	A National Landscape Strategy for Ireland	Rol	2015	AHRRGA	The National Landscape Strategy will be used to ensure compliance with the European Landscape Convention and to establish principles for protecting and enhancing it while positively managing its change. It is a high level policy framework to achieve balance between the protection, management and planning of the landscape. There are six high level objectives with associated actions: the three most relevant to the LDP being: to recognise landscapes in law; to develop a National Landscape Character Assessment, to develop landscape policies. Following completion of the National Landscape Character Assessment, statutory guidelines on local Landscape Character Assessments will be prepared for Planning Authorities. These regional and local landscape character assessments will inform and guide landscape policy, action plans and local authority development plans.	The Council shares a boundary with Ireland, therefore the LDP has the potential to impact on this strategy. The Strategy and any relevant national and local Landscape Character Assessments will be taken into account as they become available.
13. Landscape	Northern Ireland Seascape Character Assessment	NI	2014	DAERA	Twenty-four different regional seascape character areas have been identified round the coast of Northern Ireland. The Seascape Character Assessment describes these areas, their key characteristics and the different influences that mould each as a unique part of the coastline.	This can inform planning of development in the coastal zone. The description and mapping of regional seascape character can provide evidence to assist in responding to the increasing demands being placed upon the related marine and terrestrial environments. This can also help to inform the planning, design and management of a range of projects taking place on and around the coastline.
13. Landscape	Northern Ireland's Landscape Charter	NI	2014	DAERA	Invites organisations and individuals to sign the charter and commit to delivering its vision by approaches including the following: adopt and promote best practice to ensure all development works with and enhances sense of place;	This requires consideration of all landscapes to enhance them, respect sense of

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					ensure sense of place is central to all decision making about landscape and empower people locally to be involved.	place and promote sympathetic design.
13. Landscape	Building on Tradition: A sustainable Design Guide for the NI Countryside	NI	2012	Dfi	Building on Tradition: A Sustainable Design Guide for the Northern Ireland Countryside' provides assistance to all those involved with sustainable development in the Northern Ireland countryside to understand the requirements of PPS21. The guide promotes quality and sustainable building design in Northern Ireland's countryside.	This can be used to inform siting and design standards for development in the countryside to achieve better landscape integration.
13. Landscape	Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment	NI	2000	DAERA	The Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment subdivided the countryside into 130 Landscape Character Areas (LCAs), each based upon local patterns of geology, landform, land use, cultural and ecological features. For each LCA, the key characteristics were described and an analysis of landscape condition and its sensitivity to change was made. While the original assessment was published in 2000 many landscape character areas have been updated more recently.	This is not policy but it provides a comprehensive analysis of all of Northern Ireland Landscapes, including their vulnerability and sensitivity to change. These aspects can help inform Councils on the state of the landscape, capacity for development and areas meriting protection. There are linkages with the sustainability topics of natural resources and historic environment and cultural heritage.
14. Historic Environment & CH	Xi'an Declaration On The Conservation Of The Setting Of Heritage Structures, Sites And Areas	Inter-national	2005	ICMOS	To contribute through legislation, policies, planning processes and management to better protect and conserve the world's heritage structures, sites and areas in their settings.	The LDP can assist with implementing the measures outlined in the agreement: • Acknowledging the contribution of setting to the significance of heritage monuments, sites and areas; • Understanding, documenting and interpreting the settings in diverse contexts; • Developing planning tools and practices to conserve and manage

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						settings; • Monitoring and managing change affecting setting; • Working with local, interdisciplinary and international communities for co-operation and awareness in conserving and managing setting.
14. Historic Environment & CH	UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001)	Inter-national	2001	UNESCO	The Convention sets out basic principles for the protection of underwater cultural heritage. Amongst its main principles are an obligation to preserve underwater cultural heritage, with in situ preservation as first option, and a ban on its inappropriate commercial exploitation. While the UK has not ratified the Convention, it publicly supports the majority of its articles and has publicly recognised the Annex or 'Rules' of the Convention as being 'best practice' for archaeology	The LDP will recognise the Annex or 'Rules' of the Convention as being 'best practice' for underwater archaeology.
14. Historic Environment & CH	Rules annexed to the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001)	Inter-national	2001	UNESCO	The Annex to the 2001 Convention contains detailed practical guidelines entitled "Rules concerning activities directed at underwater cultural heritage. They are highly useful and widely recognised and applied by underwater archaeologists. The Rules contain regulations as to: how a project is to be designed; the competence and the qualifications required for persons undertaking interventions; planning the funding of excavation projects; documentation of archaeological excavations under water; and methodologies on conservation and site management.	The Local Plan will recognise the Annex or 'Rules' of the Convention as being 'best practice' for underwater archaeology.
14. Historic Environment & CH	The Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972)	Inter-national	1972	UNESCO	The most significant feature of the 1972 World Heritage Convention is that it links together in a single document the concepts of nature conservation and the preservation of cultural properties. The Convention recognises the way in which people interact with nature, and the fundamental need to preserve the balance between the two. The programme catalogues, names, and conserves sites of outstanding cultural or natural importance to the common culture and heritage of humanity. To be selected, a World Heritage Site must be an already classified landmark, unique in some respect as a geographically and historically identifiable place having special cultural or physical significance (such as an ancient ruin or historical structure, building, city, complex, desert, forest, island, lake,	This convention is the mechanism for the identification and establishment of World Heritage Sites. There is currently one WHS in NI. The LDP may recognise sites which are of sufficient national or global importance to merit their inclusion on the Tentative List for World Heritage Sites. The LDP may help

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					monument, mountain, or wilderness area). It may signify a remarkable accomplishment of humanity, and serve as evidence of our intellectual history on the planet.	support the actions required for sites to receive nomination to the Tentative List by preserving or enhancing their cultural heritage or natural heritage value.
14. Historic Environment & CH	Faro Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention, 2005)	Europe	2005	Council of Europe	The Faro Convention emphasises the important aspects of heritage as they relate to human rights and democracy. It promotes a wider understanding of heritage and its relationship to communities and society. The Convention encourages us to recognise that objects and places are not, in themselves, what is important about cultural heritage. They are important because of the meanings and uses that people attach to them and the values they represent.	Member States agree to emphasise the value and potential of cultural heritage wisely used as a resource for sustainable development and quality of life in a constantly evolving society. Examples of specific implications with regard to LDP include Article 5b "enhance the value of the cultural heritage through its identification, study, interpretation, protection, conservation and presentation"; Article 5e "Promote cultural heritage protection as a central factor in the mutually supporting objectives of sustainable development, cultural diversity and contemporary creativity"; Article 8d "Promote the objective of quality in contemporary additions to the environment without endangering its cultural values"; and Article 9a "Promote respect for the integrity of the cultural heritage by ensuring that decisions about change

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						include an understanding of the cultural values involved".
14. Historic Environment & CH	European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Valletta, 1992)	Europe	1992	Council of Europe	The new text (revision of the 1969 London Convention) makes the conservation and enhancement of the archaeological heritage one of the goals of urban and regional planning policies. It is concerned in particular with arrangements to be made for co-operation among archaeologists and town and regional planners in order to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the archaeological heritage is one of the goals of urban and regional planning policies. The Convention sets guidelines for the funding of excavation and research work and publication of research findings. It advocates protection of the archaeological heritage, including any physical evidence of the human past that can be investigated archaeologically both on land and underwater and the creation of archaeological reserves and conservation of excavated sites for optimum conservation of archaeological heritage.	Consideration should be given to conservation of archaeological resources including potential archaeological reserves. Article 5 seeks the integrated conservation of archaeological heritage through its consideration in the preparation of Local Development Plans and the creation of planning policies designed to ensure well-balanced strategies for the protection, conservation and enhancement of sites of archaeological interest. It also highlights the need of devising plans to avoid adverse impact.
14. Historic Environment & CH	The European Convention on the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (Granada Convention)	Europe	1985	Council of Europe	The main purpose of the Convention is to reinforce and promote policies for the conservation and enhancement of Europe's heritage. It also affirms the need for European solidarity with regard to heritage conservation and is designed to foster practical co-operation among the Parties. It establishes the principles of "European co-ordination of conservation policies" including consultations regarding the thrust of the policies to be implemented.	Consideration should be given to conservation of architectural resources. Article 5 includes an undertaking to prohibit the removal, in whole or in part, of any protected monument, except where the material safeguarding of such monuments makes removal imperative. Article 10 states that the protection of architectural heritage as an essential town and country planning objective. Planning

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						authorities should ensure that this requirement is taken into account at all stages, both in the drawing up of development plans and in the procedures for authorising work.
14. Historic Environment & CH	Protection of Military Remains Act 1986	UK	1986	UK Gov.	Under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986 all aircraft that have crashed whilst in military service are automatically protected. Maritime vessels (e.g. ships and boats) lost during military service are not automatically protected. The MoD can, however, designate wrecks lost within the last 200 years, whose position is known, as 'controlled sites', and can designate named vessels lost on or after 4th August 1914 (Britain's entry into World War I), whose location is unknown, as 'protected places'. It is not necessary to demonstrate the presence of human remains for wrecks to be designated as either 'controlled sites' or 'protected places'. It also covers vessels of a foreign state e.g., German U-Boats	This may apply to military shipwrecks and aircraft discovered in the nearshore area and the larger freshwater lakes of NI.
14. Historic Environment & CH	Archaeology 2030: A Strategic Approach for Northern Ireland	NI	2021	Archaeology 2030 Programme Board	This project has set out to achieve a ten year vision: Our archaeology is accessed and valued by as many people as possible, led by a sector which is healthy, resilient and connected.	Includes among its recommendations: Guidance relating to development management / planning applications and that current processes and conditions should be reviewed to ensure that delays, costs and uncertainties are minimised and that archaeologists, council planners and developers can work together to make sustainable places where people want to live and work.

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14. Historic Environment & CH	Guidance on Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Historic Environment	NI	2018	DfC	Offers advice on historic environment considerations during the Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment process, including examples of the baseline evidence which should be considered through the different stages of screening, scoping, assessment, and reporting. It also provides guidance on the implementation of historic environment legislation, the relevant policy in the Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS) and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS).	The LDP and the SA of the LDP will take cognisance of this guidance.
14. Historic Environment & CH	Guidance on Guidance on Setting and the Historic Environment	NI	2018	DfC	The guidance includes a definition of setting, identifies those key aspects of setting which can contribute to the significance of a heritage asset, and outlines a three-stage process for assessing the impacts of change upon setting. It is hoped that the content of this document will assist planning authorities and applicants, heritage consultants and other stakeholders achieve a consistent approach when considering setting and the historic environment in Northern Ireland.	The LDP and the SA of the LDP will take cognisance of this guidance.
14. Historic Environment & CH	Historic Buildings of Local Importance: A guide to their Identification and Protection	NI	2017	DfC	This good practice guide aims to assist Councils achieve a consistent approach when identifying and protecting Historic Buildings of Local Importance.	The LDP may be able to contribute to the protection of unlisted historic buildings of local importance, where appropriate, through policy provisions.
14. Historic Environment & CH	Regeneration: The Value of our Built Heritage. Position Paper 2017	NI	2017	DfC	This paper sets out the potential value of effective architectural regeneration throughout our villages, towns and cities. It highlights Northern Ireland's unique architectural heritage as well as the social and economic value of older building stock, and the added qualities it can bring to our communities.	Paper recommends that heritage buildings are incorporated and made a priority in new Council community planning. The protection and promotion of Heritage should be integrated into community plans and new planning policy. Policy needs to be integrated and support building users.
14. Historic Environment & CH	Planning Policy Statement 23 – Enabling Development	NI	2014	DfI	PPS23 sets out planning policy for assessing proposals for Enabling Development in support of the re-use, restoration or refurbishment of heritage assets such as historic buildings, scheduled monuments, industrial heritage and historic parks, gardens and demesnes. It provides a policy to maintain and enhance the standard of	Retention of this will be considered in preparing LDP policies.

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					a wide range of community facilities in Northern Ireland including cultural, educational, social, health, built heritage and leisure facilities and the restoration and creation of wildlife habitat.	
14. Historic Environment & CH	Living Places - An Urban Stewardship and Design Guide for NI	NI	2014	DfI	Aims to establish the key principles behind good place making to inform those involved in the process of managing (stewardship) and making (design) urban places, with a view to raising standards across Northern Ireland. The focus of the guide is urban areas, by which is meant all of our cities, towns, villages and neighbourhoods. It recognises the wider economic, cultural and community benefits of achieving excellence in the stewardship and design of these important places, be they existing or newly proposed.	Principles inform spatial, design and policy measures that can be incorporated in the LDP to maximise contribution to strengthening society, protecting cultural heritage, promoting well-being, enhancing access and creating economic growth.
14. Historic Environment & CH	Study of the economic value of Northern Ireland's historic environment	NI	2012	DfC	The purpose of this study is to help make the case for investment in the Northern Ireland historic environment. The four objectives of the study are to: (1.) Determine the current value of economic activity generated by Northern Ireland's historic environment and its distribution; (2.) Gauge the level of historic environment-related employment in Northern Ireland, including indirect employment, the distribution of this employment, and its relative importance compared with other sectors; (3.) Conduct a credible analysis of the wider community benefits that Northern Ireland's historical environment provides to the economy using a series of case studies, and (4.) Make an assessment of the potential for the use of Northern Ireland's historic environment to aid sustainable growth of the economy and make recommendations as to how this could be realised.	This document can help to inform the LDP and identify areas where links can be made between the Historic Environment and other themes, e.g. community, economic development, tourism, etc.
14. Historic Environment & CH	Protocol for the Care of the Government Historic Estate Northern Ireland Guidance February 2012	NI	2012	DfC	A document set out by the Executive explaining how departments and agencies will put their commitment into practice for caring and protecting historic estates. Includes protecting heritage assets through regular condition surveys, maintenance and renovation using appropriately experienced practitioners and working to keep buildings in active use.	This document is recommended as good practice for Councils to adopt.
14. Historic Environment & CH	Planning Policy Statement 6 – Planning, Archaeology and Built Heritage (and Addendum ATC)	NI	1999	DfI	This PPS sets out the Department's planning policies for the protection and conservation of archaeological remains and features of the built heritage.	Retention of this will be considered in preparing LDP policies. It should be noted that some of the policy text of PPS 6 has been superseded by

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						policy in the SPPS, for example SPPS para. 6.11
14. Historic Environment & CH	Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995	NI	1995	DfC HED	Article 3 of this Order provides for the scheduling of monuments for protection. Monuments are selected for scheduling on the basis of published criteria, which are found in found in Annex B of Planning Policy Statement 6 (PPS 6): Planning, Archaeology and Built Heritage (1999).	There is a requirement for Scheduled Monument Consent for works within Scheduled Monument designated areas. This would be a consideration in zoning ground including or immediate to Scheduled Areas.
14. Historic Environment & CH	Lurgan Conservation Area Design Guide Booklet	Local	2004	DfI	The purpose in producing general design guidelines for proposed new building alterations and extensions within Lurgan Conservation Area is to help ensure that such proposals do not detract from the character and special qualities of the area.	Extant Supplementary Planning Guidance may be relevant to drafting updated policy in the new LDP.
14. Historic Environment & CH	Loughgall Conservation Area Design Guide Booklet	Local	1993	DfI	The purpose in producing general design guidelines for proposed new building alterations and extensions within Loughgall Conservation Area is to help ensure that such proposals do not detract from the character and special qualities of the area.	Extant Supplementary Planning Guidance may be relevant to drafting updated policy in the new LDP.
14. Historic Environment & CH	Richhill Conservation Area Design Guide Booklet	Local	1993	DfI	The purpose in producing general design guidelines for proposed new building alterations and extensions within Richhill Conservation Area is to help ensure that such proposals do not detract from the character and special qualities of the area.	Extant Supplementary Planning Guidance may be relevant to drafting updated policy in the new LDP.
14. Historic Environment & CH	Armagh Conservation Area Design Guide Booklet	Local	1992	DfI	The purpose in producing general design guidelines for proposed new building alterations and extensions within Armagh City Conservation Area is to help ensure that such proposals do not detract from the character and special qualities of the area.	Extant Supplementary Planning Guidance may be relevant to drafting updated policy in the new LDP.
14. Historic Environment & CH	Dromore Conservation Area Design Guide Booklet	Local	1992	DfI	The purpose in producing general design guidelines for proposed new building alterations and extensions within Dromore Conservation Area is to help ensure that such proposals do not detract from the character and special qualities of the area.	Extant Supplementary Planning Guidance may be relevant to drafting updated policy in the new LDP.
14. Historic Environment & CH	Your Voice, Our Future: Draft Heritage Strategy December 2025	Local	2025	ABC Council	The draft heritage strategy for the Borough sets out 10 objectives set under three overarching themes that guide the strategic direction to be taken in response to built,	The draft Strategy's approach focuses heavily on community involvement and

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					natural and cultural heritage within the Borough over the next 10 years.	governance regarding heritage related objectives. Natural and built heritage policies will directly contribute to the Council's Heritage Strategy, while topic areas such as tourism and economy will indirectly impact on its outcomes.
15. Other Areas	Draft] Supplementary Planning Guidance to PPS 18 'Renewable Energy' Anaerobic Digestion	NI	2010	DfI	The SPG provides additional advice and guidance specific to Anaerobic Digestion (AD) to complement the background information already set out in the Best Practice Guidance to PPS 18. AD proposals raise a number of planning issues including visual and landscape impacts arising from industrial scale plant/buildings; potential odour impacts, air emissions, noise impacts, and traffic impacts.	LDP policies in respect of development in the countryside, waste and landscape may influence the future development of these facilities
16. Area Plan	Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Local Development Plan 2032. Part 1: Plan Strategy. September 2023	Council	2023	Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council	The adoption of the Plan Strategy represents a key milestone for the Council, and provides the framework for the future investment in the Council area. It sets the strategic direction for the sustainable economic growth of the Council area and provides a framework for better connectivity between places and opportunities for healthier lifestyles, which are key aims to shaping good quality places in which to work, live and play. The Vision, Objectives and Spatial Strategy address the economic, social and environmental challenges facing our Council area whilst reflecting the rich variety of our settlements and their diverse roles and functions, set against a vibrant rural hinterland. The Plan Strategy will be part of the Development Plan for the purpose of dealing with planning applications, appeals and enforcement. The Plan is supported through a range of Strategic Policies. These provide the basis for the suite of Operational Policies for housing, economic development, our city and town centres, tourism, infrastructure and the natural and historic environment. Account has been taken of policies which are cross-cutting in nature, including flooding, climate change adaptation and mitigation, health and active travel. The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) states that where a Council adopts its Plan Strategy, existing policy retained under the transitional	The Council may have regard to other plans and topic-based strategies e.g. transport, recreation and economic development, as considered relevant and which may also have cross-boundary implications for its neighbouring Councils. Council should therefore also ensure that its strategy is not in conflict with the Development Plan Documents (DPDs) of neighbouring Councils by assessing any likely cross boundary implications of policies and proposals contained in its DPD to help ensure its compatibility with that of the neighbouring Council and facilitate an

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					arrangements shall cease to have effect. This will represent a change for stakeholders and the Council is committed to building capacity in relation to the new policy framework.	integrated and coordinated approach to the implementation of higher-level regional planning aims and objectives.
16. Area Plan	Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council Local Development Plan 2032. Part 2: Operational Policies. September 2023	Council	2023	Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council	Part Two of the Local Development Plan sets out Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council's Operational Policies that will be taken into account in the determination of all planning applications, appeals and enforcement.	The Council may have regard to other plans and topic-based strategies e.g. transport, recreation and economic development, as considered relevant and which may also have cross-boundary implications for its neighbouring Councils. Council should therefore also ensure that its strategy is not in conflict with the Development Plan Documents (DPDs) of neighbouring Councils by assessing any likely cross boundary implications of policies and proposals contained in its DPD to help ensure its compatibility with that of the neighbouring Council and facilitate an integrated and coordinated approach to the implementation of higher-level regional planning aims and objectives.
16. Area Plan	Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council Local Development Plan 2030 Plan Strategy	Council	2025	Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council	The formal adoption of the Local Development Plan 2030 – Plan Strategy represents a key milestone in the Local Development Plan process for the Borough and one that provides an important plan-led framework, to allow development to take place in an appropriate and sustainable manner to meet the needs of citizens today, whilst laying the foundations for the future. It provides a	The Council may have regard to other plans and topic-based strategies e.g. transport, recreation and economic development, as considered relevant and

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
					powerful place-shaping tool to benefit the people who live in Antrim and Newtownabbey, those who work in local businesses and invest in the Borough, and the visitors who support the growing tourism sector.	which may also have cross-boundary implications for its neighbouring Councils. Council should therefore also ensure that its strategy is not in conflict with the Development Plan Documents (DPDs) of neighbouring Councils by assessing any likely cross boundary implications of policies and proposals contained in its DPD to help ensure its compatibility with that of the neighbouring Council and facilitate an integrated and coordinated approach to the implementation of higher-level regional planning aims and objectives.
16. Area Plan	Mid Ulster District Council Local Development Plan 2030 Draft Plan Strategy	Council	2019	Mid Ulster District Council	The Plan Strategy is the first stage of a two stage LDP for the district. It sets out the strategic objectives of Mid Ulster District Council and informs all stakeholders of the policy framework against which all proposals will be assessed. The draft Plan Strategy will be subjected to public consultation and independent examination before adoption.	The Council may have regard to other plans and topic-based strategies e.g. transport, recreation and economic development, as considered relevant and which may also have cross-boundary implications for its neighbouring Councils. Council should therefore also ensure that its strategy is not in conflict with the Development Plan Documents (DPDs) of neighbouring Councils by assessing any likely cross boundary implications of policies and proposals contained

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
						in its DPD to help ensure its compatibility with that of the neighbouring Council and facilitate an integrated and coordinated approach to the implementation of higher-level regional planning aims and objectives.
16. Area Plan	Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Draft Plan Strategy 2035	Council	2025	Newry Mourne and Down District Council	The draft Plan Strategy is the first of two development plan documents which will encompass our Local Development Plan, the second being the Local Policies Plan. When adopted, the Plan Strategy will constitute a key milestone for the council area. The draft Plan Strategy sets the strategic direction for future investment through sustainable economic growth in the district whilst facilitating the achievement of social and environmental objectives, such as healthier lifestyles, improved connectivity between places, and shaping sustainable and quality places to live, work, invest and visit.	The Council may have regard to other plans and topic-based strategies e.g. transport, recreation and economic development, as considered relevant and which may also have cross-boundary implications for its neighbouring Councils. Council should therefore also ensure that its strategy is not in conflict with the Development Plan Documents (DPDs) of neighbouring Councils by assessing any likely cross boundary implications of policies and proposals contained in its DPD to help ensure its compatibility with that of the neighbouring Council and facilitate an integrated and coordinated approach to the implementation of higher-level regional planning aims and objectives.

	Title	Spatial Scale	Year	Lead	Objectives/Requirements	Implications for LDP
16. Area Plan	Monaghan Council Development Plan 2025-2031	Council	2025	Monaghan County Council	Sets out planning policy for County Monaghan.	May assist LDP in identifying cross-border opportunities and constraints.

1. The objective for sustainable development is to improve health and well-being.
Rationale Public policy seeks to increase healthy life expectancy, reduce preventable deaths, improve mental health and reduce health inequalities. Evidence shows that there is a need to address obesity, increase physical activity and reduce inequalities in health. It is also necessary to provide for the needs of an aging population and minimise the detrimental impacts of noise. This can be achieved by creating an environment that is clean and attractive; encourages healthy lifestyles and enables access to health care facilities for all.
Key issues ▪ By 2035 the population of the Borough is projected to have increased from its 2018 level by 10.6% or 23,167 people, over treble the predicted average rate for NI. ▪ Population trends indicate an ageing population with potentially a higher number of older dependents e.g. the number of people aged 85 and over is expected to double by around 3,580 individuals by mid-2030. ▪ An increase in the proportion of older people in the population will increase the requirement for care. There is a need to meet the future needs for care and support for older people at home or in communal homes and to improve access to health services, other facilities and services. ▪ Participation rates in physical activity are lower than the NI average and significantly lower than recommended minimum levels. ▪ There is a need to promote and incentivise regular participation in physical activity through provision of and ensuring good accessibility to sports facilities (including water sports facilities), open space, green infrastructure and walking and cycling routes. ▪ Less than half of children in NI walk or cycle to school. ▪ There is a particular need for children to have accessible play in places where they feel safe. ▪ There will be an increasing need to create accessible means for older people to engage in physical activity to prolong their healthy lives. ▪ Development should be sited and designed to connect with greenways where possible. ▪ Need to protect and enhance biodiversity to promote positive health benefits. ▪ Levels of adult obesity in NI and the UK are high by global standards, reflecting poor diet and a relatively sedentary lifestyle. ▪ In ACBCBC many of the indicators for mental health appear to show a lower than average quality of mental health. ▪ Noise and environmental quality are not identified as being significant adverse effects at present however they can impact on health and therefore environmental quality should be improved, or sustained where it is good, to minimise adverse health impacts. ▪ Road safety for all users should be a key consideration of planning and design. ▪ The location of and access to emergency services can impact on response times. Rural areas require accessibility to general practice and non-emergency healthcare services. ▪ ACBCBC shows a lower rate of health deprivation and disability compared with the NI average, but there are large inequalities in health and well-being with most measures of health being significantly worse in the most deprived areas. ▪ Good spatial planning can reduce health inequalities by providing a high standard of design and place making, open space, capacity for any additional services required and accessibility. ▪ Need to plan the relative location of industry and housing, open space and public facilities to minimise use conflicts. ▪ Major transport infrastructure has the potential to cause noise disturbance, air pollution or safety risks which can be reduced through siting and design.

- There are some communities within the Council area which experience problems of multiple deprivation particularly in parts of Armagh City, Banbridge, Lurgan, Portadown and Keady, where income and employment are the key concerns. - Parts of ACBCBC may have increased probability of the incidence of Radon at actionable levels.
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Appraisal Prompts	
Positive Effects	Negative Effects
a) Improve access to health care b) Reduce response times for the emergency services c) Provide opportunities for and encourage health lifestyles and physical activity for all ages d) Create open space with public access e) Increase social contact and intergenerational contact (including family cohesion) f) Support those providing care g) Provide suitable accommodation for those with long term health problems or disability h) Maintain good air quality i) Avoid or reduce noise impacts that may affect health j) Improve ability to reach schools and workplaces by active travel k) Reduce the risk of traffic accidents	l) Reduce access to health care m) Increase response times for the emergency services n) Discourage healthy lifestyles and physical activity o) Reduce open space with public access p) Decrease social contact and intergenerational contact q) Lack of support for carers r) Shortage of suitable accommodation for those with long term health problems or disability s) Decrease in air quality t) Increase noise impacts that may affect health u) Make it harder to reach schools and workplaces via active travel v) Increase the risk of traffic accidents

2. The objective for sustainable development is to strengthen society	
Rationale	
Regional policy is directed towards improving community relations and creating a safe society which is more united. Success will be represented by places which are inclusive, respect culture and identity, promote social integration and create a sense of pride. They will also be designed to feel safe and to reduce opportunity for crime or anti-social behaviour.	
Key issues	
- There will be a growing population and the plan will need to meet the need for more dwellings. - Some areas have seen substantial growth in recent years, there is a need to ensure that facilities meet the needs of the population. - Some areas have seen significant population decline in recent years, there is a need to ensure that this does not have a long term adverse effect on them as places to live or do business. - A decline in household size will increase the number of homes required per capita and influence the type of dwellings required. - People may be more likely to stay in a home long term if it meets their changing needs and facilities and amenities that they wish to use are as accessible as possible through their lives. - A greater proportion of older people will increase the need for suitable housing that is accessible for those who may not drive and enables support to be provided. - Levels of deprivation vary widely throughout the council area. - Rural communities have relatively good access to urban areas, however some of their populations may not have good proximity to services. - There is a commitment and desire to promote social inclusion through shared, welcoming and accessible places. - Need to plan for and meet the needs of diverse groups in the council area, this may include allowing for facilities to meet specific needs. - Some parts of ACBCBC have populations which predominantly reflect one religion or political opinion. - There is a need to provide appropriate shared space and apply place making to make areas inclusive for all backgrounds and income levels. - The needs and experience of different parts of ACBCBC society differ and are best expressed by representatives of the range of groups. Some of this may be gained through the Community Planning process and also through being proactive in inviting comment on and participation in plan preparation from all groups. - There will be an increased need to accommodate those with disability. - The community is not ethnically diverse, but there is a higher than average proportion of people born in an EU country resident in the Council area. The needs of minority groups such as Irish Travellers must be taken into account. - There will continue to be a need for childcare facilities, nursery, primary and secondary schools as well as accessibility to community and leisure facilities particularly in the short term.	
Appraisal Prompts	
Positive Effects	Negative Effects
a) Promote inclusion of all groups b) Retain, create, or enhance shared space c) Increase accessibility to shared space d) Promote positive social interaction e) Give rural communities appropriate access to facilities and services f) Reduce the factors causing inequalities g) Meet identified needs that will reduce inequalities experienced by the most deprived communities	h) Inhibit inclusion of all groups i) Shared space reduced or deteriorates j) Decrease accessibility to shared space k) Decrease positive social interaction l) Rural communities less access to facilities and services m) Exacerbate the factors causing inequalities n) Maintains or increases inequalities experienced by the most deprived communities

3. The objective for sustainable development is to provide good quality, sustainable housing.	
Rationale	
The population is growing and therefore there is ongoing need for new housing in locations that meet regional policy, are accessible and balance the needs of society and the environment. The make-up of households is changing therefore design needs to meet long-term requirements with good quality build to be sustainable. This objective should reduce homelessness and ensure decent, affordable homes with a mix of types.	
Key issues	
- Between 2011-2021 the rate of population growth overall for the council area was above the Northern Ireland average and particularly high in the legacy councils of Banbridge and Craigavon. - The number of households has increased rapidly with a trend for smaller household sizes. A decline in household size will increase the number of homes required per capita and influence the type of dwellings required. - A changing demography has created a high demand within social housing amongst single and small family households will mean significant requirement for one and two bedroom dwellings. - There continues to be a demand across Armagh, Craigavon and Banbridge for social housing provision particularly in Craigavon. - The number of people presenting themselves as homeless between 2009/10 and 2013/14 has increased across the council area by 3-5%. - There is scope to bring vacant dwellings into use to contribute to the housing stock. - As life expectancy of the population rises this will increase the need for suitable housing that is accessible for the elderly and which enables support to be provided. - There will be an increased need to accommodate those with disability. - There are advantages to providing life time homes that are accessible and adaptable to all and meet wheelchair standards. - New housing should be low carbon and reduce the problems of fuel poverty. - Affordable housing is required for a variety of housing types and sizes. Despite an overall improvement in affordability, affordability remains an issue for first time buyers, alongside difficulties in securing mortgages. - All new housing should help to support healthy lifestyles. - Housing provision should enable social cohesion in families and communities and promote vibrancy of settlements. - Rural housing continues to make a contribution to overall housing supply in the council area albeit at a reduced rate since the introduction of PPS 21.	
Appraisal Prompts	
Positive Effects	Negative Effects
a) Encourage low carbon homes b) Encourage the building of life-time homes with potential for adaptability, such as wheelchair access c) Encourage affordable housing d) Reduce homelessness e) Meet the needs of specific groups e.g. single people, families, retired people, ethnic minorities, disabled f) Reduce the number of unfit homes g) Provide housing which meets locally identified needs (in terms of type, tenure and size) h) Provide a mix of housing types	i) Decrease energy efficiency j) Homes not suited for lifetime use k) Reduced affordable housing l) Increase homelessness m) Does not meet the needs of specific groups e.g. single people, families, retired people, ethnic minorities, disabled n) Does not reduce the number of unfit homes o) Does not meet local need for housing type/quantity p) Does not provide a mix of housing types
4. The objective for sustainable development is to enable access to high quality education.	
Rationale	

Good education improves opportunities for employment and also contributes to avoidance of poverty and to healthier lifestyles. The provision of suitable accommodation for educational establishments in appropriate, accessible locations should play a part in making schools more sustainable and reducing inequalities in education.	
Key issues - Although the council area has a high level of educational achievement at all levels this is not consistent between DEAs. - Since 2023 there has been a 0.5% decrease in the number of enrolments in schools within the Borough. There has also been a decrease of 6.4% in 2024 of the number of children enrolled in pre-school education. Post-primary has seen a 18.6 increase in enrolments since 2015/16 while Special Schools have seen the greatest percentage increase in enrolments from 2014/15 to 2024/25 rising by 54.3%. - Between 2023-2024 there has been a decrease in higher education enrolments (below the Northern Ireland average level) but an increase in further education enrolments (above the Northern Ireland average level). - In Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough the percentage of residents aged 16 and over with no qualifications (25.2%) was slightly higher than Northern Ireland overall (23.8%). Level 1 qualifications and apprenticeships showed similar proportions in both the borough and Northern Ireland. Those with qualifications at level 4 and above was lower in the borough (30.4%) than Northern Ireland (32.1%). - Sharing facilities has been recognised as a way to promote a more cohesive and tolerant society and make better use of the resources available to education.	
Appraisal Prompts	
Positive Effects a) Improve education level and employability of the population b) Promote access to education c) Promote access to skills training d) Help rural communities access education and skills training e) Improve opportunities for multiple use of facilities f) Help educational establishments to provide modern sustainable accommodation	Negative Effects g) Does not help improve education level and employability of the population h) Decrease access to education i) Decrease access to skills training j) Makes rural communities access to education and skills training harder k) Under use of public facilities l) Inhibit provision of suitable educational facilities

5. The objective for sustainable development is to enable sustainable economic growth.	
Rationale	
Regional policy seeks to develop a strong, competitive and regionally balanced economy. It is necessary to provide suitable locations for employment, with flexibility where necessary, to reflect current and future distribution of jobs across sectors, encourage new business start-ups, facilitate innovation, regenerate areas, attract investment and make employment as accessible as possible for all. This will reduce unemployment and poverty by helping more people to earn a living and increase their income.	
Key issues	
- Identifying and zoning appropriate land is a vital part of creating the conditions to sustain economic development that meets employment needs and supports economic growth. - Many of the large settlements in the Council are located on key transport corridors. In selecting land for development, it is important to provide sites with quality environments located on transport corridors to attract businesses. - Need to ensure that the Council area is attractive to investors, and higher skilled people, by supporting the vitality and vibrancy of the wider area and facilitating a high quality local environment through appropriate land use, design and layout. This relates particularly to quality of provision, location, and accessibility of office/manufacturing/retail space. - Proposed new employment locations should be readily accessible by active travel and/or public transport. - A higher than average percentage of people in the Council area are economically active. - The Council area has a high proportion of people employed in the wholesale / retail trade, manufacturing and health sectors. - Employee salaries are broadly average for NI. - The business birth rate and survival rate is average for NI, but lower than the rest of the UK. A focus on encouraging and nurturing new business ideas would help the Council increase and sustain economic growth. - Within the Council area, there is a vibrant rural entrepreneurial spirit within the villages and open countryside. It is important that the Plan provides policy which can facilitate appropriate sustainable rural businesses. - Within retail, there have been a number of challenges in recent years, however the market is in recovery and is evolving. - Town centres should be supported by encouraging occupation of vacant buildings. - The out-of-town retail park (The Boulavard) should be supported to increase its unit occupancy and usage in a manner that complements nearby town centres rather than taking business from them. 'Brexit' and exchange rate fluctuations may disproportionately affect businesses in border areas. - Almost three quarters of overnight visits to the Council area are to visit friends and relatives. The proportion of overnight visitors staying for holiday/pleasure/leisure is the lowest in NI. - There are a wealth of heritage and cultural, natural and landscape tourism assets within the Council area with significant future potential. - Activity tourism has the potential to create important economic benefits, particularly in the rural area. - Water sport activities, including those based on connections to Lough Neagh, have important tourist potential; Oxford Island and Kinnego Marina were the most popular visitor attractions in the Council area (excluding country parks/parks/forests).	
Appraisal Prompts	
Positive Effects	Negative Effects
a) Support innovation and competitiveness within the local economy b) Ensure sufficient land supply in appropriate locations for economic growth c) Support creation of a range of job types that are accessible especially to areas of greatest deprivation	j) Does not promote innovation and competitiveness within the local economy k) Restricts the supply of land in locations appropriate for economic growth l) Does not support creation of a range of job types that are accessible especially to areas of greatest deprivation m) Does not support enhancement of the skills base.

d) Support enhancement of the skills base. e) Help make the Borough a more attractive place to live, work, visit and invest f) Make the best use of key location along major road and rail corridors g) Ensure the vitality and vibrancy of city and town centres can be improved h) Increase the number of people coming to the Borough to work i) Create and sustain tourism assets	n) Does not help make the Borough a more attractive place to live, work, visit and invest o) Does not make use of location along major road and rail corridors p) Vitality and vibrancy of city and town centres may decline. q) Does not increase the number of people coming to the Borough to work r) Does not enhance use of tourism assets.
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6. The objective for sustainable development is to manage material assets sustainably.	
Rationale	
Material assets such as infrastructure and sources of energy production are essential for society and the economy but need careful planning to ensure that they are designed for efficiency and to minimise adverse impacts. The concept of circular economy treats waste as resource which should be managed sustainably to reduce production and increase recovery, recycling and composting rates; new or adapted facilities may be required.	
Key issues	
▪ Sustainably improve the telecommunications network in areas with slow download speeds and in rural areas to help ensure those residents, communities and businesses are not disadvantaged. ▪ Adopt a spatial approach to the sustainable planning of our material assets to help ensure energy sources and distribution to users are located as efficiently as possible in relation to one other. ▪ Work with partners to help sustainably develop gas infrastructure projects. ▪ Continue to support appropriate sustainable renewable projects and associated infrastructure to help increase the diversity of renewables supplying energy to the grid, to help meet commitments made under the UK Climate Change Act. ▪ The lack of financial incentives for renewable projects may affect the demand to develop renewables. ▪ Consider community based renewable projects that can make more efficient use of land and reduce environmental impacts including landscape related issues. ▪ Consider alternative renewable technologies to wind in areas where wind technology may cause concern for landscape issues. ▪ Look for sustainable opportunities within the waste management industry that support resource efficiency and align with the Southern West Management Plan (SWaMP). ▪ Reduce non-recyclable wastes and educate people about alternatives in accordance with the principles of the waste management hierarchy – avoid, reduce, reuse, recycle, recover. ▪ Ensure equal access to waste management facilities across the Council based upon the proximity principle and use the LDP to enable consideration of derelict/contaminated land for waste management facilities.	
Appraisal Prompts	
Positive Effects	Negative Effects
a) Sufficient telecommunications can be provided or are feasible b) Electrical infrastructure is fit for purpose c) Enables renewable energy production/connections d) Supports development of renewables e) Increases reusing/recycling/composting rates f) Makes reusing/recycling/composting easier g) Reduces waste production per household h) Uses/encourages the proximity principle for location of material assets i) Reduces the amount of derelict/contaminated land	j) Existing telecommunications poor or unlikely to become available k) Adequate electrical infrastructure unavailable or unfeasible l) Infrastructure not fit for purpose m) Halts development of renewables n) Unlikely to improve recycling rates or make recycling easier o) Does not adopt the proximity principle for location of material assets p) Doesn't take advantage of derelict/contaminated land

7. The objective for sustainable development is to protect physical resources and use sustainably.	
Rationale	
Land, minerals, geological features, geothermal energy and soil are resources which require protection from degradation and safeguarding for future use. Sustainable agriculture, sustainable tourism and the sustainable use of minerals, geological features, and geothermal energy can help to support the economy.	
Key issues	
- Mineral reserves should be safeguarded from inappropriate development and their future use and accessibility protected. - Spatial Joint Mineral Plans with other Councils should be a consideration to help Council's and the industry manage as a regional resource. - Older mineral sites (ROMPs) may be causing undue damage or deterioration to the local environment and could be providing multiple benefits with appropriate restoration as well as adding to local green/blue infrastructure. (tbc if applicable) - Peat extraction still takes place in the Council but peatlands are also important for a range of ecosystem services provision (i.e. water/carbon stores, habitat for specialist plants/animals) requiring their conservation. - Promoting the circular economy could reduce the demand for some minerals. - Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) are protected areas that represent the best of our wildlife and geological sites that make a considerable contribution to the conservation of our most valuable natural places. - ACBCBC holds a unique position with regards to potential development of deep geothermal energy in Northern Ireland and the integration of its infrastructure as it is situated between both potential aquifers of Lough Neagh and the Mourne Mountains. - Shallow geothermal energy could be incorporated in development. - The potential effects of sub-surface development should be assessed at an early stage to determine feasibility and to avoid any adverse effects. - ACBCBC needs to consider the future need for cemetery provision in some areas. - Local development pressure from single turbines, rural dwellings, and in some areas cemetery provision may require local site-specific measures. - Soil quality should be protected using effective conservation measures.	
Appraisal Prompts	
Positive Effects	Negative Effects
a) Earth science features can be protected b) Enables the minerals industry to operate sustainably c) Enables materials to be locally sourced d) Considers minerals across Council boundaries e) Enable future use/benefit of quarries f) Enables potential future use of geothermal energy g) Avoids/minimises loss of greenfield sites h) Retains semi natural land cover/biodiversity i) Avoids soil erosion/pollution j) Potential for sub-surface planning	k) Earth science features unlikely to be protected l) Reduces the ability for minerals industry to operate sustainably m) Considers minerals only within the Council area n) Does not protect potential future use/benefit of quarries o) Inhibits the future use of geothermal energy p) Increases loss of greenfield sites q) Reduces semi natural land cover/biodiversity r) Soil erosion/pollution likely s) Sub-surface planning unlikely due to geology

8. The objective for sustainable development is to encourage active and sustainable travel.	
Rationale	
There is a common goal to reduce traffic emissions and congestion, which means reducing single-occupancy car use and increasing use of other forms of transport, especially at peak times. The location of housing and key services can facilitate better access to public transport. Opportunities for active travel make travel more affordable and may bring added health benefits, while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Measures to manage car demand, such as parking and re-allocation of road space, which encourage a shift from car to public transport, walking and cycling will contribute to this goal.	
Key issues	
▪ The Council has several main transport routes crossing through it that make it an important area for transport connections moving north and south, east and west but there are also a significant amount of smaller routes and unclassified roads that culminate in the Council with the second highest amount of transport routes. ▪ There is a slightly higher than average number of households with access to two, three, four or more vehicles and a high reliance on the private car/van for transport. ▪ Traffic congestion is one of the top environmental concerns of people in the Borough. ▪ Over three quarters of workers in the Council rely on some form of motorised transport to get to work rather than using public transport, walking or cycling. ▪ Nearly a quarter of all households in the Borough have no access to any vehicle which means a considerable amount of the population is dependent on public transport, car sharing and active travel options. ▪ A considerable amount of people walk to work rather than use any other mode of transport and this trend could be encouraged by providing appropriate services and walkways/greenways to enable more people to commute this way. ▪ Less than 1% of commutes to work are by bike so there may be a need to investigate measures (design, connectivity) that could help enable more people to commute by bike. ▪ The Council benefits from being part of the rail network and is part of the connection between Belfast and Dublin. ▪ The amount of people who choose to use public transport to commute to work is lower than those that choose to walk and significantly lower than those relying on a car/van so there is a need to investigate measures that could help enable more people to commute by bus or train. ▪ A considerable amount of people car share and this trend could be encouraged by providing additional park and ride/share facilities at strategic locations to enable more citizens to commute this way and enable much stronger transport connections for rural communities to urban hubs and reduce traffic congestion. ▪ There is expected to be an increase in electric vehicles and demand for electric charging points across the Borough. ▪ Planning active travel links/projects to existing greenways could help reflect strategic plans for a greenway network at the local level and help to encourage citizens to walk or cycle enabling easier access to the outdoors with benefits for health and well-being. ▪ The primary walking routes and cycling lanes in the hubs of the Council could be improved by adding new links that would increase connectivity and accessibility for citizens to the key locations but also out to the wider countryside and attractions such as the Mournes.	
Appraisal Prompts	
Positive Effects	Negative Effects
a) Will help reduce traffic congestion b) Encourage modal shift to active travel and/or public transport c) Improve access to and efficiency of public transport d) Will benefit those without access to a vehicle e) Retain, create, or enhance walking or cycling routes	f) Unlikely to reduce traffic congestion g) Does not promote modal shift to active travel and/or public transport h) Unlikely to improve access to and efficiency of public transport i) Unlikely to benefit those without access to a vehicle j) Does not retain, create, or enhance walking or cycling routes

9. The objective for sustainable development is to improve air quality.	
Rationale	
Air pollution has serious impacts on human health as well as degrading the natural environment. This objective can be achieved through reducing sources of air pollution. Where air pollution cannot be totally excluded careful siting of development should avoid impacts on sensitive receptors.	
Key issues	
- One Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) for NO₂ is located in one Hub and directly linked to road traffic emissions. - Key regional transport routes are located within the Council making it a transport hub for residents and visitors across the country and continuously producing air traffic pollution. - Road traffic generates 85% of emissions and is the largest contributor to air pollution in the Council. - Traffic congestion in Armagh City continues to be an air quality issue. - Traffic congestion is one of the top three environmental concerns of residents. - Public transport options need to be improved to help reduce reliance on the private car particularly in rural areas but also in the main towns where congestion is frequent. - Continued support for renewables in appropriate locations should be encouraged through initiatives like the Council's Renewable Energy Strategy to help reduce air pollutants from fossil fuels. - Air quality should be a consideration when planning the location of land uses, particularly when residential areas may be affected or other sensitive receptors.	
Appraisal Prompts	
Positive Effects	Negative Effects
a) Will help achieve AQMA objectives b) Likely to improve air quality c) Able to reduce traffic congestion d) Will encourage other modes of transport to the car e) Promotes/supports/enables projects/behaviour that will improve air quality f) Able to avoid/reduce air pollution g) Will avoid increase of ammonia emissions (near to sensitive receptors)	h) Unlikely to help meet AQMA objectives i) Unlikely to improve air quality j) Unlikely to reduce traffic congestion k) Maintains/increases car use l) Inhibits/stops projects/behaviour that will improve air quality m) Likely to increase air pollution n) Likely to increase ammonia emissions (near to sensitive receptors)

10. The objective for sustainable development is to reduce causes of and adapt to climate change.	
Rationale	
International commitments require greenhouse gas emissions to be reduced to decrease their effects on climate. Measures that help reduce energy consumption and enable renewable energy help mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, however, climate change adaptation planning and implementation is essential to managing the resilience of our society and natural environment to an uncertain future, as well as for the known current and projected impacts of a changing climate.	
Key issues	
▪ The Council has the ability to mitigate for climate change by looking for opportunities and introducing measures to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the top contributing sectors which includes transport and agriculture, which are both prominent within the Council. ▪ The LDP could be used to promote measures to reduce GHG emissions from the residential sector be it through new gas infrastructure, additional small-scale producers, community based renewable energy schemes and/or energy efficient new builds. ▪ There is a need for a spatial approach to the location of appropriate renewable energy projects to help mitigate for climate change and support commitments made under the UK Climate Change Act but this need must be balanced against the environmental impacts and where there is potential to negatively impact on citizens and/or sensitive features. ▪ Measures including financial support should be investigated to help encourage the uptake of appropriate renewables. ▪ Measures are needed to ensure the grid is fit-for-purpose and new connections can be facilitated. ▪ The transport sector in Northern Ireland has experienced increasing levels of GHG emissions and the Council will need to investigate local measures to help reduce these emissions. ▪ The Council should continue to develop local measures that can help citizens reduce waste production and increase recycling rates across all sectors. ▪ The LDP should consider adjacent development zonings in the context of predicted flood areas under climate change scenarios and the increased risk of pollution from runoff. ▪ Ensuring buffer zones and wildlife corridors exist around designated sites and priority habitats will help futureproof for the movement of species and habitats in a changing climate. ▪ It is important to protect the function of wetlands and peatlands not just for their biodiversity value but as natural carbon and water stores that can help to reduce the impacts of climate change.	
Appraisal Prompts	
Positive Effects	Negative Effects
a) Will reduce greenhouse gas emissions b) Likely to reduce energy consumption c) Likely to reduce the need to travel by vehicle d) Increases/supports/promotes/enables renewable energy e) Enables/promotes public transport, walking/cycling. f) Helps reduce consumption/waste production and increases recycling g) Protects designated sites, locally important habitats and/or wildlife corridors h) Protects floodplains i) Protects peatlands j) Incorporates measures to adapt to climate change	k) Likely to increase greenhouse gas emissions l) Unlikely to reduce energy consumption m) Unlikely to reduce vehicle use n) Restricts/inhibits/detracts from renewable energy o) Maintains reliance on vehicles and discourages public transport, walking/cycling. p) Encourages consumption and increases waste levels q) Damages designated sites, habitats and/or wildlife corridors r) Removes/damages/reduces the extent or holding capacity of floodplains s) Removes/damages/reduces the peatlands t) Does not consider adaptation for climate change

11. The objective for sustainable development is to protect, manage and use water resources sustainably.

Rationale

This objective encompasses reducing levels of water pollution, sustainable use of water resources, improving the physical state of the water environment and reducing the risk of flooding, now and in the future. It meets the requirements of Northern Ireland legislation, strategies and plans in support of the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations and other legislation that relates to water, and it takes account of the future impacts of climate change.

Key issues

- By comparison to the rest of Northern Ireland surface water quality is generally lower in ACBCBC; a quarter of the waterbodies in the Council area are at 'poor' or 'bad' ecological status.
- Development may lead to contaminated runoff which may increase pollution of waterbodies.
- Developments without access to mains sewers can incorporate sewage treatment on site, but it is important that there is capacity for safe disposal of treated discharges and for maintenance of the treatment system to ensure that it remains effective in the long term.
- Other wastes may also cause pollution at the point where they are disposed of or utilised. Wastes from livestock, food processing or primary treatment such as sewage or anaerobic digesters have the potential to cause pollution elsewhere.
- Lurgan, Portadown and Banbridge are identified as SFRAs and there are four other settlements at moderate risk of flooding.
- Constructed flood alleviation and defence measures are expensive and should, where possible, be avoided and alternative methods of flood risk management considered.
- Climate change will increase the probability and extent of flood risk.
- Development should be planned to avoid areas at significant risk from flooding, now or in the future, or where development may increase the flood risk elsewhere.
- Development may lead to changes in the rate of surface water runoff, or the capacity of a receiving watercourse may be altered which in turn has the potential to increase flood risk.
- There are benefits in retaining and restoring natural flood plains and watercourses as a form of flood alleviation - this can support objectives of the Water Framework Directive.
- A safety issue arises because there are not currently legal requirements relating to impounded water therefore there are considered to be risks in potential inundation zones below reservoirs.
- Sustainable drainage (SuDS) measures should be incorporated and maintained in new development and redevelopment or regeneration schemes.
- Plan proposals should be compatible with the Flood Risk Management Plans published by Rivers Agency in December 2015.
- Developments without access to mains sewers can incorporate sewage treatment on site, it is important that there is capacity for safe disposal of treated discharges, that discharges do not impact on water quality or ecology and for maintenance of the treatment system to ensure that it remains effective in the long term.
- The high use of untargeted methods to apply herbicides and pesticides has caused pollution in waterbodies.
- There are issues with elevated levels of nutrients entering watercourses and polluting waterbodies.
- Development in general requires a water supply therefore can increase demands for sources, treatment and distribution infrastructure. This can be offset by measures to make more efficient use of water.
- There are capacity issues at a number of WWTWs and unless infrastructure is upgraded development requiring new connections to municipal treatment works will not be possible in certain areas. This may limit or delay potential for development.

Appraisal Prompts

Positive Effects

Negative Effects

a) Improve the quality of surface and ground water to meet objectives b) Lead to more efficient use of water c) Minimise risks from flooding d) Avoid the need for flood defence e) Protect or enhance floodplains f) Maintain water flows for good ecological quality k) Protect aquatic food resources	l) Reduce quality of surface and ground water and fail to meet water quality objectives m) Lead to waste of water n) Increase risks from flooding (now or in future) o) Risk creating a need for flood defence p) Reduce the extent or holding capacity of floodplains q) Water flows/temperature not suitable for good ecological quality. r) Unsustainable impacts on aquatic food resources
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12. The objective for sustainable development is to protect natural resources and enhance biodiversity.

Rationale

International obligations which are adopted in Northern Ireland legislation, along with national legislation and policies, require the protection of biodiversity including flora, fauna and habitats. This is for their intrinsic value and for the wider services that they provide to people, the economy and the environment - for example, as carbon stores which can mitigate the effects of climate change. This objective includes protecting and enhancing biodiversity including in coastal and marine areas, as well as protection of green and blue infrastructure to enhance the services that natural resources provide.

Key issues

- Significant areas of Lough Neagh and Portmore Lough are within the Council and are protected under numerous nature conservation designations with varying features of interest.
- There is a lack of formally designated nature conservation areas through the majority of the Council's interior, the focus of which is over the wetlands of Lough Neagh and its southern fringe and Portmore Lough.
- Local development pressure from rural housing and renewables is evident in some parts of the Council and in areas that are more sensitive, local level measures may be needed to help avoid environmental impacts.
- The three main non-governmental nature conservation organisations in Northern Ireland are present in the Council with National Trust sites mostly located in the north west, Ulster Wildlife present south of Armagh and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds located to the north east at Portmore Lough.
- The vision of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan presents an opportunity for partnership working, community involvement and environmental education to help combat threats to local biodiversity.
- The Council has a statutory duty to further biodiversity conservation within its functions.
- The LDP should use opportunities to increase the Council's green/blue infrastructure network by linking existing green and open space together and creating greenways with access whilst also investing in the canal network. This will also help the Council to fulfil its statutory duty under the Wildlife and Natural Environment (WANE) Act 2011 further the conservation of biodiversity when exercising its function.
- The LDP should encourage the sustainable development of land as a multifunctional resource and promote ecosystems services with multiple benefits for stakeholders.

Appraisal Prompts

Positive Effects	Negative Effects
a) Protects and/or enhances Lough Neagh and Portmore Lough b) Protects and/or enhances designated sites and their buffers c) Protects and/or enhances local biodiversity d) Protects/enhances/incorporates green/blue infrastructure (G/BI)	f) Unlikely to protect or enhance Lough Neagh or Portmore Lough g) Unlikely to protect or enhance designated sites or their buffers h) Unlikely to protect or enhance local biodiversity i) Removes/damages/excludes green/blue infrastructure (G/BI)

e) Supports/provides ecosystem services	j) Negatively impacts on ecosystem services
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13. The objective for sustainable development is to maintain and enhance landscape character.	
Rationale	
International and national policies seek to conserve the natural character and landscape of the coast and countryside and protect them from excessive, inappropriate or obtrusive development. This objective seeks to maintain the character and distinctiveness of the area's landscapes and to protect and enhance open spaces and the setting of prominent features, settlements and transport corridors.	
Key issues	
- Although there is only a small portion of AONB in the Council there are a wide variety of landscape types across it including 23 Landscape Character Areas (LCAs), six Regional Landscape Character Areas (RLCAs) and 101 Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs) that make the Council unique in its own right and therefore attractive to investors for housing, recreation and business ventures. - There are two potential Areas of Scenic Quality (ASQ) that could, if designated, help add to the protection awarded to landscape in those areas. - The Council may need to consider local level landscape studies and in some areas more sensitive to change, further local measures to help avoid negative impacts from development pressures such as rural housing. - There is an opportunity to use the LDP process to designate more LLPAs across the Council and particularly in the Dungannon and South Tyrone legacy Council area where there are none. - The Mourne Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) borders the Council on its south eastern flank and is an example of where management of landscape issues could particularly benefit from partnership working with other stakeholders.	
Appraisal Prompts	
Positive Effects	Negative Effects
a) Continue to protect areas designated for landscape b) Minimise any visual intrusion c) Protect and/or enhance the setting of prominent features, settlements and transport corridors d) Sensitively integrate new development to protect and enhance local distinctiveness e) Able to appropriately consider any impacts on the Mourne AONB and any other neighbouring landscape designations	f) Negatively impact on areas designated for landscape g) Increase any visual intrusion h) Detract from the setting of prominent features, settlements and transport corridors i) Enable new development without considering local distinctiveness j) Unable to consider relevant landscape related management plans in neighbouring jurisdictions

14. The objective for sustainable development is to protect, conserve and enhance built and cultural heritage.	
Rationale	
The historic environment and cultural heritage are resources that inform our history and bring character and sense of place. They also attract visitors and contribute to the economy and bring vibrancy to the places where we live, work and relax. This can be achieved by protecting and enhancing Conservation Areas, townscapes and other sites of historic and cultural value including their setting.	
Key issues	
▪ The Historic Environment and Cultural heritage play a role in maintaining and enhancing the sense of place in our settlements and rural locations which can be supported by building design recognising historic environment evidence in both urban and rural locations. ▪ Heritage assets are at risk from neglect, decay, development pressures and vacancy. ▪ Heritage at Risk should continue to be identified and efforts made to maintain their regular use and/or support their restoration. ▪ The Council area's rich cultural and heritage assets can contribute to a high-quality built environment that helps to create attractive places for living, investing in and visiting. ▪ The Council area contains centres, villages and towns which each have a unique sense of place, and character. Protecting this sense of place aspect has benefits for people and their pride in their community. ▪ Protecting built heritage features and recognising their value extends beyond listing and enforcement. Consideration should be given to the setting of those features, and the scale and context of surrounding buildings. ▪ The Council area has a rich archaeological heritage, and this could be further explored through identifying new Areas of Archaeological Potential. ▪ The Navan Fort Complex is of sufficient importance to merit its inclusion on the tentative list for nomination as a World Heritage Site. Development in this area should be managed to support nomination. ▪ The Council area has a rich industrial heritage through milling, linen and textiles production, its 18th and 19th Century transport engineering and defence heritage associated with World War II. ▪ Opportunities to link these heritage assets with present-day uses could be explored. ▪ Appreciating the value of built heritage should also apply to new buildings. ▪ There is ongoing loss of certain non-designated heritage assets such as historic farmsteads and buildings in the countryside, industrial and defence heritage, and historic shopfronts in some towns and settlements. Non-designated buildings which are of heritage or architectural importance in the context of overall landscape, townscape or heritage value should be recognised for their role in conserving these settings. ▪ A number of Conservation Areas and Townscape Character Areas may be at risk of flooding both with and without the effects of climate change. ▪ There may be opportunities to maintain or reflect historic routeways and townland boundaries. ▪ Traffic pollution, air quality, noise pollution and other problems are affecting the historic environment.	
Appraisal Prompts	
Positive Effects	Negative Effects
a) Protect and conserve built and cultural heritage b) Protects and/or enhances built and cultural heritage c) Allow 'sense of place' to be conserved in townscape and rural settings d) Protect and enhance local distinctiveness e) Allow archaeological features to be assessed, recorded and preserved f) Preserve and enhance the setting of cultural heritage assets	j) Loss of built and cultural heritage k) Deterioration of built and cultural heritage l) Lose 'sense of place' in townscape and rural settings m) Reduce local distinctiveness n) Archaeological features not assessed, recorded and preserved o) Damage the setting of cultural heritage assets

g) Support access to, interpretation of and understanding of the historic environment	p) Reduce access to, interpretation of and understanding of the historic environment
h) Enable assessment of impacts of development on complex and extensive archaeological sites adjacent to settlements	q) Impacts of development on complex and extensive archaeological sites adjacent to settlements not understood
i) Provide opportunities for cultural activities	r) Decrease opportunities for cultural activities

APPENDIX 6: CONSULTATION BODY COMMENTS ON THE SCOPING REPORT TEMPLATE

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
General Comments	DAERA: NIEA 15/11/2017	We are broadly content with the envisaged layout of the SEA report template. A number of baseline data sources and relevant strategies/reports are detailed in the Local Development Plans, DAERA Environmental Evidence and Information Guidance available at: https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/development-plan-evidence-guide-documents There is likely to be some overlap between the information required for the SEA assessment and the information that is gathered for technical LDP papers such as Countryside Assessments. However, it should be noted that we have not reviewed technical reports as part of this scoping consultation and there may be additional significant environmental issues affected by new development that should be considered in the environmental report such as cumulative loss of habitat or changes to air quality, both urban and rural. The scope and level of detail of information in the SEA should be proportionate to the content and purpose of the plan. Whilst regional or district based trends and indicators may help to assess certain high level and strategic aspects of the plans more detailed and spatially specific information would be required to assess other elements of the plan in particular any aspects of the plan with a spatial dimension or influence. The Development Plan Practice Note for Sustainability Appraisal incorporating SEA was produced by the former Department of the Environment in 2015. This document is intended to guide users through the key requirements of a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and SEA and deals primarily with procedures as well as good practice. Some of its content may be useful when developing the SEA documents associated with the LDP such as Preferred Options papers. http://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/advice/practicenotes/dp_practice_note_4_sa.pdf	Noted, data referred to in https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/daera-environmental-evidence-guide-may-2017.pdf has been accessed and, where available, information at council level has been sourced. The need to access more spatially specific information to inform spatial designations is noted and will be considered at Plan strategy.
Natural Resources	DAERA: NIEA 15/11/2017	We are broadly content with the envisaged layout of the SEA report template. We welcome the inclusion of Biodiversity, Green and Blue Infrastructure and Landscape within the scope of the Natural Resources SEA topic. We would expect that this will also include priority habitats and species. There are significant interactions between Biodiversity and the topics Health & Well-being, Physical Resources, Water, Air, Landscape and Climatic Factors. We acknowledge that most of the information required to inform the SEA will have been collected as part of the preparation of technical papers such as the Countryside Assessment.	The interactions between this topic and other objectives has been noted and section 5.11 updated. Appendix 7 provides baseline information about European and Ramsar sites. The need to access more spatially specific information (e.g. priority species and non-designated priority habitat) to inform spatial designations is noted

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		<u>Baseline Evidence</u> Information sources include: NIEA Natural Heritage Digital datasets which includes protected sites and priority habitats https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/download-digital-datasets Northern Ireland State of the Environment Report 2013 https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/state-environment-report-2013 Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report 2017 https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-environmentalstatistics-report-2017 National Ecosystems Assessment, Chapter 18 on Northern Ireland http://uknea.unepwcmc.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=m%2BvhAV3c9uk%3D&ta Priority species records can be obtained from the Centre for Environmental Data and Recording (CEDaR). These can be accessed by contacting CEDaR, National Museums NI, 153 Bangor Road, Cultra, Holywood, BT18 0EU. Website: http://www.nmni.com/cedar	and will be considered at Plan strategy
Water Natural Resources Historic Environment	DAERA: NIEA 15/11/2017	<u>Marine/Coastal</u> When taking any decision which relates to any function capable of affecting (or which might affect) the marine area, which is not an authorisation or enforcement decision, Section 58 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA) and Section 8 of the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013, require a public authority to have regard to the appropriate marine policy documents. This means that currently, in the preparation of your Local Development Plan and all of its associated documents, including the Sustainability Appraisal, you, as the Public Authority, are legislatively required to have regard to the UK Marine Policy Statement (UK MPS). Once adopted, you will also have to have regard to the Marine Plan for Northern Ireland (in addition to the UKMPS). Although Armagh City, Banbridge, Craigavon Council area is land locked, there is the potential to affect the marine area of Northern Ireland, for example, through hydrological systems. Careful attention must therefore be paid to the UK MPS and the Marine Plan for Northern Ireland (once adopted) alongside terrestrial planning documents, such as, the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS2). Consideration of the marine aspect is not limited to 'environment' related topic areas. There must also be a wider consideration of the potential impact both on and from the marine, in relation to social and economic SA topic areas. Therefore, you must have regard to the marine area across all SA topic areas in the preparation of your plan and all of its associated documents. Some specific points to consider are noted below: Pg. 10, 3.2 Principles, connected: include the marine area as a neighbouring area.	Details of the strategic context referred to have been included and Appendix 4 and/or Water or Natural Heritage topics where available. Reference to the NI Marine Plan will be updated once it is published.

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		Pg. 13, 3.11 Cumulative Effects: consideration of cumulative effects should include those on the marine area Pg. 14, 4.2 para.3 Preparation: The UK Marine Policy Statement and when, published, the Marine Plan for Northern Ireland, should be included here. Pg. 17, 5.2 Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies: The UK Marine Policy Statement and when, published, the Marine Plan for Northern Ireland, should be included here. Pg. 18, 5.3 Strategic Context: The UK Marine Policy Statement and when, published, the Marine Plan for Northern Ireland, should be included here. Pg. 33, Appendix 4: Both the UK MPS and the Marine Plan for Northern Ireland are cross cutting and therefore consideration should be given to marine aspects across all SA topic areas.	
Air Quality	DAERA: NIEA 15/11/2017	We are not sure to what degree air quality has been considered in technical papers accompanying the LDPs. A general list of things that should be considered in the SA/SEA in terms of air quality are: Recent Review and Assessment Reports of Air Quality by the Council which should include a review of recent trends in monitored levels of air pollutants and consider some of the points below: - Any Air Quality Action Plans that the Council currently has in place. - Any Air Quality Detailed Assessments that the Council has carried out. - The presence and location of Air Quality Management Areas. - The presence and location of Smoke Control Areas. - The consideration of road traffic (current and projected) and the influence that this has/could have on air pollutant levels. Local Air Quality Management Policy Guidance LAQM PG NI(09): http://www.airqualityni.co.uk/news-and-reports/useful-guidance Information is available at the website: www.airqualityni.co.uk which has many of the documents mentioned above, as well as the annual 'Air Pollution in Northern Ireland' report.	A variety of these sources were used in the Air quality topic. AQMAs have been referred to. Transport routes and vehicles, and types of journey made are referred to in the Transport section, which is cross-referenced with the Air Quality section. Transport routes and reliance on car also referred to in Air Quality. The 'Likely Evolution' section of the transport section has been updated to help reflect potential future traffic levels. This aspect is also noted for future plan stages. Transport strategies are in preparation by DfI and will also inform this section.
Noise	DAERA: NIEA 15/11/2017	We note that 'Noise' is one of the 'Health and Well-being' topics. Considerations should include: Noise maps for Northern Ireland that the Department has produced which can be found at https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/noise Relevant guidance and standards for noise as well as the Noise Policy statement: https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/doe/noise-policy-statement-ni.PDF The presence and location of any Quiet Areas.	Noise mapping data has been sourced and presented in the Health and Well-being section. There are no Quiet Areas in the Borough.

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
Historic Environment Division (HED)	DAERA: NIEA 15/11/2017	<u>Historic Environment</u> We note and welcome the inclusion of Historic Environment issues as a heading in your scoping template document and in Strategic Objective 14. The National Monuments and Buildings Record for Northern Ireland contains a great deal of information on the historic environment and Historic Environment Division (HED) encourage local authorities to utilize this resource in LDP preparation. We would highlight the following GIS spatial data evidence bases which are critical for use in your scoping exercise. The attached link https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/historic-environment-digital-datasets makes available spatial evidence on a wide variety of historic environment assets, including Scheduled and State Care monuments, which are afforded statutory protection under the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995 and Listed Buildings, afforded protection under Article 42 of the Planning Order 1991. Further datasets are available on the Sites and Monuments Record, Industrial Heritage, Historic Parks Gardens and Demesnes, Battle sites, Defence Heritage, ASAls and AAPs. Please ensure to recheck our datasets to download up to date versions as they are subject to change as new sites are designated or recognised. GIS spatial datasets on the marine historic environment, can be requested from Rory McNeary, rory.mcneary@daera-ni.gov.uk The Gazetteer of Nucleated Historic Settlements. Information on request from HED. This is the result of a programme of work undertaken by HED to identify historic settlement centres and from these in some cases, areas of archaeological potential, identifying new ones and potentially modifying others. While the zones are in draft it will nonetheless be a useful tool going forward in the LDP process. We will in due course supply some text in relation to each zone identified and the history of the settlement. This draft map https://dfcgis.maps.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=ec66f1afc1254c68bf301283d89fe426 also allows you to view ASAls in and draft candidate ASAls in your borough. Historic Ordnance Survey Mapping. We would also highlight the many other sites of heritage interest in your district which are not/are not yet listed in our records. These include historic boundaries such as townland and parish boundaries and some later historic cemeteries. The evidence used in populating your scoping report should cross reference to assessments and LDP documentation which your council area has already prepared (E.g. countryside assessment). The report should identify key characteristics of the historic environment and also demonstrate consideration, understanding and	Noted, the section on Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage has been expanded to reflect this input. Information is summarised however it is not considered proportionate to include very detailed information at this strategic stage of plan preparation. It will inform spatial considerations at a later stage. Appendix 3 is updated to reflect the comment that provision of good quality housing has an uncertain relationship and is not always compatible with the historic environment objectives. Information on marine and submerged archaeology has been sourced from DAERA, but no records relevant to this Council area are present.

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		awareness of international conventions, as well as local legislation and policies which provide protection for the historic environment in Northern Ireland. A document of particular worth in the preparation of your LDP would be the published <i>"An Archaeological Survey of County Armagh"</i>. HED highlight the importance of recognizing the relationship of the historic environment to other headings including health and well-being, education and economic growth (e.g. tourism), and sustainable use of physical resources. In relation to the compatibility matrix in Appendix 3 of your report we comment that Provision of good quality housing has an uncertain relationship and is not always compatible with the historic environment objectives. –For example new housing can sometimes lead to dereliction of historic stock, or large schemes might adversely impact on previously unrecorded archaeological remains. In relation to Appendix 2 we highlight that historic environment and landscape are intertwined as each have influenced the evolution of the other We further point out the very large number of strategic heritage assets in your area. Highlights include the historic towns of Armagh City, Banbridge and Dromore, the many State Care and scheduled monuments, which include Navan Fort and associated sites, the Danes Cast and the Newry Canal. Several of the settlement patterns in your district have their origins in the medieval period and the town of Armagh merits specific consideration as a settlement where complex and extensive below ground archaeological remains as well as historic fabric incorporated into later structures, are known to exist. HED have also identified a candidate ASAI around the earthworks at Lisnagade and Lisnavaragh. We stress the opportunity that the local development plan presents to realise the potential of the historic environment in your district, for economic, social and health and environmental benefits. HED maintain an independent role in relation to the drafting of LDPs and emphasise the importance of authorities being able to demonstrate how they have utilized the evidence on the historic environment in characterizing their landscape, and in considering zonings for development and forms of mitigation such as appropriate designation or key site requirements.	
Water Quality	DAERA: NIEA 15/11/2017	We are not sure to what degree water quality is considered in technical papers accompanying the LDPs. It is key that the Local Development Plan takes the statutory River Basin Management Plans into consideration and the achievement of the objectives therein. As a public body, the council has a duty to have regard to – (a) the River Basin Management Plan for that district; and	Noted, information on water quality specific to the Council was obtained from NIEA and incorporated in the Water section. Flooding has been addressed under the water and climatic factors topics

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		(b) any supplementary plan published under regulation 16 in exercising their duties. River Basin Management is a key element in implementing the Water Framework Directive (WFD), taking an integrated approach to the protection, improvement and sustainable use of the water environment. It applies to groundwater and to all surface water bodies, including rivers, lakes, transitional (estuarine) and coastal waters out to one nautical mile. Revised River Basin Management plans were published in December 2015. Updated information on the water quality classifications of surface waters and groundwater in the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon District Council area should be obtained from https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/water As part of the River Basin Planning process, a Programme of Measures has been established to detail the improvements required to meet 'Good' status, the actions required and the delivery mechanisms. The programme of measures aims to address the key pressures by concentrating efforts on those pressures that pose the greatest threat to the water environment. From pressure assessments conducted we have identified two significant sources of pressure preventing water bodies from achieving good status. These are diffuse pressures from agricultural sources and point source pressures from WWTWs and industrial discharges. Other pressures include: ▪ diffuse and point source pollution – pollution arising from a number of other sources including forestry, sediment, urban catchments, quarries & mines, waste & contaminated land and chemicals; ▪ water quantity and flow – taking too much water from rivers, lakes and groundwater which causes problems for wildlife, reduces the amount of water available for people to use and affects the environmental ecology; ▪ the physical condition of the water environment – man made changes to the natural habitat of rivers, lakes, estuaries and coastal waters, for example flood defences and weirs, and changes to the natural river channels for land drainage and navigation. These modifications alter natural flows, may cause excessive build-up of sediment, increase erosion, reduce the quality of habitats and may also present a barrier to fish movement; ▪ invasive alien species – the negative effects on the health of the water environment and native plants and animals from those species originating outside Northern Ireland and introduced to the Northern Ireland water environment; and ▪ other pressures – factors that affect fish populations and habitat not captured above. The Programme of Measures have been brigaded under topics and each of the documents are available from the	and was fully considered in appraisal. The RBMPs and FRMPs were reviewed and information incorporated into the scoping at a proportionate scale for this stage of the Plan process. SES will retain the main reference to flooding within the Water chapter, with the agreement of DfI Rivers Agency.

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		DAERA web-site, under the following Programme of Measures topic headings: Agriculture; Sewage & Industry; Forestry; Sediment; Urban Catchment; Quarries & Mines including Oil & Gas exploration; Waste & Contaminated land; Chemicals; Abstraction & Flow Regulation; Morphology; Invasive Alien Species; and Fisheries. The SA/SEA should be proportionate in assessing these measures against the likely impact of Local Development Plan documents. A full list of the measures has been included as an Annex to this letter, for ease of future reference. <u>Waste Water Treatment Provision</u> A technical paper for the LDP (or the SA/SEA) should identify all the waste water treatment works (WWTW's) and sewerage networks in your Council area and assess them against their current capacity, and environmental performance, and ▪ their predicated capacity during the lifetime of the Local Development Plan. This information should be aligned with Northern Ireland Waters infrastructure investment strategy set out in their price Control processes and the Long Term Water Strategy. ▪ Sustainable Water – A Long Term Water Strategy for Northern Ireland ▪ PC15 (NIW's draft expenditure plan 2015-2021). This information should be used proportionately in the different stages of the LDP SA/SEA process. At some stage in the process suitable mitigation measures may be required to ensure the zoning of land and the timing of the release of that land for development is aligned with the availability of suitable waste water treatment infrastructure to service the developments to ensure there is adequate protection for the water environment. Please contact the SEA Team at seateam@daera-ni.gov.uk should you have any queries or require clarification.	
Historic Environment	DfC Historic Environment SEA Team 23/02/2026	HED have considered the content of the scoping report and overall consider it to provides a thorough scoping and review of historic environment evidence in respect of the cultural heritage of the borough. We note and welcome the example table included in Appendix 4 in respect of plans and programmes which will be used going forward. Should council wish to seek any comment on future draft potential inclusions of programmes in respect of the Historic Environment we would be happy to consider and advise on these.	Noted.
Natural Environment Division (NED)	DAERA: NIEA 23/02/2026	We note that transboundary considerations have been incorporated into the Scoping report. Cross border designated sites with pathways to/from the Republic of Ireland, priority habitats, river basins, and other landscape types also require special attention as ecological	

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		functionality and ‘views’ of landscape cross political boundaries. UK’s new national network of SAC’s and SPAs which replaced the ‘Natura 2000’ network. Please note following the decision of the United Kingdom to leave the European Union, the collective term of “Natura 2000” sites the network of European protected sites are now known as “National Site Network” sites within the United Kingdom, including Northern Ireland.	Amended to include National Site Network.
General	NIEA Natural Environment Division 23/02/2026	“From Evidence to Opportunity” is Northern Ireland’s second State of the Environment report. The first report “Our environment, our heritage, our future” was published in 2008 and presented baseline indicators across six themes to provide an evidence-based assessment of the state of the environment. The introduction of annual Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics reports in 2009 means that we now have an extensive set of indicators on the Northern Ireland environment. Northern Ireland State of the Environment Reports: https://www.daerani.gov.uk/publications/state-environment-report-2013 DAERA National Statistics report is intended to be the first reference point for a range of environmental indicators and will provide, where available, annual updates on the indicators contained within it. It is of both public and academic interest and provides a valuable resource across government in providing links to government strategies. Appropriate Assessments should refer to the status of habitats and species in the relevant reports available on the JNCC website as follows: UK Article 17 report for the Habitats Directive https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/article-17-habitats-directive-report-2019/ and the UK Article 12 report for the Birds Directive https://jncc.gov.uk/ourwork/european-reporting/#birds-directive-reporting It may be worth also including in your considerations the following:	A draft HRA will be published alongside the final SA report at the draft Plan Strategy stage. The HRA will consider potential impacts of the LDP on all potentially affected SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites that make up the new network of sites under UK jurisdiction as well as any sites located in the RoI. Noted. Legal requirements and responsibilities are already defined in law and are outside the scope of a Sustainability Appraisal.

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		• The Environment (NI) Order 2002 • The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 • Biodiversity Strategy for NI to 2020 • Draft Environment Strategy • The Draft NI peatland policy: • The Draft Green Growth Strategy Consultation on the draft Green Growth Strategy for Northern Ireland • Northern Ireland Energy Strategy 2050 Page 25 refers to a baseline statistical report for the borough, and it would be useful to have access to this document. The report also references Super Output Areas (SOAs) to support small-area statistical reporting. As there are 890 SOAs in Northern Ireland, it would be helpful to clarify how many lie within the Council area and whether they can be used to support baseline development.	Reported updated to address this comment.
Natural Resources/ Climate Change/ Water Resources/ Transport and Accessibility	DAERA Natural Environment Division 23/02/2026	A number of useful information sources that highlight the current state of the environment in Northern Ireland at a regional level and which could be referenced are: • Northern Ireland State of the Environment Reports: https://www.daerani.gov.uk/publications/state-environment-report-2013 • Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Reports: https://www.daerani.gov.uk/articles/northern-ireland-environmental-statistics-report Other relevant web-links are; • Designated Scientific Sites: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/landing-pages/protected-areas • Regional Landscape Character Map viewer: https://www.daerani.gov.uk/services/regional-landscape-character-areas-map-viewer DAERA have a map browser for NI protected sites and known priority habitat:	Noted – these documents have been used in preparation of the Scoping report

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		www.daera-ni.gov.uk/services/natural-environment-map-viewer Our natural environment datasets are available at the link below: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/download-digital-datasets	
Natural Resources	DAERA Natural Environment Division 23/02/2026	We welcome the recognition of the importance of peatland preservation for carbon storage and biodiversity. We would reiterate the importance of protecting and preserving these ecosystems – see the NI Peatland Strategy. It should be noted that disturbance of these ecosystems, even for the use of renewable electricity generation, can have a negative impact on the environment. In some cases, it has been shown that the release of GHG from disturbed organic peatland soils has released more than would be saved from the renewable energy generation project. The council should be mindful of this potential effect in further drafts of the LDP process. We also welcome the statements within the biodiversity objective highlighting the potential to enhance the Council's green/blue infrastructure network through improved connectivity of green and open spaces, development of greenways, and investment in the canal network. The emphasis on sustainable land use and multifunctional ecosystems services is also positive, as these actions can enhance natural resources, support wildlife habitat, and promote public engagement with nature.	Noted.
Water Resources	DAERA Drinking Water Inspectorate 23/02/2026	With regards to Section Water, it should be emphasised that the water environment, made of groundwater, surface water and watercourses can also be used as drinking water (both through public supply utilised by Northern Ireland Water) and private supplies (boreholes, wells and springs) or as a component in industrial processes. There appears to be no consideration to The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 and The Private Water Supplies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017, both of which are regulated by the DWI. We would appreciate if the plan would take due regard to Public and Private Water Supplies: Public Water Supplies: Consultation with the primary water undertaker Northern Ireland Water Ltd (NI Water) is routinely encouraged as all catchments are	Chapter 5.11 has been updated to consider these comments. Noted

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		considered as Drinking Water Protection Areas (DWPAs) under Article 7 of the Water Framework Directive. The nationwide basins are utilised by NI Water to provide the public supply of water. Consideration should be given to the location of any infrastructure and protection of DWPAs. If public drinking sources could be impacted, mitigation actions must be provided to ensure quality and sufficiency of supply. Private Water Supplies: A development must not impact on either the quality or sufficiency of a private water supply, and mitigation measures must be put in place, where required, in the protection of such drinking water supplies. Therefore dependent on the scale, type, location and the potential impacts the proposal may have on such supplies the developer should, if appropriate, undertake a scoping exercise to determine the location of any private water supplies. Please note that DWI also publish independent water quality reports for Northern Ireland and are available on the DAERA website: Drinking Water Quality in Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs. It is recommended these are viewed alongside the NIW reports for the same calendar year.	
Water Resources	DAERA Water Catchment Unit 23/02/2026	The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) should consider all issues in relation to the aquatic environment during all aspects / phases in relation to the implementation of the Draft Plan Strategy for Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council. Impacts that should be considered include, (but may not limited to), those relating to water quality, water quantity, hydromorphology. Assessment should consider all potential impacts both direct and indirect. It is important the SA consider the potential for any transboundary impact to the aquatic environment in the Republic of Ireland. In cases where this is identified, cross border river basins should be given special attention as ecological functionality cross jurisdictional boundaries. NI/ROI migratory/mobile species such as salmon can be impacted by water quality / water quantity. <u>Plans and Programmes</u> River Basin Management Plans are the key tools for implementing the Water Framework Directive and to	Noted. Section 5.11 sets out the detailed consideration of the water environment. The Scoping Report recognises transboundary matters, particularly in relation to designated sites, river basins, and ecological connectivity across the NI/ROI border. Noted

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		achieving its objectives. If the potential for impacts to the aquatic environment in Northern Ireland are identified, then the NI River Basin Management Plans must be considered during the SA process. DAERA has published the River Basin Management Plan for the 3rd cycle period which runs from 2021-2027. The plan provides an update on the health of Northern Ireland's water environment (the status of water bodies) and sets out our targets (objectives) and actions (programme of measures) on how we want to improve our water environment in the next six years. The plan covers the North Western, Neagh Bann and North Eastern river basin districts (RBD) and includes detailed status updates on each RBD. The River Basin Management Plan for the 3rd cycle contains information relating to Plans & Projects (which are key for 3rd cycle RBMP), Links to the plan, policies and strategies and the Programme of Measures for the 3rd Where the potential for transboundary impacts to the aquatic environment have been identified then due consideration must also be given to the relevant Irish River Basin Management Plans. <u>Baseline Information.</u> Several useful information sources are available that highlight the current state of the environment in Northern Ireland at a regional level which could be referenced including the Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report the latest of which currently is dated May 2025. Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Reports: https://www.daerani.gov.uk/articles/northern-ireland-environmental-statistics-report DAERA issued a consultation document on Significant Water Management Issues to inform the development of the third cycle River Basin Management Plan (2021-2027). This gives further consideration of the pressures and their sources on water quality in Northern Ireland Further details on this issue can be found at Planning for the third cycle River Basin Management Plan 2021-2027 - Consultation on Significant Water Management Issues December 2019 Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (daerani.gov.uk) Also with regard to Northern Ireland Baseline Information and Data Sources DAERA have two map viewers in relation to the aquatic environment that may be of use, Water Information Request Web Viewer and NIEA Catchment Data Map Viewer both of which can be found at https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/daera-map-viewers	Added to PPP list Noted Noted

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
Air Quality and Biodiversity	DAERA Air Quality and Biodiversity Unit 23/02/2026	NIEA - Natural Environment Division's Air Quality and Biodiversity Unit (AQBU) have the following comments: AQBU welcomes the objectives to protect and enhance biodiversity and to improve air quality. Consideration should be given to the impact of the Plan on sensitive habitats and species. The Air Pollution Information System (APIS) provides information on the impacts of air pollutants such as agricultural ammonia, nitrogen oxides and resulting nitrogen deposition on sensitive habitats and species. The map feature within APIS enables detailed information to be provided on the Critical Levels/Loads for each qualifying feature and background levels of these pollutants: www.apis.ac.uk/app	Noted
Water Resources	DAERA Marine Fisheries Division 23/02/2026	Strategic Context, Review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies, including Appendix 4 The Scoping Report refers to the UK Marine Policy Statement (UK MPS), the UK Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 (MCAA) and the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 in Section 1.25.5. The Marine Plan for Northern Ireland is included in the section heading and should be referenced within the section itself. The report acknowledges the Borough's indirect connectivity to the marine environment via its watercourses and river systems. This is welcomed considering there is no distinction made within marine legislation, namely the Marine Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 and the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, between public authorities that have a coastal area of responsibility or tidal watercourse/s and those that do not. It is important that marine legislation and marine policy documents are considered under any review of Policies, Plans, Programmes and Strategies. It is noted section 1.40.1 does not reference the UK Marine Strategy or its associated regulations. It is important that those elements of the UK Marine Strategy which are not addressed through the Water Framework Regulations (WFD) are fully considered and incorporated. The UK Marine Strategy sets out the framework for the achievement of good environmental status in our marine	Updated and reference in para 4.3.5 Note and considered in section 5.11. Requested additions have been made.

SA Topic	Date	Comments	How addressed
		and coastal waters. In coastal waters which extend out to 1 nautical mile, both WFD and the Marine Strategy Regulations 2010 apply. However, in these areas the Marine Strategy Regulations only applies for aspects of good environmental status that are not already addressed by WFD. This includes issues such as certain aspects of biodiversity, which will need considered as part of the Sustainability Appraisal Report. Issues identified should be drawn out and reflected within the <i>Key Sustainability Issues</i>, where appropriate. It is further recommended the current reference to '<i>pollution problems at beaches</i>' is broadened to '<i>pollution problems at beaches and in marine and coastal waters often arise from within upstream river catchments</i>' (pg 108). <u>Baseline information</u> Consideration should be given to including baseline information (section 1.40.2) from the UK Marine Strategy, particularly in relation to coastal waters. The report should recognise the potential for indirect effects from Wastewater Treatment Works capacity issues, settlements that are reliant on private septic tanks and settlements that have no network / catchment capacity, as effluent discharges into a drainage field or soakaway system, thereby mixing with ground water and river systems.	Noted and amendments made to add this in Section 5.11

INTERESTED IN DEVELOPMENT

in the Armagh City,
Banbridge and
Craigavon Borough

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