

Appendices

Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021

- Appendix 3** Louth Housing Strategy
- Appendix 4** Development Management Guidelines for ACA's
- Appendix 5** Architectural Conservation Areas
- Appendix 6** Characteristics of Vernacular Buildings
- Appendix 7** Ardee ACA Character Appraisal
- Appendix 8** Guidelines for Works in ACA's
- Appendix 9** A Guide to ACA's in Louth
- Appendix 10** Ardee ACA
- Appendix 11** Views and Prospects
- Appendix 12** Louth Retail Strategy
- Appendix 13** Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- Appendix 14** Green Infrastructure Strategy
- Appendix 15** Procedures for Taking in Charge recently completed Housing Estates
- Appendix 16** Tree Protection
- Appendix 17** Areas of Special Archaeological Interest

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

Executive Summary

Page No.

1.0	Introduction	1
1.1	Methodology	1
1.2	Review of Part V	2
2.0	Housing Context	2
2.1	Statutory Background	2
2.2	Policy Background	2
2.2.1	National Spatial Policy (NSS) 2002-2020 & Implementing the National Spatial Policy Update & Outlook	2
2.2.2	Border Regional Authority: Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022	3
2.2.3	Part V of the Planning & Development Act 2000- Housing Supply A Model Housing Strategy	3
2.2.4	Housing Policy Statement (2011)	3
2.2.5	Circular Housing 11/2012 Review of Part V of the Planning & Development Act (as amended) DECLG, 2012	4
2.2.6	National Housing Strategy for people with a Disability 2011-2016	4
2.2.7	Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Cities Towns & Villages 2009	4
2.2.8	Delivering Homes, Sustainable Communities- Policy Statement 2007	4
2.2.9	Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020	5
3.0	Population & Housing Trends	5
3.1	Population & Housing Growth	5
3.2	Demographic Profile	7
3.3	Current & Future Outlook	8

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

4.0	Housing Demand	10
4.1	Introduction	10
4.2	Population & Household Projections	10
4.3	Disposable Income Projections	13
4.4	House Price Assessment & Projection	17
4.5	Household Affordability	19
4.6	Reflections on Part V Requirement	30
5.0	Housing Supply	31
5.1	Introduction	31
5.2	Housing Permitted and Completed	31
5.3	Housing Targets	32
5.4	Land Supply	34
5.5	Unfinished Housing Estates Survey	34
5.6	Social & Affordable Housing Provision	34
5.7	Meeting Social & Specialist Housing Demand	35
5.8	Provision of Social Housing under Part V	35
5.9	Rental Accomodation Scheme, Leasing Initiatives & Housing Assistance	36
5.10	Provision of Social Housing with Voluntary Bodies & Housing Co-Operatives	36
5.11	Casual Vacancies	37
5.12	Homeless Persons	37
5.13	Purchase of New or Second Hand Dwellings	38
5.14	Traveller Accomodation Needs	38
5.15	Persons with Disabilities/The Elderly	41
6.0	Housing Strategy	42
6.1	Introduction	42
6.2	Key Principles of the Housing Strategy	42
6.3	Housing Policies	42
6.4	Strategy Implementation	44

List of Figures

Figure 1.1	State Age/ Population Profile 2011	6
Figure 2.1	Louth Age/Population Profile 2011	7

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

List of Tables

Table 1.1	Louth & Border Region Population Analysis 1996-2011	5
Table 1.2	House Completions in County Louth 1996-2011	8
Table 1.3	County Louth Population Projections 2012-2024	10
Table 1.4	Identified Housing Requirement County Louth 2021-2024	12
Table 1.5	Estimated Distributions of Household Disposable Incomes for County Louth, 2011	14
Table 1.6	Average Annual Disposable Income for County Louth, 2011-2024	15
Table 1.7	Average Monthly Disposable Income County Louth, 2012-2024	16
Table 1.8	Affordability Analysis and Associated Affordable Housing Demand 2008-2024	18
Table 1.9	Approximate Affordable Housing prices in County Louth, 2012-2024	20
Table 1.10	Required Additional Households in County Louth 2012-2024	21
Table 1.11	Calculation of Anticipated Social Housing Need in County Louth 2012-2024	23
Table 1.12	Summary of Anticipated Social Housing Need in County Louth 2012-2024	29
Table 1.13	House Completions by Type County Louth 2005-2012	31
Table 1.14	Annual Planning Permission Granted in County Louth between 2007-2011	32
Table 1.15	Summary of Louth Population/Housing Land Requirements By 2021	33
Table 1.16	Social Housing Supply for County Louth 2014-11-21	35
Table 1.17	Voluntary & Co-Operative Housing for County Louth 2006-2011	37
Table 1.18	Facilities for Homeless in County Louth	38
Table 1.19	Tenant Purchase Sales 2009-2013	38
Table 1.20	Louth County Council Traveller Accommodation Programme 2000-2013	39
Table 1.21	Progress on Implementation of 2009-2013 Programme	39
Table 1.22	Assessment of Need 2013- Traveller Families	40
Table 1.23	Targets for Delivery of Social Housing 2014-2018	41

Executive Summary

Louth County Council in conjunction with Future Analytics Consulting Ltd undertook to prepare the Housing Strategy 2015-2021 for Louth County Council, which will inform the ongoing process of preparing a new County Development Plan for the corresponding period.

The purpose of this report is to outline the key steps undertaken in this process and to highlight subsequent findings relating to population and future housing projections, and the calculation of Part V requirements.

The main findings and recommendations of this report include the following:

- In accordance with the **Border Regional Authority Planning Guidelines**, the population of Louth is projected to increase to approximately 132,648 persons by 2016 and 142,800 persons by 2022. The calculated population increase over the period 2012-2022 is 19,903 persons, the equivalent of 1,809 persons per annum. The specific population growth figure for the plan period is 10,689 persons or 1,781 persons per annum;
- When population growth is translated into future housing requirements, it is envisaged that a total of 7,422 units will need to be provided between 2012-2022, an average of 675 units per annum. The housing requirement for 2015-2021 is 4,001 units, or an average of 667 units per annum;
- The average household size in County Louth is expected to fall from 2.80 in 2011 to 2.70 by 2016, and further to 2.58 by 2022. This reduction in household size will result in pressure for more units to accommodate expected population growth, as well as potential variability in unit type and size;
- Approximately one third of the households in Louth have an average disposable income of €16,314 (about 313.73 per week);
- The calculated social housing need for Louth County between 2012-2022 is 909 units (475 units between 2015-2021). On average there is likely to be a 12% shortfall in the delivery of social housing over this period and this report recommends that Louth County Council set a requirement of a minimum of 12% of units on all land zoned for residential uses for the purpose of social/specialised housing.

1.0 Introduction

The Housing Strategy has been prepared by Louth County Council with the quantitative analysis and modelling element informed by **Future Analytics Consulting Ltd**, to meet the statutory requirements set out under the **Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended)** and in particular Part V of the said Act. It also contains relevant provisions contained within the **Housing (Miscellaneous Provision) Act 2009**.

This Housing Strategy relates to the period 2015-2021, which is the lifetime of the forthcoming Louth County Development Plan and will replace the current **Housing Strategy 2007**.

The principle aim of a housing strategy is to ensure that the proper planning and sustainable development of the area of the Development Plan provides for the housing of the existing and future population of the county in an appropriate manner. Within this the Planning Authority has a statutory obligation to address the needs for social and specialist housing and ensure that sufficient land is zoned for housing over the period of its Plan.

1.1 Methodology

During the years since the current **Louth Housing Strategy 2007** was adopted, there have been fundamental changes in the economy and in particular in the Irish housing market, with many assumptions underpinning the previous strategy having changed considerably. Uncertainty in the market, the changing nature of housing demand, including but not limited to income, interest rates, demographics etc are key aspects which underpin the current housing market and the applied methodology considers these aspects in detail, providing a robust and credible basis for the assessment of future housing need in Louth.

This Louth Housing Strategy has been prepared in accordance with national guidance and legislation with the aim of addressing the following:

- To ensure the future supply of housing in Louth is sufficient to meet planned population growth,
- To ensure that adequate housing is available for persons of different income levels,
- To ensure a mixture of house types and sizes to match the requirements of different households,
- To address the need for social housing in Louth.

In line with statutory requirements contained within the **Department of Environment, Community & Local Government (DECLG) guidance "Development Plans – Guidelines for Planning Authorities"**, Louth County Council has an obligation to ensure that sufficient zoned land is available to meet residential needs for the next 9 years and this strategy therefore covers the period until 2014.

It is intended that this document is both succinct and readable for all. Outlined in the next chapter is a brief overview of the statutory and policy background informing this Housing Strategy and placing it in context.

1.2 Review of Part V

In June 2011, the government published a 'Housing Policy Statement' to act as a framework addressing short to medium term issues in the housing market (including standing down of affordable housing) and **Circular Housing 11/2012** stating that a review of Part V of the Planning & Development Act 2000-2010 was underway with interim advice to planning authorities on how to avoid additional funding pressures in meeting their obligations in relation to Part V. These are detailed in Chapter 2 below.

2.0 Housing Context

2.1 Statutory Background

Part V of the **Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended)** requires that each Planning Authority prepares a Housing Strategy which is to both inform and be integrated into its Development Plan.

The purpose of the Housing Strategy is to essentially:

- Ensure that sufficient zoned and serviced lands for residential purposes are available in appropriate locations to meet the requirements of the Housing Strategy and the existing and future housing demand including social and affordable housing,
- Ensure that housing is available to people of different income levels and determine the distribution of this housing,
- Ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is developed to reasonably match the requirements of the different categories of households, including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities,
- Counteract undue segregation in housing between people of different social backgrounds,
- Provide that a specific percentage (not exceeding 20%) of the land zoned in the Development Plan for residential use or a mixture of residential and other uses, shall be reserved for those in need of social or specialist housing in the area.

2.2 Policy Background:

2.2.1 National Spatial Strategy (NSS) 2002-2020 & Implementing the National Spatial Strategy: 2010 Update and Outlook

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) sets out a twenty year planning framework for a strategically focused planning system and seeking the future sustainable development of Ireland, which aims to achieve more balanced social, economic and physical development coupled with population growth

throughout the regions. The NSS introduced the concept of Gateways and Hubs. Herein, Dundalk was identified as a Gateway for this part of the border Region.

The NSS update and Outlook Report, re-affirms Government commitment to implementing this long term planning framework, coupled with new policies and objectives. The NSS requires that **Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG's)** are implemented throughout the country. For Louth, the applicable Regional Planning Guidelines are for the Border Region 2010-2022.

2.2.2 Border Regional Authority: Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022

This is a long term strategic planning document which aims to direct the future growth of the Border Region implementing the planning framework set out in the **National Spatial Strategy (NSS)** published in 2002 and securing the successful implementation of the NSS at the regional, county and local level. This is achieved through an evaluation of the elements involved in ensuring proper planning and sustainable development such as integrating land use, transport, economic growth, investment and the environment. The Guidelines provide population and housing targets for each planning area in the region, which must be incorporated by local authorities into their development plans through the **Core Settlement Strategy**.

2.2.3 Part V of the Planning & Development Act 2000 – Housing Supply – A Model Housing Strategy and Step by Step Guide (2000)

This was a model approach designed to aid local authorities in preparing housing strategies as required under Part V of the **Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)**. Part V required that local authorities prepare Housing Strategies and for these to be incorporated into Development Plans. Agreements under Part V were between developers and the Planning Authority on how to meet the obligations as specified under Part V. It also provided that local authorities could obtain up to a maximum of 20% of land zoned for housing for the delivery of social and affordable housing.

2.2.4 Housing Policy Statement (2011)

The strategic objective of this Policy Statement is to enable all households access to good quality housing, appropriate to household circumstances and in the community of their choice. The following outlines a number of the measures proposed therein:

- More equitable treatment of housing tenure,
- Advocates new mechanisms for the delivery of permanent social housing,
- Transfer to local authorities of responsibility for long term recipients of rent supplement,
- Standing down of all affordable housing schemes,
- Formal review of Part V.

As outlined above and of particular relevance, the Statement announced a full review of Part V of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended) in addition to a step down in affordable housing schemes, which is being undertaken in recognition of the current market conditions.

2.2.5 Circular Housing 11/2012: Review of Part V of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 (as amended) (DECLG 2012)

The **DECLG** are undertaking a review of Part V of the **Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended)** in order to consider how best during the current housing market conditions, planning gain can still be achieved regarding sourcing social housing supports. **Circular 11/2012 (February)** states that while local authorities should examine all the options available to comply with the statutory requirements of Part V, that pending the review of same that Part V obligations should be executed in a manner that places no additional funding pressures on local authorities. This includes for:

- Financial contribution,
- Reduced number of units,
- Land in lieu.

2.2.6 National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011-2016

This Strategy was introduced to meet the housing needs of those with disabilities and is supported in the Governments Housing Policy Statement (referenced above) as part of a framework of initiatives to provide for the housing needs of households which are vulnerable or disadvantaged. The term disability includes four categories of disability ie sensory, mental health, physical and intellectual disability. The Strategy, referring to census 2006 data, details the number of people with disabilities in each local authority area, with 9.4% (10,414 persons) of Louth's population having a disability. The 2011 census figure now identifies that 13% (15,932 persons) of Louth's population have a disability.

2.2.7 Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas – Cities, Towns and Villages 2009

This focuses on creating sustainable communities by incorporating the highest design standards and ensuring a co-ordinated approach to the provision of infrastructure and services to provide for a quality living environment. In proximity to public transport increased densities are promoted. A **Best Practice Urban Design Manual** supports the Guidelines, setting out appropriate standards and best practice examples.

2.2.8 Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities – Policy Statement 2007

This aims to transform the housing sector through inter alia:

- Building sustainable communities,
- Responding to housing need that improves choice and offers support by taking account of the households position in the life cycle,
- Effective delivery of housing programmes.

2.2.9 Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020

This Policy was published recognising the need for investment in transport to ensure an efficient economy and continued social development. It highlights the need to encourage people to choose sustainable transport modes such as cycling, walking and public transport. Integrated land use and transportation planning is a means of achieving greater efficiencies, improved accessibility and reduced emissions and promotes housing to towns and villages where there is appropriate public transport connections.

3.0 Population & Housing Trends

3.1 Population & Housing Growth

Between 1996 and 2011 the population of the State increased from 3,626,087 to 4,581,267 persons, a growth rate of almost 26%. At 26.4%, population growth in the Border Region was very much on par with the national growth experienced over the same period 1996-2011.

A comparison of Louth's population performance relative to other counties in the Border Region reveals that in terms of levels of growth in the period 2006-2011, County Louth (10.5%) was only surpassed by County Cavan (14.3%) over that period. This trend should be framed in the context of actual growth over that time – Louth's percentage share of the total population growth in the Border Region only increased very marginally from 23.5% in 2002 to 23.86% in 2011. As is evident from Table 1 below, Louth's percentage change relative to the other counties within the Border Region was greatest between 1996 and 2002. Since then, during the period 2002-2006, Louth experienced only the third largest percentage growth change in the Region (9.3%) after first Cavan (13.2%) and second Leitrim (12.2%). This marginally improved during the period 2006-2011, where Louth experienced the second highest percentage growth change in the Region (10.5%) after Cavan (14.3%)

Table 1.1: Louth and Border Region Population Analysis 1996-2011

Area of Border Region	Population 1996	Population 2002	Population 2006	Population 2011	% Change 96-02	% Change 02-06	% Change 06-11	Overall % Change 96-11
Cavan	52,944	56,546	64,003	73,183	6.8	13.2	14.3	38.22
Donegal	129,994	137,575	147,264	161,137	5.8	7.0	9.4	23.95
Leitrim	25,057	25,799	28,950	31,798	3.0	12.2	9.8	26.90
Louth	92,166	101,821	111,267	122,897	10.5	9.3	10.5	33.34

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

Monaghan	51,313	52,593	55,997	60,483	2.5	6.5	8.0	17.87
Sligo	55,821	58,200	60,894	65,393	4.3	4.6	7.4	17.14 xx
Total	407,295	432,534	468,375	514,891	6.2	8.3	9.9	26.41

Source: Amalgamation of CSO data

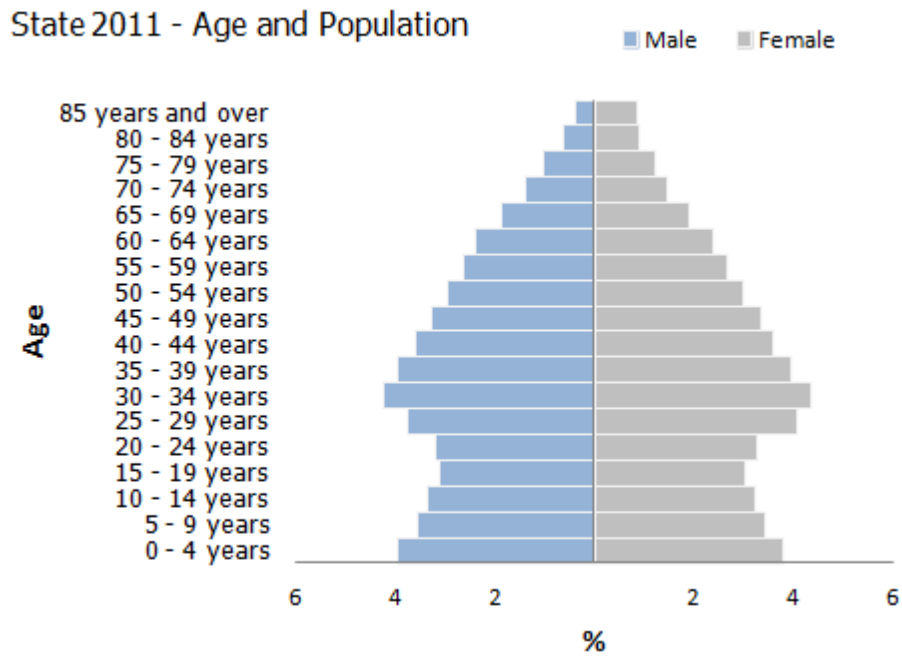


Figure 1.1: State Age / Population Profile 2011

Appendix 3 Louth Housing Strategy

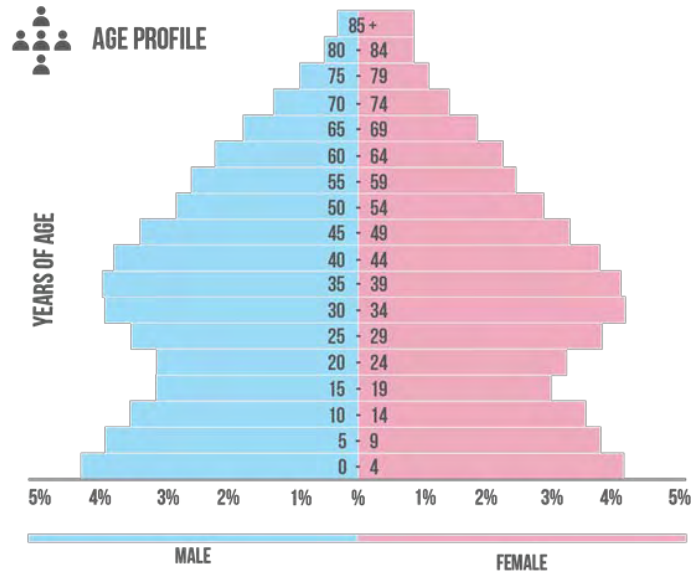


Figure 1.2: Louth Age / Population Profile 2011

3.2 Demographic Profile

The above provides a comparison between the State and County demographic profiles. From the above, it is evident that Louth boasts a high percentage of children in the 0-4 age cohort and also a high percentage of adults in the 25-29, 30-34, 35-39 and 40-44 age cohorts which would indicate that Louth has a high proportion of young families. In terms of the older age cohorts, Louth lies below that of the state.

The major settlements in County Louth, namely those identified within the settlement hierarchy of the **Regional Planning Authority: Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2010-2022** and the Louth County Development Plan, all experienced an increase in population between 2002-2011.

Housing delivery is often considered to be an immediate reflection of prevailing market conditions within an area – an indicator of how the market operates and fluctuates in real time. Generally, from the late 1990's until the economic collapse in 2007, Ireland experienced strong housing demand influenced by population growth, a reduction in household formation rates alongside net immigration. In addition to the above there were other factors including an increase in the buy to let market, divorce rates and higher income levels resulting in trade ups. This was reflected in County Louth which witnessed a fall in average house size in the County from 3.30 in 1996 to 2.8 in 2011.

Between 1996 and 2011, the number of houses built within the County is evidenced in Table 1.2

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

It is clearly evident that house completions were greatest between the period 2002 and 2006 and thereafter, house completions in the County fell dramatically.

Table 1.2: House Completions in County Louth 1996 - 2011

House Completions (All Sectors) Louth County Council	
Year	Number
1996	969
1997	1191
1998	1171
1999	1581
2000	1513
2001	2046
2002	1923
2003	2288
2004	2328
2005	2195
2006	2251
2007	1654
2008	1413
2009	763
2010	404
2011	257
Total	23,947

3.3 Current & Future Outlook

Significant challenges remain in the housing market nationally. The latest research from Daft.ie (Daft .ie House Price Report Q1 2014) indicated that in the 1st Qtr of 2014 that Dublin still dominates in the housing market but that it would be incorrect to assume that house prices are still in decline in the remainder of the country. Whilst the year on year change outside Dublin remains negative (at -3.3%), this 12 month period masks an increase between January and March 2014 of 2.3%, which is the first quarter on quarter rise in list prices since 2007. This price figure is unsurprising when taken in conjunction with figures on supply which have fallen from 54,000 in March 2012 to 33,000 in March 2014. In the first quarter of 2014 there has been a year on year increase in asking prices of 1.3% in County Louth. Indeed within Leinster, Dublin's commuter counties saw a year on year rise in asking prices for the first time since 2007, whereas elsewhere in the province, they were lower than a year ago.

It should be noted that relative to the remainder of the country excluding Dublin, that asking prices in Louth are the fifth highest in the country only after, in order; Wicklow, Cork City, Meath and Galway City.

Appendix 3 Louth Housing Strategy

The current average asking price for a 1 bedroom apartment in Louth is approximately €54,000, a three bed semi-detached house is approximately €99,000, whilst a 5 bed detached house is circa €263,000. These figures compare favourably with the remainder of the country (outside of Dublin and the major cities and Kildare, Meath and Wicklow)

There is a general consensus that market momentum will gather pace as part of the envisaged recovery of the economy. In the longer term localised demographic factors, lower occupancy rates may require a revised approach to housing provision in the county.

4.0 Housing Demand

4.1 Introduction

Determining housing demand during the lifespan of the Development Plan is fundamental to the overall Housing Strategy. The demand side model draws on key research information from the **Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG), the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)** to reflect the latest activity in the housing market and the documented outputs are the product of considered scenario testing. A number of key data sources have been utilised to model the Part V requirements and these are referenced throughout.

4.2 Population & Household Projections

The starting point in any assessment of housing demand is projected population growth over the Development Plan Period. **The Border Regional Authority: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (BRAGPA) 2010-2022** set population targets for County Louth of 132,648 persons by 2016 and 142,800 persons by 2022. To ensure conformity in approach, it is necessary to roll forward these projections in the Housing Strategy. The **BRAGPA** figures use assumptions on the baseline populations at 2010 and then project these forward to 2016 and 2022. The Department previously advised that it is best practice to use actual figures, derived from the Census, where they are available.

Table 1.3: County Louth Population Projections 2012-2024

Year	Louth County Population Total	Annual Population increase from 2011-2024	Percentage Increase	% Change 2011-2016 & 2016-2022
1996	92,166		-	-
2002	101,821		10.48	-
2006	111,267		9.28	-
2011	122,897		10.45	-
2012	124,788	1,891	1.54	-
2013	126,708	1,920	1.54	-
2014	128,658	1,950	1.54	-
2015	130,638	1,980	1.54	-
2016	132,648	2,010	1.54	7.93%
2017	134,292	1,644	1.24	-
2018	135,956	1,664	1.24	-
2019	137,641	1,685	1.24	-

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

2020	139,346	1,706	1.24	-
2021	141,073	1,727	1.24	-
2022	142,800	1,727	1.24	7.65%
2023	144,570	1,770	1.24	-
2024	146,361	1,791	1.24	-

Source: FAC

From the 2011 Census, the population of County Louth was 122,897 which is marginally higher than previously projected by the BRAGPA (122,640). Whilst still working towards the 2016 and 2022 figures, the starting point is the 2011 figure. Table 1.3 above sets out the approach, which draws on a % rate-based population application. The population has to increase from 122,897 to 132,648 by 2016 - the equivalent of a 7.9% increase in total population over this period. This percentage is then apportioned out (1.54% per annum between 2012-2016). Based on the RPGs, the population will subsequently increase to 142,800 in 2022, the equivalent of 7.65% over this period, or an average of 1.24% between 2017-2022. Cumulatively, this equates to a total annual population growth figure of 19,903 over the period to 2012-2022, the equivalent of 1,809 persons per annum. The projected growth figure for 2015-2021 is 10,688 persons, or 1,781 per annum.

The RPGs distinguish between population figures in County Louth and growth projections in Dundalk and Drogheda. The population projections for these areas sit within the overall County forecasts. The population of Dundalk was 37,816 in 2011 and this is expected to increase to 47,200 by 2022, an increase of 9,384 persons. The total population of Drogheda in 2011 was 32,453 (this refers to the Louth based component of the town excluding Meath). The Louth-based component of the town is projected to increase to 38,415 by 2022.

The forecast of housing demand over the study period is reached by applying the relevant household size to projected population increases. The average household size in County Louth has fallen from 3.30 in 1996 to 2.80 in 2011, a decrease of 0.50 over a 16 year period or a decline of 0.031 persons per annum over this timeframe. The RPGs apply an occupancy rate of 2.70 people by 2016. Working towards this figure, an incremental 0.020 persons per annum decline is applied, a uniform projection which is subsequently rolled forward to 2022 and beyond. The CSO does not commit itself to forecasts on future average household size. Taking account of historical trends in the County and available evidence on household composition from the 2011 Census, including a growth in single parent households and a rise in cumulative birth rates, the applied per annum reduction of 0.020 persons is considered reasonable and is reflective of commonly held assumptions that occupancy rates will continue to fall in the short to medium term.

Table 1.4 sets out the resulting housing requirement over the study period in County Louth. Specifically, the requirement for 2012-2022 is 7,422, an average of 675 units per annum. The specific requirement for 2015-2021 is 4,001 units or an average of 667 units per annum. It is important to note that the relationship between projected annual population increase and household growth in absolute terms may not directly sum, as different household size rates have been applied each year.

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

Table 1.4 : Identified Housing Requirement County Louth 2012-2024

Year	Louth County Population	Annual Increase from 2011 to 2024	Number of Households (Private Permanent)	Average Household Size	Average Household Size	Additional Houses Required Per Annum
1996	92,166		27,961	3.30	3.30	-
2002	101,821		32,782	3.11	3.11	-
2006	111,267		38,598	2.88	2.88	-
2011	122,897		43,897	2.80	2.80	-
2012	124,788	1,891	44,577	2.78	↓	680
2013	126,708	1,920	45,273	2.76		696
2014	128,658	1,950	45,985	2.74		712
2015	130,638	1,980	46,712	2.72		728
2016	132,648	2,010	47,457	2.70	2.70	745
2017	134,292	1,644	48,070	2.68	↓	613
2018	135,956	1,664	48,696	2.66		626
2019	137,641	1,685	49,334	2.64		638
2020	139,346	1,706	49,985	2.62		651
2021	141,073	1,727	50,649	2.60		664
2022	142,800	1,727	51,319	2.58	2.58	669
2023	144,570	1,770	52,010	2.56	2.56	691
2024	146,361	1,791	52,715	2.54	2.54	705

4.3 Disposable Income Projections

Section 93 of the Act defines 'affordability' as a "person who is in need of accommodation and whose income would not be adequate to meet the payments of a mortgage for the purchase of a house to meet his or her accommodation needs because the payments calculated over the course of the year would exceed 35% of that person's annual income net of income tax and pay related social insurance..". The first step in the assessment of affordability under Part V requirements is the determination of disposable income projections. Disposable income is the amount of income, after tax is deducted, that is available for spending and saving.

Current estimates of household disposable incomes are taken from the **CSO Household Budget Survey**. These are national figures and Table 1.5 sets out the process of working out what is applicable to Louth. It works out the percentage changes of average weekly disposable incomes over previous periods (based on fact), annualises it (as of 2010) and adjusts it for 2011 (as at year ahead of study period) based on the average percentage increase over previous periods. With an updated national figure for 2011, it is necessary to localise it to County Louth and a deflator is applied from the CSO report on County Incomes and Regional GDP 20105 for such purposes. Based on the latest available figures, the average disposable income rate in the county is 0.981% of the national average. It is notable that this compares favourably with rates recorded elsewhere among the border counties. The output of Table 1.5 is average annual disposable incomes across different deciles in the County at 2011 and the corresponding number of households in the County. The figures indicate that approximately one third of the households in Louth have an average disposable income of €16,314 (about €313.73/week).

With an income baseline for 2011 identified, the next step is to work out how affordability may fluctuate over the plan period. The 2011 figures are inflated annually using forecasted average disposable household income growth rates from the ESRI. We examine different growth scenarios set out by the institute, including their expectations for growth over the plan period. Based on the current economic outlook, a recovery-based scenario average of 3.6% has been applied over the plan period. As highlighted in the text, this compares with an average growth rate figure of 7.1% in the previous housing strategy.

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

Table 1.5 : Estimated Distributions of Household Disposable Incomes for County Louth, 2011

Income Range	Average Weekly Disposable Income (State) (€) (1999-2000)	Average Weekly Disposable Income (State) (€) (2004-2005)	Average Weekly Disposable Income (State) (€) (2009-2010)	Percentage Change from 2004-2005 to 2009-2010	Assumed Annual Percentage Increase from 2005 to 2010	Adjusted Average Weekly Disposable Income (State) (€) (2011)	Percentage of Households in Each Category (State)	Average Annual Disposable Income (State) (€) (2011)	Louth Deflator	Average Annual Disposable Income (Louth) (€) (2011)	Number of Households in Louth (2011)
1st Decile	106.23	158.99	188.91	18.8%	3.76%	196.02	11.57%	10,193.05	0.981	9,998.87	5,079
2nd Decile	174.42	244.65	300.98	23.0%	4.60%	314.84	10.54%	16,371.68	0.981	16,059.80	4,627
3rd Decile	249.38	359.12	431.28	20.1%	4.02%	448.61	9.48%	23,327.82	0.981	22,883.43	4,161
4th Decile	331.71	488.30	549.20	12.5%	2.49%	562.90	9.60%	29,270.75	0.981	28,713.16	4,214
5th Decile	423.00	628.31	669.46	6.5%	1.31%	678.23	9.74%	35,267.91	0.981	34,596.07	4,276
6th Decile	515.73	779.53	802.56	3.0%	0.59%	807.30	9.56%	41,979.71	0.981	41,180.01	4,197
7th Decile	617.61	950.84	972.03	2.2%	0.45%	976.36	9.81%	50,770.85	0.981	49,803.68	4,306
8th Decile	743.44	1,167.54	1,183.82	1.4%	0.28%	1,187.12	9.58%	61,730.31	0.981	60,554.38	4,205
9th Decile	925.52	1,420.76	1,472.66	3.7%	0.73%	1,483.42	9.78%	77,137.80	0.981	75,668.35	4,293
10th Decile	1,428.71	2,232.01	2,289.38	2.6%	0.51%	2,301.15	10.34%	119,659.74	0.981	117,380.27	4,539
Total							100.00%				43,897

Appendix 3 Louth Housing Strategy

The key outputs from Table 1.6 are projected changes in disposable incomes across the defined deciles over the period to 2024, again a measure of future affordability over this period. The level of difference in projected changes across the different income brackets is very noticeable. The percentage rate of growth across the deciles is generally the same, but the difference in growth in real terms between say decile 1 (€5,836) and decile 10 (€68,517) highlights that the prospects of those with existing affordability issues at the bottom of the ladder is unlikely to materially change over the period, particularly when compared with an expected uplift in house prices over the same timeframe (next section).

Table 1.6 : Average Annual Disposable Income for County Louth, 2011-2024

	Average Annual Disposable Income – County Louth - 2011-2024 (€)													
Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
% Growth	-	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%
1st Decile	9,999	10,359	10,732	11,118	11,518	11,933	12,363	12,808	13,269	13,746	14,241	14,754	15,285	15,835
2nd Decile	16,060	16,638	17,237	17,857	18,500	19,166	19,856	20,571	21,312	22,079	22,874	23,697	24,550	25,434
3rd Decile	22,883	23,707	24,561	25,445	26,361	27,310	28,293	29,312	30,367	31,460	32,593	33,766	34,981	36,241
4th Decile	28,713	29,747	30,818	31,927	33,077	34,267	35,501	36,779	38,103	39,475	40,896	42,368	43,893	45,473
5th Decile	34,596	35,842	37,132	38,469	39,853	41,288	42,775	44,314	45,910	47,562	49,275	51,049	52,886	54,790
6th Decile	41,180	42,662	44,198	45,789	47,438	49,146	50,915	52,748	54,647	56,614	58,652	60,764	62,951	65,217
7th Decile	49,804	51,597	53,454	55,378	57,372	59,437	61,577	63,794	66,091	68,470	70,935	73,488	76,134	78,875
8th Decile	60,554	62,734	64,993	67,333	69,756	72,268	74,869	77,565	80,357	83,250	86,247	89,352	92,568	95,901
9th Decile	75,668	78,392	81,215	84,138	87,167	90,305	93,556	96,924	100,414	104,028	107,773	111,653	115,673	119,837
10th Decile	117,380	121,606	125,984	130,519	135,218	140,086	145,129	150,353	155,766	161,374	167,183	173,202	179,437	185,897

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

Drawing on the outputs of Table 1.6, Table 1.7 below sets out the average monthly disposable income for Louth for the period 2012-2024, on the basis that you pay a mortgage monthly

Table 1.7: Average Monthly Disposable Income in County Louth, 2012-2024

Range	Percentage of Households in Each Category (Louth)	Average Monthly Disposable Income – County Louth - 2012-2024 (€)												
		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
1st Decile	11.57%	863	894	927	960	994	1,030	1,067	1,106	1,146	1,187	1,229	1,274	1,320
2nd Decile	10.54%	1,386	1,436	1,488	1,542	1,597	1,655	1,714	1,776	1,840	1,906	1,975	2,046	2,120
3rd Decile	9.48%	1,976	2,047	2,120	2,197	2,276	2,358	2,443	2,531	2,622	2,716	2,814	2,915	3,020
4th Decile	9.60%	2,479	2,568	2,661	2,756	2,856	2,958	3,065	3,175	3,290	3,408	3,531	3,658	3,789
5th Decile	9.74%	2,987	3,094	3,206	3,321	3,441	3,565	3,693	3,826	3,964	4,106	4,254	4,407	4,566
6th Decile	9.56%	3,555	3,683	3,816	3,953	4,095	4,243	4,396	4,554	4,718	4,888	5,064	5,246	5,435
7th Decile	9.81%	4,300	4,455	4,615	4,781	4,953	5,131	5,316	5,508	5,706	5,911	6,124	6,344	6,573
8th Decile	9.58%	5,228	5,416	5,611	5,813	6,022	6,239	6,464	6,696	6,937	7,187	7,446	7,714	7,992
9th Decile	9.78%	6,533	6,768	7,012	7,264	7,525	7,796	8,077	8,368	8,669	8,981	9,304	9,639	9,986
10th Decile	10.34%	10,134	10,499	10,877	11,268	11,674	12,094	12,529	12,981	13,448	13,932	14,433	14,953	15,491
	100.00%													

4.4 House Price Assessment and Projection

The next step is to determine current house price sales and how they may fluctuate over the plan period, thereby impacting on affordability. Relevant house prices, including recent increase/decrease trends are taken from the **CSO Residential Property Price Index 2013** and reflecting market projections, assumptions on likely future fluctuations are applied across 8 broad bands of residential property prices. A nominal 1% increase in house prices in 2015 and 2016 rising to a 4% increase between 2021-2024 has been applied. It is important to look at these increases in a cumulative context over the period to 2024 and against trends in the recent past. For example, starting from a base figure of €85,846 (1st Band) in 2014, the projected increase in price to €114,183 in 2024 would only restore prices to circa the 2010 average, still significantly down on the market high sale prices of 2006/2007. The bottom of Table 1.8 apportioned out the percentage breakdown within County Louth of different houses by price band.

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

Table 1.8: Affordability Analysis and Associated Affordable Housing Demand 2008-2024

Year	Average Price Increase/Decrease	1st Band - not exceeding X1	2nd Band - X1-X2		3rd Band - X2-X3		4th Band - X3-X4		5th Band - X4-X5		6th Band - X5-X6		7th Band - X6-X7		8th Band - exceeding X7
			Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	
2008	-	150,000	150,001	200,000	200,001	250,000	250,001	300,000	300,001	350,000	350,001	400,000	400,001	500,000	500,000
2009	-16.20%	125,700	125,701	167,600	167,601	209,500	209,501	251,400	251,401	293,300	293,301	335,200	335,201	419,000	419,000
2010	-11.40%	111,370	111,371	148,494	148,494	185,617	185,618	222,740	222,741	259,864	259,865	296,987	296,988	371,234	371,234
2011	-13.00%	96,892	96,893	129,189	129,190	161,487	161,487	193,784	193,785	226,082	226,082	258,379	258,380	322,974	322,974
2012	-11.40%	85,846	85,847	114,462	114,462	143,077	143,078	171,693	171,693	200,308	200,309	228,924	228,924	286,155	286,155
2013	0.00%	85,846	85,847	114,462	114,462	143,077	143,078	171,693	171,693	200,308	200,309	228,924	228,924	286,155	286,155
2014	0.00%	85,846	85,847	114,462	114,462	143,077	143,078	171,693	171,693	200,308	200,309	228,924	228,924	286,155	286,155
2015	1.00%	86,705	86,705	115,606	115,607	144,508	144,509	173,410	173,410	202,311	202,312	231,213	231,213	289,016	289,016
2016	1.00%	87,572	87,572	116,763	116,763	145,953	145,954	175,144	175,144	204,334	204,335	233,525	233,526	291,906	291,906
2017	2.00%	89,323	89,324	119,098	119,098	148,872	148,873	178,647	178,647	208,421	208,422	238,196	238,196	297,744	297,744
2018	2.50%	91,556	91,557	122,075	122,076	152,594	152,595	183,113	183,113	213,632	213,632	244,150	244,151	305,188	305,188
2019	3.00%	94,303	94,304	125,737	125,738	157,172	157,172	188,606	188,607	220,041	220,041	251,475	251,476	314,344	314,344
2020	3.50%	97,604	97,604	130,138	130,139	162,673	162,674	195,207	195,208	227,742	227,743	260,277	260,277	325,346	325,346
2021	4.00%	101,508	101,509	135,344	135,344	169,180	169,180	203,016	203,016	236,852	236,852	270,688	270,688	338,360	338,360
2022	4.00%	105,568	105,569	140,758	140,758	175,947	175,948	211,136	211,137	246,326	246,326	281,515	281,516	351,894	351,894
2023	4.00%	109,791	109,792	146,388	146,389	182,985	182,986	219,582	219,583	256,179	256,180	292,776	292,776	365,970	365,970
2024	4.00%	114,183	114,183	152,243	152,244	190,304	190,305	228,365	228,366	266,426	266,427	304,487	304,488	380,608	380,608
% of Louth Housing Units within each Band (2008) - based on Whole Country		2.50%	13.50%		15.50%		17.50%		14.50%		10.50%		11.50%		14.50%

4.5 Household Affordability

This next step is to identify the affordability threshold - the number of new household formations that may be expected to experience affordability difficulties over each year of the development plan period. To do this, the projections for household income are applied to the DECLG Model Housing Annuity formula to establish the maximum affordable house price for each of the ten disposable income decile ranges identified previously. The formula itself requires you to plug in a few key inputs such as the assumed percentage of household income that would go towards mortgage costs (typically 35%), a loan to value ratio (0.80), an annual interest rate (3.95%) and a loan term (average of 25 years). Table 1.9 summarises the outputs from the annuity calculations themselves, setting out approximate affordable housing prices across the different deciles in Louth to 2024.

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

Table 1.9: Approximate Affordable Housing Prices in County Louth 2012-2024

Range	Percentage of Households in Each Category (Louth)	Approximate Affordable House Prices – County Louth - 2012-2024												
		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
1st Decile	11.57%	71,925	74,515	77,197	79,976	82,855	85,838	88,928	92,130	95,447	98,883	102,442	106,130	109,951
2nd Decile	10.54%	115,524	119,683	123,991	128,455	133,079	137,870	142,833	147,975	153,303	158,821	164,539	170,462	176,599
3rd Decile	9.48%	164,609	170,534	176,674	183,034	189,623	196,450	203,522	210,849	218,439	226,303	234,450	242,890	251,634
4th Decile	9.60%	206,544	213,979	221,683	229,663	237,931	246,497	255,370	264,564	274,088	283,955	294,178	304,768	315,740
5th Decile	9.74%	248,862	257,821	267,102	276,718	286,680	297,000	307,692	318,769	330,245	342,134	354,450	367,211	380,430
6th Decile	9.56%	296,222	306,886	317,934	329,380	341,237	353,522	366,249	379,434	393,093	407,245	421,905	437,094	452,829
7th Decile	9.81%	358,255	371,152	384,514	398,356	412,697	427,554	442,946	458,892	475,413	492,527	510,258	528,628	547,658
8th Decile	9.58%	435,589	451,270	467,516	484,346	501,783	519,847	538,561	557,950	578,036	598,845	620,403	642,738	665,877
9th Decile	9.78%	544,309	563,904	584,205	605,236	627,024	649,597	672,983	697,210	722,310	748,313	775,252	803,161	832,075
10th Decile	10.34%	844,357	874,754	906,245	938,870	972,669	1,007,685	1,043,962	1,081,545	1,120,480	1,160,818	1,202,607	1,245,901	1,290,753
	100.00%													

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

The previously forecasted annual completion numbers are disaggregated down by the percentage of households identified in each category in Louth, as per Table 1.10.

Table 1.10 : Required Additional Households in County Louth 2012-2024

Income Range	Percentage of Households in Each Category (Louth)	Total Additional Households - County Louth - 2012-2024												
		Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
1st Decile	11.57%	79	80	82	84	86	71	72	74	75	77	77	80	82
2nd Decile	10.54%	72	73	75	77	78	65	66	67	69	70	71	73	74
3rd Decile	9.48%	64	66	67	69	71	58	59	60	62	63	63	66	67
4th Decile	9.60%	65	67	68	70	71	59	60	61	62	64	64	66	68
5th Decile	9.74%	66	68	69	71	73	60	61	62	63	65	65	67	69
6th Decile	9.56%	65	67	68	70	71	59	60	61	62	63	64	66	67
7th Decile	9.81%	67	68	70	71	73	60	61	63	64	65	66	68	69
8th Decile	9.58%	65	67	68	70	71	59	60	61	62	64	64	66	68
9th Decile	9.78%	67	68	70	71	73	60	61	62	64	65	65	68	69
10th Decile	10.34%	70	72	74	75	77	63	65	66	67	69	69	71	73
	100.00%	680	696	712	728	745	613	626	638	651	664	669	691	705

Appendix 3 Louth Housing Strategy

An essential requirement of any housing strategy is to identify as accurately as possible the number of households who can be classified as having an affordability problem over the study period, so as to adequately inform the necessary provision of these units. Table 1.11 below sets out in detail the determination of the anticipated social housing need and associated shortfall for County Louth. This determination is based on the number of households required, housing affordability by each decile, household band position, house prices bands (upper value), number of houses required within each band, and the percentage and number of housing units projected to be provided within each band. It attempts to represent the 12 relationship between different elements as best it can, but it is very complex, as different deciles and bands that are identified in previous stages are cross referenced against each other, in line with per annum housing projections to identify a shortfall. The shortfall is the number of households within each respective band that will have an affordability issue. Taking 2015 as an illustrative year, there are 728 households required, 109 of which are required in the 1st band that has an upper price value of €86,705 and based on **DECLG** House Price Statistics, it is estimated that only 18 housing units will be delivered within this band. Therefore, there will be a housing shortage in this band of 90 units and this equates to 12.42% of the total housing requirement in that year. The minus figures contained within the 2nd to 8th Bands inclusive denote that there is not a housing shortfall in these bands.

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

Table 1.11 : Calculation of Anticipated Social Housing Need in County Louth 2012-2024

Year	Range	No. of Households Required	Running Total	Affordability by each Decile	Household Band Position	House Prices Bands - Upper Value	No. of Houses Required within each Band	% of Housing Units Projected to be Provided within each Band	No. Housing Units Projected to be Provided within each Band	Housing Shortfall - i.e. No. of Households Meeting Affordability Criteria	Housing Shortfall as a % of Total Households Required
2012	1st Decile	79	79	71,925	1st Band	85,846	112	2.50%	17	95	13.93%
	2nd Decile	72	150	115,524	2nd and 3rd Bands	143,077	75	29.00%	197	-122	-
	3rd Decile	64	215	164,609	4th Band	171,693	46	17.50%	119	-73	-
	4th Decile	65	280	206,544	5th and 6th Bands	228,924	86	25.00%	170	-84	-
	5th Decile	66	346	248,862	7th Band	286,155	79	11.50%	78	1	-
	6th Decile	65	411	296,222	8th Band	None	-	14.50%	99	-	-
	7th Decile	67	478	358,255							
	8th Decile	65	543	435,589							
	9th Decile	67	610	544,309							
	10th Decile	70	680	844,357							
		680					100.00%	680			
2013	1st Decile	80	80	74,515	1st Band	85,846	110	2.50%	17	93	13.36%
	2nd Decile	73	154	119,683	2nd and 3rd Bands	143,077	74	29.00%	202	-128	-
	3rd Decile	66	220	170,534	4th Band	171,693	46	17.50%	122	-76	-
	4th Decile	67	287	213,979	5th and 6th Bands	228,924	85	25.00%	174	-89	-
	5th Decile	68	354	257,821	7th Band	286,155	62	11.50%	80	-18	-
	6th Decile	67	421	306,886	8th Band	None	-	14.50%	101	-	-
	7th Decile	68	489	371,152							
	8th Decile	67	556	451,270							
	9th Decile	68	624	563,904							
	10th Decile	72	696	874,754							
		696					100.00%	696			
2014	1st Decile	82	82	77,197	1st Band	85,846	109	2.50%	18	91	12.81%
	2nd Decile	75	157	123,991	2nd and 3rd Bands	143,077	73	29.00%	206	-133	-
	3rd Decile	67	225	176,674	4th and 5th Bands	200,308	83	32.00%	228	-145	-
	4th Decile	68	293	221,683	6th Band	228,924	46	10.50%	75	-29	-
	5th Decile	69	362	267,102	7th Band	286,155	77	11.50%	82	-5	-
	6th Decile	68	430	317,934	8th Band	None	-	14.50%	103	-	-
	7th Decile	70	500	384,514							
	8th Decile	68	568	467,516							
	9th Decile	70	638	584,205							
	10th Decile	74	712	906,245							
		712					100.00%	712			

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

Year	Range	No. of Households Required	Running Total	Affordability by each Decile	Household Band Position	House Prices Bands - Upper Value	No. of Houses Required within each Band	% of Housing Units Projected to be Provided within each Band	No. Housing Units Projected to be Provided within each Band	Housing Shortfall - i.e. No. of Households Meeting Affordability Criteria	Housing Shortfall as a % of Total Households Required
2015	1st Decile	84	84	79,976	1st Band	86,705	109	2.50%	18	90	12.42%
	2nd Decile	77	161	128,455	2nd & 3rd Bands	144,508	73	29.00%	211	-138	-
	3rd Decile	69	230	183,034	4th and 5th Bands	202,311	83	32.00%	233	-150	-
	4th Decile	70	300	229,663	6th Band	231,213	46	10.50%	76	-31	-
	5th Decile	71	371	276,718	7th Band	289,016	77	11.50%	84	-7	-
	6th Decile	70	440	329,380	8th Band	None	-	14.50%	106	-	-
	7th Decile	71	512	398,356							
	8th Decile	70	581	484,346							
	9th Decile	71	653	605,236							
	10th Decile	75	728	938,870							
		728					100.00%	728			
2016	1st Decile	86	86	82,855	1st Band	87,572	108	2.50%	19	90	12.05%
	2nd Decile	78	165	133,079	2nd & 3rd Bands	145,953	73	29.00%	216	-143	-
	3rd Decile	71	235	189,623	4th and 5th Bands	204,334	82	32.00%	238	-156	-
	4th Decile	71	307	237,931	6th and 7th Bands	291,906	123	22.00%	164	-41	-
	5th Decile	73	379	286,680							
	6th Decile	71	450	341,237	8th Band	None	-	14.50%	108	-	-
	7th Decile	73	523	412,697							
	8th Decile	71	595	501,783							
	9th Decile	73	668	627,024							
	10th Decile	77	745	972,669							
		745					100.00%	745			
2017	1st Decile	71	71	85,838	1st Band	89,323	88	2.50%	15	73	11.82%
	2nd Decile	65	136	137,870	2nd & 3rd Bands	148,872	59	29.00%	178	-119	-
	3rd Decile	58	194	196,450	4th & 5th Bands	208,421	67	32.00%	196	-129	-
	4th Decile	59	253	246,497	6th and 7th Bands	297,744	100	22.00%	135	-35	-
	5th Decile	60	312	297,000							
	6th Decile	59	371	353,522	8th Band	None	-	14.50%	89	-	-
	7th Decile	60	431	427,554							
	8th Decile	59	490	519,847							
	9th Decile	60	550	649,597							
	10th Decile	63	613	1,007,685							
		613					100.00%	613			

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

Year	Range	No. of Households Required	Running Total	Affordability by each Decile	Household Band Position	House Prices Bands - Upper Value	No. of Houses Required within each Band	% of Housing Units Projected to be Provided within each Band	No. Housing Units Projected to be Provided within each Band	Housing Shortfall - i.e. No. of Households Meeting Affordability Criteria	Housing Shortfall as a % of Total Households Required
2018	1st Decile	72	72	88,928	1st Band	91,556	89	2.50%	16	73	11.67%
	2nd Decile	66	138	142,833	2nd & 3rd Bands	152,594	60	29.00%	181	-122	-
	3rd Decile	59	198	203,522	4th & 5th Bands	213,632	67	32.00%	200	-133	-
	4th Decile	60	258	255,370	6th and 7th Bands	305,188	100	22.00%	138	-37	-
	5th Decile	61	319	307,692	8th Band	None	-	14.50%	91	-	-
	6th Decile	60	378	366,249							
	7th Decile	61	440	442,946							
	8th Decile	60	500	538,561							
	9th Decile	61	561	672,983							
	10th Decile	65	626	1,043,962				100.00%	626		
2019	1st Decile	74	74	92,130	1st Band	94,303	90	2.50%	16	74	11.59%
	2nd Decile	67	141	147,975	2nd & 3rd Bands	157,172	60	29.00%	185	-125	-
	3rd Decile	60	202	210,849	4th & 5th Bands	220,041	68	32.00%	204	-136	-
	4th Decile	61	263	264,564	6th and 7th Bands	314,344	102	22.00%	140	-39	-
	5th Decile	62	325	318,769	8th Band	None	-	14.50%	93	-	-
	6th Decile	61	386	379,434							
	7th Decile	63	449	458,892							
	8th Decile	61	510	557,950							
	9th Decile	62	572	697,210							
	10th Decile	66	638	1,081,545				100.00%	638		
2020	1st Decile	75	75	95,447	1st Band	97,604	92	2.50%	16	75	11.58%
	2nd Decile	69	144	153,303	2nd & 3rd Bands	162,673	62	29.00%	189	-127	-
	3rd Decile	62	206	218,439	4th & 5th Bands	227,742	70	32.00%	208	-139	-
	4th Decile	62	268	274,088	6th and 7th Bands	325,346	104	22.00%	143	-39	-
	5th Decile	63	332	330,245	8th Band	None	-	14.50%	94	-	-
	6th Decile	62	394	393,093							
	7th Decile	64	458	475,413							
	8th Decile	62	520	578,036							
	9th Decile	64	584	722,310							
	10th Decile	67	651	1,120,480				100.00%	651		

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

Year	Range	No. of Households Required	Running Total	Affordability by each Decile	Household Band Position	House Prices Bands - Upper Value	No. of Houses Required within each Band	% of Housing Units Projected to be Provided within each Band	No. Housing Units Projected to be Provided within each Band	Housing Shortfall - i.e. No. of Households Meeting Affordability Criteria	Housing Shortfall as a % of Total Households Required
2021	1st Decile	77	77	98,883	1st Band	101,508	94	2.50%	17	77	11.63%
	2nd Decile	70	147	158,821	2nd & 3rd Bands	169,180	63	29.00%	193	-130	-
	3rd Decile	63	210	226,303	4th & 5th Bands	236,852	71	32.00%	213	-141	-
	4th Decile	64	274	283,955	6th and 7th Bands	338,360	106	22.00%	146	-40	-
	5th Decile	65	338	342,134	8th Band	None	-	14.50%	96	-	-
	6th Decile	63	402	407,245							
	7th Decile	65	467	492,527							
	8th Decile	64	531	598,845							
	9th Decile	65	595	748,313							
	10th Decile	69	664	1,160,818				100.00%	664		
2022	1st Decile	77	77	102,442	1st Band	105,568	95	2.50%	17	78	11.69%
	2nd Decile	71	148	164,539	2nd & 3rd Bands	175,947	64	29.00%	194	-130	-
	3rd Decile	63	211	234,450	4th & 5th Bands	246,326	72	32.00%	214	-142	-
	4th Decile	64	276	294,178	6th and 7th Bands	351,894	108	22.00%	147	-40	-
	5th Decile	65	341	354,450	8th Band	None	-	14.50%	97	-	-
	6th Decile	64	405	421,905							
	7th Decile	66	471	510,258							
	8th Decile	64	535	620,403							
	9th Decile	65	600	775,252							
	10th Decile	69	669	1,202,607				100.00%	669		
2023	1st Decile	80	80	106,130	1st Band	109,791	98	2.50%	17	81	11.74%
	2nd Decile	73	153	170,462	2nd & 3rd Bands	182,985	66	29.00%	200	-134	-
	3rd Decile	66	218	242,890	4th & 5th Bands	256,179	75	32.00%	221	-146	-
	4th Decile	66	285	304,768	6th and 7th Bands	365,970	112	22.00%	152	-41	-
	5th Decile	67	352	367,211	8th Band	None	-	14.50%	100	-	-
	6th Decile	66	418	437,094							
	7th Decile	68	486	528,628							
	8th Decile	66	552	642,738							
	9th Decile	68	620	803,161							
	10th Decile	71	691	1,245,901				100.00%	691		

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

Year	Range	No. of Households Required	Running Total	Affordability by each Decile	Household Band Position	House Prices Bands - Upper Value	No. of Houses Required within each Band	% of Housing Units Projected to be Provided within each Band	No. Housing Units Projected to be Provided within each Band	Housing Shortfall i.e. No. of Households Meeting Affordability Criteria	Housing Shortfall as a % of Total Households Required
2024	1st Decile	82	82	109,951	1st Band	114,183	101	2.50%	18	83	11.80%
	2nd Decile	74	156	176,599	2nd & 3rd Bands	190,304	68	29.00%	205	-137	-
	3rd Decile	67	223	251,634	4th & 5th Bands	266,426	77	32.00%	226	-149	-
	4th Decile	68	291	315,740	6th and 7th Bands	380,608	114	22.00%	155	-41	-
	5th Decile	69	359	380,430	8th Band	None	-	14.50%	102	-	-
	6th Decile	67	427	452,829							
	7th Decile	69	496	547,658							
	8th Decile	68	563	665,877							
	9th Decile	69	632	832,075							
	10th Decile	73	705	1,290,753				100.00%	705		
		705									

Appendix 3 Louth Housing Strategy

For Louth, this per annum shortfall, when expressed against envisaged total supply fluctuates between 11.58% and 13.93% over the period to 2021. The average over the period 2012 - 2021 is 12.29% and the models Part V recommendation of 12% stems directly from this source. Essentially, it is the resulting output from all the preceding steps. The summary of anticipated social housing supply is set out in Table 1.12. It outlines a requirement to deliver 475 units over the period of the housing strategy 2015-2021, an average of 79 units per annum.

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

Table 1.12: Summary of Anticipated Social Housing Need in County Louth 2012-2024

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
New Household Formations	680	696	712	728	745	613	626	638	651	664	669	691	705
Social and Affordable Housing Requirement	95	93	91	90	90	73	73	74	75	77	78	81	83
Housing Shortfall as a % of Total Households Required	13.93%	13.36%	12.81%	12.42%	12.05%	11.82%	11.67%	11.59%	11.58%	11.63%	11.69%	11.74%	11.80%

4.6 Reflections on Part V Requirement

The completed modeling exercise results in a recommended minimum Part V requirement of 12% for social and/or specialist housing. The reduction to 12% can be attributed to a significant drop in house prices since the last strategy (an average year-on-year drop of 13% between 2009-2012), which was prepared at the top of the market. The ESRI project an average annual increase of 3.6% in GDP over the plan period and the relationship between this resulting small increase in affordability relative to lower house prices is at the centre of what will be affordable. The reduction in the Part V figure in Louth is not unique in this regard with many other counties experiencing similar reductions.

5.0 Housing Supply

5.1 Introduction

This section of the Strategy examines past and projected future housing supply, house completions, the types of units developed and the amount of zoned land available for residential development.

5.2 Housing Permitted and Completed

Table 1.13 provides a breakdown of completed units by type over the period 2005-2012. 56% of the total completions were on planned larger schemes, 29% were individual houses while 15% approximately were apartments. It also highlights the drop off in apartment development relative to total completions in recent years. It illustrates a fall in house completion rates in recent years, which fell from a peak of 2,251 units in 2006 to a low of 314 units in 2011.

Table 1.13: House Completions by Type County Louth 2005-2012

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total
Single House	443	570	486	385	317	198	170	138	2707
Scheme House	1352	1311	921	839	393	197	72	120	5205
Apt	400	370	247	189	53	9	72	10	1350
Total	2195	2251	1,654	1,413	763	404	314	268	9262

The above activity is further emphasised through the examination of housing units granted planning permission over the period. By 2011, the number of housing schemes (multi development and one off) which had been granted planning permission fell from 461 to 105 by 2011. Similarly the number of houses granted in the same period dramatically dropped between 2011 and 2007 from a figure of 1519 units to 150 units. Table 1.14 also highlights the shift in trends away from speculative development and in particular flatted schemes.

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

Table 1.14: Annual Planning Permissions Granted in County Louth between 2007-2011

Year	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011	
Status	Granted (PP)	No. Units	Granted PP	No. Units	Granted PP	No. Units	Granted PP	No. Units	Granted PP	No. Units
Houses (Multi dev & One Off)	461	1519	420	3879	243	950	157	200	105	150
Flats/Apts	22	264	27	1677	14	604	7	7	6	17
Total	483	1783	447	5556	257	1554	164	207	111	167
Amount % inc/dec in Grants	-13	+16	-7	+211	-42	-72.	-43.3	-87	-32	-19

Source: CSO

5.3 Housing Targets

The population forecasts of the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region establish a housing target for Louth of 7,422 units between 2012-2022 which is an average of 675 units per annum. (This figure of 7,422 units refers to the year 2022. When this is adjusted to the end of the plan period which is 2021 the figure is 6753). Louth County Council has an obligation to ensure that sufficient zoned residential land is available throughout the lifetime of the Development Plan and beyond to meet the anticipated needs and allow for an element of choice in the market. **The Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) guidance 'Development Plans – Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2007)** formalises this requirement, by stipulating that enough land should be made available to meet residential needs for a period of 9 years.

In line with Section 4, it is envisaged that the majority of new residential development will be directed towards the two urban areas of Dundalk and Drogheda in line with the Settlement Strategy and that the relevant housing land requirements should be guided by this principle. It is estimated that approximately 1815 will be delivered in Dundalk over the period to 2022 and 1127 in Drogheda over the same period. The remaining shall be dispersed between Ardee, Dunleer, and the Level 3 and 4 settlements with 819 units. For the purposes of calculating the future land requirement to deliver on planned targets, an average density 40 dwellings per hectare has been applied to development in urban areas with a density of 25 dwellings per hectare applied elsewhere.

Table 1.15 below summarises the potential population and housing growth within the Settlements of the County for the period to 2021, disaggregating it down by planned delivery in Dundalk, Drogheda and the remainder of the County.

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

Table 1.15: Summary of Louth Population/Housing and Land Requirements by 2021

Settlement	Target Population Allocation 2016 - 2021	Household Allocation 2016 - 2021	Aver. Density unit/ ha	Existing Land Zoned for Residential Use ¹ (Ha)	Housing Land Required* (Ha) 2010-2016	Housing Land Required* 2016-2021	Excess (Ha)
Dundalk and Environs	4,322	1,600	42	904	54	57	793
Drogheda and Northern Environs	2,571	952	40	355	42	36	277
Ardee	129	48	30	60	11	2.4	46.6
Dunleer	63	23	30	14.4	4.5	1.15	8.75
Level 3 Settlements	339	125	20	198	21	9.375	167.625
Level 4 Settlements	30	11	5	-	18.6	3.3	-
Rural Area	948	351	-	-	-	-	-
Total	8402	3,111	-	1,531	151.1	109.225	1,270.675

**Headroom requirement of 50% extra over and above actual predicted land / unit requirements has been included in these figures.*

5.4 Land Supply

From the above, it is evident that Louth County Council has sufficient lands zoned to cater for residential purposes yet to be developed during the lifetime of the Plan.

5.5 Unfinished Housing Estates Survey

An updated DECLG survey of unfinished housing developments was undertaken in 2013 to provide important evidence on progress in addressing the issues raised by unfinished housing. The study indicated that while larger local authorities such as Cork or Dublin have the highest numerical levels of vacant housing, that Louth (7.94) is 9th (in a Table of 34 Local Authorities) as the highest in the Country for vacant houses per 1,000 households.

The units of relevance to this strategy are those which are fully developed but vacant as these units can reasonably be expected to contribute to overall housing supply in the County. Of those estates surveyed and confirmed as complete, a total of 349 units were identified as vacant. Each unfinished residential development has distinct characteristics, context and mitigating issues and responses and therefore must be tailored to these circumstances. Louth County Council are positively engaging with all relevant parties to address related matters and whilst it is difficult to estimate future outcomes of ongoing work at this stage, it is envisaged that solutions may contribute positively to future housing supply in the County in the medium term.

5.6 Social and Affordable Housing Provision

In accordance with the **Housing Act 2009**, every three years housing authorities are required to undertake an **Assessment of Housing Need** in their administrative area. The Assessment of Housing Need was completed by Louth County Council in May 2013, to determine the number of households in need of housing support. The previous categorisation under the 1988 Act has changed and the Basis of Need is as follows:

- Concluded that Mortgage is Unsustainable,
- Dependent on Rent Allowance,
- Disability – intellectual/mental health/physical/sensory,
- Homeless, Institutional, Emergency Accommodation or Hostel,
- Involuntary Sharing,
- Overcrowded,
- Unfit,
- Unsuitable - Medical or Compassionate,
- Unsuitable – Particular Household Circumstances,

Appendix 3 Louth Housing Strategy

The net social housing need in County Louth equates to 3,825 units, according to the **Assessment of Need (May) 2013**. The largest category of need is for those in 'Unsuitable Particular Household Circumstances' (financial constraints).

Table 1.16 below provides details of social housing supply currently available in County Louth (June 2014).

Table 1.16: Social Housing Supply for County Louth 2014

	Total
Social Housing Stock	3847
Voluntary Units	768
Properties in Rental Accommodation Scheme	191
Unsold Affordable in Voluntary Social Leasing Tenancies	48
Social Leasing Units	329

5.7 Meeting Social and Specialist Housing Demand

As set out in Chapter 4 of this Housing Strategy, there is an identified need for approximately 552 social housing units over the plan period 2015-2021

As Table 1.16 above illustrates the social housing supply for County Louth at 2014. Presently, County Louth maintains a total of 3847 social housing units. Currently there are 4,441 people on the waiting list (June 2014)

5.8 Provision of Social Housing under Part V

In the short to medium term the provision of social housing through Part V will be seriously reduced due in part to the reduced quantity of private house construction in recent years. Notwithstanding the ongoing review by the **DECLG of Part V of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended)**, Louth County Council recognises the rationale for capturing planning gain through resourcing social housing supports.

5.9 Rental Accommodation Scheme, Leasing Initiatives & Housing Assistance Payment

The Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) is an initiative to cater for the accommodation needs of certain persons in receipt of rent supplement, normally for more than 18 months and who are assessed as having a long term housing need. It involves the Authority paying the rent to the accommodation providers on behalf of the tenant. The Local Authority makes use of the private sector and engages in a contractual arrangement to secure medium term rented accommodation. The accommodation must meet certain standards and the landlord must be tax compliant and must register the tenancy with the **Private Residential Tenancies Board (PRTB)**. The RAS initiative seeks to eliminate 'poverty traps' by providing the footing on which to access employment or up-skilling opportunities which may support broader accommodation options in the future. Unlike rent supplementation, tenants can remain in the scheme upon taking on full time employment, with a higher contribution toward the rent being sought as income increases.

The Government agreed in principle on 23 March 2012 the transfer of responsibility for supporting those with longer-term housing needs to the **(DECLG)**, which represents a significant change in social housing policy. The design of HAP processes is a critical step in the transfer of responsibility for rent supplement recipients with an identified housing need from the **Department of Social Protection** to the **(DECLG)** and the local government sector. Rent supplement was originally designed as a short-term income support mechanism rather than a way to deliver rental support to those with longer-term housing needs. HAP is intended to target rent supplement households with a longer term housing need and will be a form of housing support. It is anticipated that a large proportion of the current rent supplement cohort will transition to the HAP system.

There are currently 191 RAS tenants in Louth. Leasing initiatives involve Local Authorities entering into lease arrangements with private property owners for periods of between 10 to 20 years. The preferred option is for long term leasing.

5.10 Provision of Social Housing with Voluntary Bodies and Housing Co-Operatives

Approved non-profit housing bodies or voluntary housing associations also provide social housing and are formed for the purpose of relieving housing need and the provision of management of housing. They are established by a voluntary management board to benefit the community in which they are based, and are approved and funded by **the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG)**. Housing Co-Operatives are self help and jointly owned member/user housing associations or societies.

Projects undertaken may be in response to the needs of the elderly, less-abled persons, homeless persons or families and single people on low incomes. Some housing associations may be formed to specialise in meeting a particular housing need, others develop with broader aims.

The specific housing services offered will depend on the aims or concerns of the members, the needs of tenants as well as the financial and other resources available for both capital costs and

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

ongoing management running costs. Whilst financial constraints are always a concern, over the last number of years there appears to have been an increase in financial measures to co-operative and voluntary housing associations.

Louth County Council will continue to work in partnership with voluntary bodies and co-operatives, to optimise resources in acquiring and managing social housing. A summary of output in this area between 2006 and 2011 is set out in Table 1.17 below.

Table 1.17: Voluntary and Co-Operative Housing for County Louth 2006-2011

Year	Voluntary & Co-Operative Housing Output					
	Capital Assistance Scheme			Capital Loan & Subsidy Scheme		
	No. Of Houses			No. Of Houses		
	Completed or Acquired	In Progress	Commenced	Completed or Acquired	In Progress	Commenced
2006	15	26	34	0	123	123
2007	1	25	0	50	122	49
2008	47	0	22	59	154	97
2009	0	0	0	228	0	10
2010	12	0	12	0	0	0
2011	25	0	31	0	0	0

Source: Housing Section Louth County Council (Origin DECLG)

5.11 Casual Vacancies

A small number of Louth County Council's housing stock will become available as new lettings annually through casual vacancies resulting from death of tenant, transfer to alternative accommodation, anti-social behaviour etc. It is the policy of the housing authorities to ensure that casual vacancies are kept to a minimum and to have them re-occupied in the shortest possible timeframe.

5.12 Homeless Persons

Chapter 6 of the **Housing Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2009** provides for the management of homelessness matters and designates Housing Authorities as the lead statutory provider of Housing Services (whilst acknowledging the role of the HSE). **The North-East Homelessness Action Plan 2014-2017** replaces the 2011-2013 Plan. Louth County Council was designated as the responsible authority for the preparation of the **Regional Homelessness Action Plan for Louth, Cavan and Monaghan. The National Homelessness Action Plan – The Way Home 2008-2013** seeks to end homelessness by 2016, with the emphasis on prevention of homelessness and the provision of homes first. **The Assessment of Housing Need 2013** identified that in Louth as a total that there are 37 on the Housing List have been assessed and identified as Homeless Related.

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

A list of the facilities provided in Louth for the homeless is outlined in Table 1.18 below:

Table 1.18: Facilities for Homeless in County Louth

Location	Facility	Capacity used by Housing Authority	Overall Bed Night Capacity
Dundalk	Simon Community	19	26
Dundalk	Womens Aid (Domestic Violence)	5	23
Drogheda	Drogheda Homeless Aid Association	14	21
Drogheda	Women's & Children Refuge Centre	3 Homeless 6 units (DV) 2 rooms (DV)	35

Source: North East Homeless Action Plan 2014-2017

5.13 Purchase of New or Second Hand Dwellings

The purchase of new or second hand dwellings will be limited by capital financial restrictions. In line with the wider housing market, sales executed under the tenant purchase scheme slowed in recent years and this scheme ceased on 31st December 2012 (with all sales having to be completed by June 2014). Tenant purchase schemes completed between 2009 and 2013 are as outlined in Table 1.19 below.

Table 1.19 : Tenant Purchase Sales 2009-2013

Year	Applications Received	Applications Progressed	Local Authority House Sales Completed
2009	23	10	1
2010	11	6	0
2011	40	4	4
2012	16	9	2
2013	-	-	8

Source: Housing Department Louth County Council

It is anticipated that Louth County Council will meet its identified social housing provision via a combination of all of the options set out above, (including the new **Incremental Purchase Scheme**) having regard to national guidance which may emerge over the life time of the strategy. In the potential absence of new build opportunities in the short term, all sources of supply from vacant and unfinished estates, unsold affordable units and the turnaround of casual vacancies will have to be explored in detail.

5.14 Traveller Accommodation Needs

The Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998 put in place a legislative framework to meet the accommodation needs of travellers normally resident within a local authority area. It requires each Local Authority to prepare and adopt a **Traveller Accommodation Programme** initially in respect of a five year period and thereafter in respect of each succeeding five year period. The **Louth County Council Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018** was adopted by Louth County Council in March 2014.

Louth County Council has a significant tradition of catering for the housing needs of the Travelling Community. Table 1.20 below summarises the progress since the enactment of the legislation and over the last three programmes in particular.

Table 1.20: Louth County Council Traveller Accommodation Programme 2000-2013

Programme	Social Housing Target	Social Achieved	Group Housing Target	Group Achieved	Halting Site Target	Achieved
2000-2004	33	46	13	2	4	3
2005-2008	58	46	4	2	3	3
2009-2013	66	60	6	4	5	3
Total to Date	157	152	23	8	-12	-9

Source: Travellers Accommodation Programme 2014-2018

In terms of the progress of implementation of the 2009-2013 Programme Table 1.21 indicates the targets, delivery outcomes accompanied with comments on same.

Table 1.21: Progress on Implementation of 2009-2013 Programme

Type	Target	Outcome	Comments
Social Housing	66	58	Targets could not be reached due to lack of availability of units
Group Housing	6	4	2 did not proceed as families were no longer interested
Halting Site	5	3	This relates to re-allocation of existing halting site bays in Dundalk Site. The site was vandalised and is no longer fit for purpose. Bays in Drogheda were also vandalised, 2 of which have been refurbished to accommodate 2 families.

Source: Travellers Accommodation Programme 2014-2018

Appendix 3
Louth Housing Strategy

According to the Assessment of Need May 2013, as identified in the **Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018** there were a total of 396 traveller families living in County Louth. These are accommodated as indicated on Table 1.22 below:

Table 1.22: Assessment of Need 2013 – Traveller Families

Type of Accommodation	Number of Families
Social Housing	159
Group Housing	18
Privately Rented	108
Privately Owned	82
Halting Site	2
Sharing with Relatives	26
Unauthorised Encampment	0
Other	1
Total	396

Source: Travellers Accommodation Programme 2014-2018

The statutory assessment of housing need under **Section 21 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009**, was carried out by Louth County Council with an eligibility date of May 2013. 140 traveller families were identified as needing accommodation. With the exception of one family who requested Halting Site Accommodation, all requested standard social housing.

The options and issues on provision of accommodation will include:

- Standard Social Housing,
- Group Housing,
- Leasing and RAS/HAP,
- Halting Site,
- Special Traveller Grant,
- New Family formations and families moving into the area,
- General Assistance to Travellers,
- Annual Targets for the provision of Accommodation,

And any other option within the normal housing services model.

The following Table 1.23 is considered as realistic targets for the delivery of standard social housing during the period of the Programme.

Table 1.23: Targets for Delivery of Social Housing 2014-2018

Standard Social Housing	
Year	Louth
2014	10
2015	9
2016	10
2017	13
2018	16
Total	58

5.15 Less-Abled Persons/ The Elderly

The National Housing Strategy for People with Disabilities 2011-2016 identifies 4 pillars of disabilities which are:

- Physical,
- Mental,
- Sensory,
- Intellectual.

The most recent *Louth Assessment of Housing Need 2013* identified 240 Disability Related Persons in need of social housing support. Having regard to the census figures and demographic profiles, looking forward, it is envisaged that greater levels of independent, semi independent and supervised housing may be required. Louth County Council will endeavour to carry out specialist extensions and alterations to local authority houses to accommodate the needs of disabled persons and the elderly. Related initiatives include the housing adaptation grant and the mobility aid grant.

For less-abled persons/older people there are also grants available, the purpose of which is to render a house more suitable for the accommodation needs of the person. The grants available are as listed below:

- Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability,
- Mobility Aid Grant for People with a Disability,
- Housing Aid for Older People.

The Assessment of Housing Need 2013 identified that in Louth County Council that there are a total of 215 persons (60+) on the Housing List with Age Related Requirements.

6.0 HOUSING STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

6.1 Introduction

This strategy has evolved from the analysis of the housing issues that have emerged during the preparation of this strategy. Having regard to the analysis and research conducted in preparing this Strategy, the policies as outlined in Section 6.3 below are recommended for adoption.

6.2 Key Principles of the Housing Strategy

- To work to deliver the population targets and population distributions as set out in the **Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region**, having regard to the County's established settlement hierarchy as set out in the Louth County Development Plan,
- To promote socially balanced and inclusive communities in all housing areas across Louth,
- To provide for varying identified needs in the County with respect to housing typology, size and mix,
- To monitor the housing strategy, allowing for adequate consultation with those who are central to the implementation of the policies of the strategy.

6.3 Housing Policies

RES 1 It is the policy of Louth County Council to ensure compliance with the Housing Strategy 2015-2021 and to facilitate the provision of housing units to sufficiently cater for social and specialist housing needs as identified in the Housing Strategy over the Plan period.

RES 2 It is the policy of the Council to enable every household to have available an affordable dwelling of good quality, suited to its needs, in a good environment and, as far as possible, at the tenure of its choice.

RES 3 Provision of social and specialist housing shall be progressed through partnership working with voluntary and co-operative housing organisations, the HSE and through agreements with private developers.

RES 4 Require that a minimum of 12% of all private residential development on lands zoned for residential or mixed uses (where residential is included) be provided for social /and or specialist housing under the provisions of Part V of the Planning Acts.

RES 5 Within the overall minimum of 12% requirement, criteria to

be taken into account will include the type and location of the housing units required by the Planning Authority at a given time, as defined by the Priority Housing List of the Housing Section.

- RES 6** To encourage and promote the creation of attractive mixed use sustainable communities which contain a variety of housing types and tenures with supporting community and residential amenities, and where Part V is visually and otherwise integrated into the overall development, thus counteracting undue segregation.
- RES 7** Continue to cater for the needs of persons with special requirements including persons with disabilities and the elderly, including the concept of independent living and the development of 'lifecycle housing' i.e. housing that is adaptable for people's needs as they change over their lifetime.
- RES 8** The preferred option for the delivery of social/and or specialist housing under Part V is through financial contribution.
- RES 9** In seeking to provide appropriate accommodation, the Council will implement the following:
- a) The National Housing Strategy for People with Disabilities 2011-2016
 - b) North-East Homelessness Action Plan 2014-2017
 - c) Time to move on from Congregated Settings: A Strategy for social inclusion (HSE)
 - d) Traveller Accommodation Programme 2014-2018

Footnote: Planning legislation which has been enacted (Urban Regeneration & Housing Act 2015) since the preparation of reports provided to the elected members in consideration and subsequent adoption of the Louth County Development Plan, will require a variation to be proposed in due course. See Note 1.

6.4 Strategy Implementation

To ensure the successful implementation of this Housing Strategy, it is necessary to keep it under review. Therefore, not more than two years after the making of the Development Plan, the Chief Executive will give a report to members on the progress achieved in implementing the Housing Strategy and the Development Plan objectives in this regard. Where the report indicates that new or revised housing needs have been identified, the Chief Executive may recommend that the Housing Strategy be amended and the Development Plan varied accordingly.

Appendix 4

Development Management Guidelines for ACA's

Contents

1.0	Development Management Guidelines for ACA's	1
1.1	Plot widths	1
1.2	Building Lines	1
1.3	Building lines may be relaxed in the following circumstances:	1
1.4	Building Heights	1
1.5	Skyline in ACA Area	2
1.6	Roof Extensions	2
1.7	Extensions and alterations may be considered acceptable where:	3
1.8	Advertising Structures	3
1.9	Demolition or Alteration	3
1.10	Shopfronts and Shutters	4
1.11	Shopfront Guidelines	4
1.12	Colours	5
1.13	Security Features	5
1.14	Relationship with Overhead Building	5

1.0 Development Management Guidelines for ACA's

The following guidelines relate to development within ACA's

1.1 Plot Widths

The following guidelines will apply to plot widths:

- New developments should have regard to the historically narrow plot sizes;
- New developments which extend over more than one historic plot, should address the design through variations in the façade composition that echo the historic plot pattern.
- Where plot amalgamation is considered necessary to accommodate new development the existing narrow land uses the narrow plot frontage should be reflected in the streetscape design.

1.2 Building Lines

The following principles in relation to building lines will apply:

- Maintain existing and established building lines where they exist.
- Create new building lines where they do not already exist in the case of extensive grey field or brown-field sites.

1.3 Building lines may be relaxed in the following circumstances:

- For innovative design solutions where it can be demonstrated that the design will positively enhance the townscape.
- Where the provision of public or civic space are to be proposed.
- To accentuate an important building.

1.4 Building Heights

The following principles will generally apply:

- The general range of building heights and number of storeys which are evident in the street should be retained.
- Stepping up of corner buildings or buildings creating significant landmarks will be permitted.
- In general, the difference in a buildings height from traditional buildings should not exceed one and a half storeys.
- Applications for or modifications for a variation in buildings does not in itself provide a justification for height increases. An alteration or extension to the existing roofline may still be unacceptable.

Appendix 4
Development Management Guidelines for ACA's

The following will be taken into account in assessing applications for higher buildings:

- The degree to which its prominence is justified in the townscape – traditionally, only significant public buildings received such prominence;
- The extent to which the building detracts or enhances important landmarks and views;
- The extent to which the building detracts from or enhances the character of open space or public realm;
- The degree of intrusion or obtusion of skyline and the impact on the topography of the street;
- Issues of shadow, significant loss of light and micro-climatic impacts;
- The extent to which an imbalance in height is created between opposite sides of the street. This may not be relevant where there is future scope for the redevelopment of the opposite side too;
- The extent to which the alteration to the façade or roofline impacts adversely upon the architectural integrity of the building and the area.
- The quality of the existing or neighbouring buildings.

1.5 Skyline in ACA Area

The height and form of a building will have a direct influence on the skyline of the ACA. Features such as chimneys also added interest and variety to the skyline. Rooflines should normally respond to the articulation of the rest of the façade and it should therefore be possible to read the width of the plot division from the bottom to the top.

Design of buildings within ACAs shall have regard to the following:

- In many modern architectural solutions, roof tops tend to be flat and extended over a considerable distance (i.e., a building with a long façade). It can result in monotonous rooftops which should therefore be relieved with variations in building height at appropriate locations such as the stepping up heights at the centre of a uniform composition or at the corners.
- The roofline should reflect the rhythm, harmony and scale of the entire street frontage, with the roofline picking up the subdivisions of the façade.
- Materials should be chosen for their appropriateness for the character of the area i.e., red dyed tiles would be inappropriate in the town centre where natural Welsh slate predominates.
- Machine and mechanical plant rooms should be designed as an integral part of the building and should not cause disruption in the roof-scape.

1.6 Roof Extensions

In general terms, the Council will not permit a roof extension if it is considered that it would;

- Harm the architectural integrity, proportions or uniformity of a building or significant group of buildings.
- Harm a significant or sensitive view.
- Reduce the visual interest generated by a varied skyline, or where the building has features that were designed to be silhouetted against the sky.
- Result in the loss of historic roof forms.

1.7 Extensions and alterations may be considered acceptable where:

- The scale of the proposed extension is appropriate to the scale and character of the existing property or is not visible from a public place
- The proposed addition is of a high standard of contemporary or traditional design where appropriate;
- Steps have been taken to prevent the build-up of visual clutter apparent from the street at high level.
- Permission will not be granted for other roof-top structures where these intrude into significant or sensitive public views, harm the character of a building or an area, or adversely affect the amenity of adjoining properties.

1.8 Advertising structures

- Policy to encourage removal of large advertisement structures if the opportunity arises.
- Policy to prohibit electronic video display screen in or adjacent to ACAs where they would impinge on or negatively affect the Character of the ACA.
- Advertisement structures within an ACA should not interfere with any structures that contribute to the architectural amenity/character of the ACA.
- All advertising structures should relate to the authorised uses in the building and should assimilate with the overall design of the shop-front and should be restricted to the fascia level. Additional advertising fixtures above ground floor level or on gable ends should be avoided.
- Generally, only the name and street number of the shop should be included, preferably hand-painted, on the fascia panel.
- The provision of temporary advertising structures on or projecting from any part of the façade, or hanging between buildings should not be erected without written approval of the planning authority.

1.9 Demolition or Alteration

The Council will not permit the demolition or alteration of buildings within designated ACAs unless it can be demonstrated that all of the below criteria is applicable:

- The building is in a very poor state of repair;
- All efforts have been made to sustain existing uses or find new ones, and these efforts have failed;
- Redevelopment of the site would greatly benefit the community and would outweigh the loss of the building/structure resulting from demolition;
- The building is unsafe and cannot be made safe.

1.10 Shopfronts and Shutters

- Proposals for new contemporary shopfronts will be considered by the planning authority, where the design is of a high quality and achieves a balance of finish and textures establishing a sense of character in contemporary design.
- Historic robust materials such as smooth render finish, granite, limestone, brick, and timber, cast-iron, brass and copper can be integrated with lightweight contemporary materials such as stainless steel and glass. Glass, in particular, introduces reflective properties which aid in a sense of playfulness and liveliness across facades.
- Design needs to be imaginative within the constraints of the existing building, enhancing its character rather than conflicting with it. In most cases an appropriate modern proposal is preferred to inaccurate historical representations or pastiche.

1.11 Shopfront Guidelines:

The guidelines below apply not only to retail premises but also to commercial, medical and medical-related and other premises providing services. In all cases, existing signage, tiled shopfronts, wrought ironwork, stonework, plasterwork detailing and any original features shall be retained on retail and commercial premises.

- Signage forms an integral part of the overall design for the shopfront and should be restricted to the fascia level. Generally, only the name and street number of the shop should be included, preferably hand-painted, on the fascia panel.
- The size, shape and position of shopfront signage should reflect the scale and façade of the building on which they are situated
- Illumination by bracket or wash lighting is preferred to internally illuminated signage
- All lettering is to be legible and in keeping with the character with the building
- Minimum lettering should be used
- Preferred signage locations are to position lettering
 - Directly to the glazing
 - To the bulkhead behind the glazing
 - To architectural feature like doors
 - Behind the glass
- Lettering or logos should not be affixed directly to the glazing of any shop or business windows, other than etched lettering. All sign displays inside the shop should be kept back a minimum distance of 500mm from the glazing. Lettering or logos should not obstruct the window display or exceed one quarter of the area of the window through which the advertisements are exhibited
- Corporate, mass-produced signage using bright colours with plastic shopfronts and plastic fascias will not be acceptable within the ACAs
- Projecting signs shall not generally be permitted as a profusion of such signs in a confined area can lead to visual clutter in the streetscape. However, positive consideration may be given to the use of a projecting sign if a building is in multiple occupancy and the proposed sign would lead to a significant overall reduction in the number and scale of advertisement structures on or projecting from the face of the building.

Appendix 4
Development Management Guidelines for ACA's

In these circumstances, the following guidelines must be observed:

- Not more than one projecting sign should be displayed on a building;
- Signs should not be fixed directly to the face of a building but should be fixed by a bracket
- Projecting sign should be fixed at fascia height adjacent to the access to the upper floors
- Signs should be individually designed to complement the scale, materials and design of the building
- Signs should not obscure important features of a building or adjacent buildings.

1.12 Colours

- The colours used in shopfronts and buildings in the ACAs should be complementary to the character of the area, that of the building and adjoining buildings
- Loud, garish colours which clash with the colours and tones of the building and adjoining buildings should be avoided. Painting over brickwork or stonework is also not acceptable
- Corporate design packages, including colour and material palates and signage, will generally not be acceptable unless fully compatible with and complementary to the character of the building and adjoining buildings. The context for the proposal is considered more important than uniformity between branches of one company.

1.13 Security Features

- The installation of security shutters requires planning permission
- The use of such shutters is discouraged as these can visually detract from the lively ambience of a shopping street at night
- The location of rollers on the exterior of the shopfront will not be permitted.
- Alternatives to roller shutters such as demountable open grilles will be considered where security needs are involved

- Where security shutters are considered essential because of the nature of the business, they may be permitted provided they meet the following criteria:
 - They must be open grill type, not solid, or perforated.
 - They must be painted or coloured to match the shopfront scheme.
 - Where possible they must be housed behind the window display.
- A security hatch or slot of a sufficient scale to accept newspaper deliveries shall be incorporated into the design of new shopfronts, as appropriate. Such a feature shall be located at or immediately above the level of the stall riser and should not interfere with the general proportions and presentation of the front façade of the shopfront.

1.14 Relationship with Overhead Building

- A shop front is an integral part of the building of which it forms part and therefore the shop front should relate to the architectural character of the upper floors in respect of proportion, scale and alignment
- Excessively deep fascias should be avoided most particularly where these obscure detailed elements such as console brackets and cornices. The fascia shall not encroach on or above first floor level or extend uninterrupted across a number of buildings

Appendix 4
Development Management Guidelines for ACA's

The design of a new shopfront should relate to the architectural characteristics of the building of which it forms part, relating sympathetically to the upper floors in structural concept, proportion, scale and vertical alignment.

Appendix 5

Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

Ardee Historic Core

1.0	Location and boundaries	1
1.1	Historical Development of the Area	1
1.2	Materials	1
1.3	Views	2
1.4	Objectives	2

Carlingford ACA – A Medieval Walled Town

2.0	Location and boundaries	4
2.1	Historical Development of the Area	4
2.2	Character	4
2.3	Materials	5
2.4	Views	5
2.5	Objectives	5
2.6	References	6

Castlebellingham ACA - An Estate Village

3.0	Location and boundaries	8
3.1	Historical Development of the Area	8
3.2	Character	8
3.3	Materials	9
3.4	Objectives	9

Collon ACA – An Estate Village

4.0	Location and boundaries	11
4.1	Historical Development of the Area	11
4.2	Materials	11
4.3	Character	12
4.4	Objectives	12

Greenore ACA

5.0	Location and boundaries	14
5.1	Historical Development of the Area	14
5.2	Character	14
5.3	Materials	14
5.4	Views	15
5.5	Objectives	15

Monasterboice ACA – Monastic Site		
6.0	Locations & Boundaries	17
6.1	Historical Development of the Area	17
6.2	Objectives	17
Newtown Monasterboice		
7.0	Location and boundaries	19
7.1	Historical Development of the Area	19
7.2	Character and Materials	19
7.3	Objectives	19
Salterstown ACA – A Clachan Settlement		
8.0	Location and Boundaries	22
8.1	Historical Development of the Area	22
8.2	Character and Materials	22
8.3	Objectives	22
Whitestown ACA		
9.0	Location and boundaries	25
9.1	Historical Development of the Area	25
9.2	Character	25
9.3	Materials	25
9.4	Objectives	26
Townley Hall Demesne – ACA		
10.0	Location and boundaries	28
10.1	Historical Development of the Area	28
10.2	Objectives	28

Maps

Map 5.1	Ardee Architectural Conservation Area	3
Map 5.2	Carlingford Architectural Conservation Area	7
Map 5.3	Castlebellingham Architectural Conservation Area	10
Map 5.4	Collon Architectural Conservation Area	13
Map 5.5	Greenore Architectural Conservation Area	16
Map 5.6	Monasterboice Architectural Conservation Area	18
Map 5.7	Newtown Monasterboice Architectural Conservation Area	21
Map 5.8	Salterstown Architectural Conservation Area	24
Map 5.9	Whitestown Architectural Conservation Area	27
Map 5.10	Townley Hall Architectural Conservation Area	30
Map 5.11	Oldbridge Demesne Architectural Conservation Area In County Meath	31

Ardee Historic Core



1.0 Location and Boundaries

The Architectural Conservation Area covers the length of the main street, to the rear boundaries of all properties - Irish Street, Market Street, Castle Street, Bridge Street and William Street. The area includes the majority of the town's protected structures.

1.1 Historical Development of the Area

The town takes its name from the Irish - Ath Fhirdia, the ford on the river Dee where the legendary hero Cúchulainn fought and defeated his friend Ferdia in the course of the Táin Bo Cuailnge. In medieval times it was an important Norman walled town.

Character

Ardee is now an attractive broad-street town, and the commercial centre for its hinterland. The main street is lined by good houses, two and three storeys in height, with some interesting shopfronts, and is distinguished by two late medieval tower houses. The south end of the area features a pleasant riverside walk and some attractive rubble stone warehousing.

1.2 Materials

The prevailing materials in Ardee, as in most Irish small towns, are slated roofs and plastered facades with timber windows and shopfronts. The two tower houses and churches are of stone, while there are a small number of brick buildings, notably the Bank of Ireland and Hamills with decorative trim.

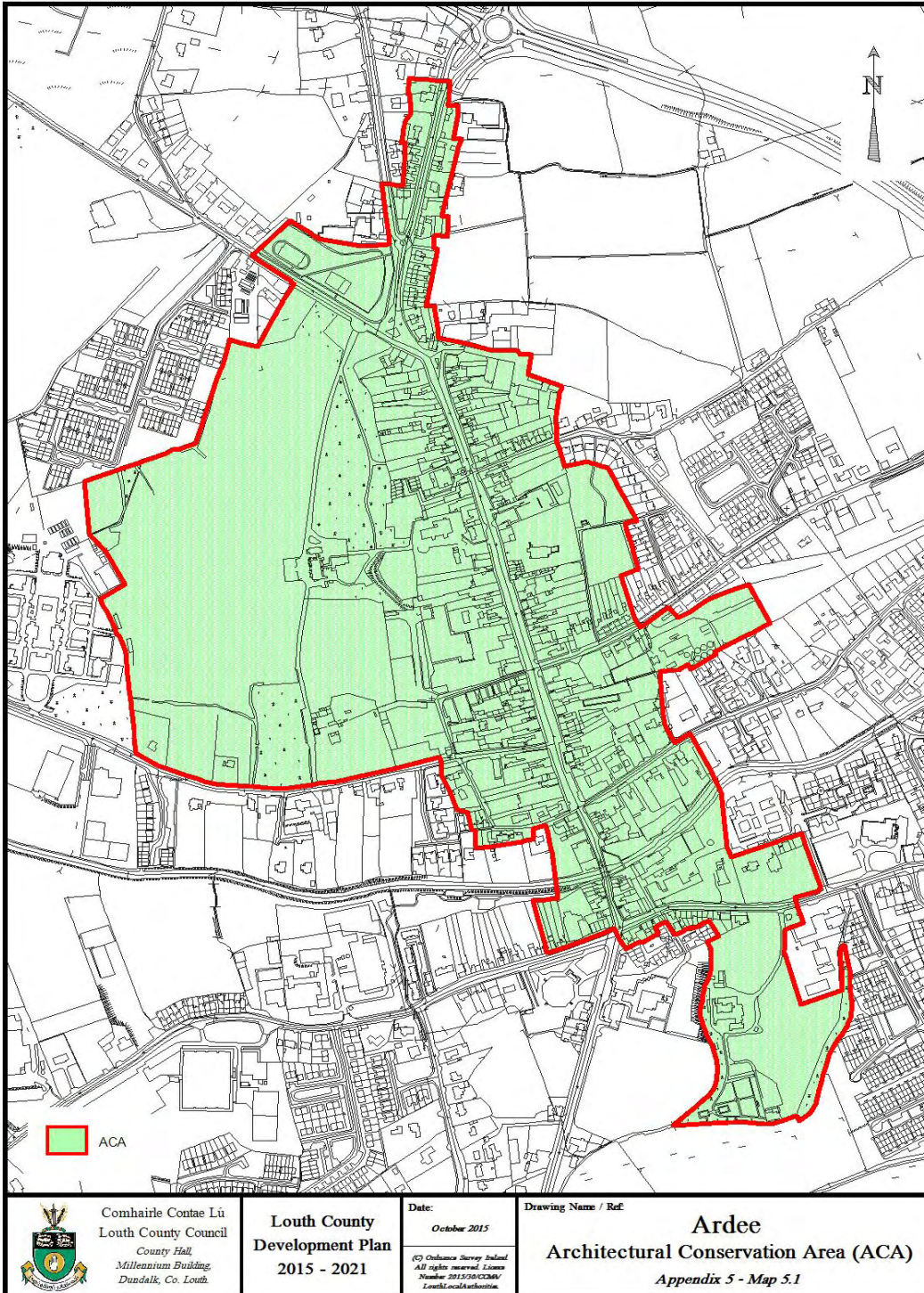
1.3 Views

Views up and down the street are dominated by Ardee Castle, while to the south the rich agricultural lands of mid-Louth can be seen.

1.4 Objectives

1. To preserve the special character of the historic town core and its setting through positive management of changes to the built environment, in particular, by requiring that the height, scale, design and materials of any proposed development within the village and in the surrounding area should complement the character of the village and not diminish its distinctiveness of place.
2. To protect the landscape setting of the village and the views outwards.
3. To encourage the removal of visually intrusive elements such as overhead cables and inappropriate signage.
4. To require the preservation and re-instatement of traditional details and materials on existing buildings and in the streetscape where improvements or maintenance works are being carried out.
5. To use appropriate materials, street furniture and lighting in any public development of the area.

Map 5.1: Ardee Architectural Conservation Area



Carlingford ACA A Medieval Walled Town



2.0 Location and Boundaries

'The town is situated at the foot of Slieve Foye along a narrow ledge of land where the mountain slope meets the sea. The medieval town lay between the castle, on the north, and the parish church, on the south, with its long axis aligned north-south, accommodating itself to the narrow corridor of low ground. Both the castle and church are on high points but it is the castle built on a rock outcrop projecting into Carlingford Lough and forming a sheltered harbour which dominates the town.' (Bradley)

The boundary of the ACA is based on the line of the Medieval town walls and extends from the City wall on the west, to the coastline on the east, and from King John's Castle on the North to the Mill Pond on the south.

2.1 Historical Development of the Area

The town was originally a harbour for the Vikings along the northern coast nestled against the backdrop of the Cooley Mountains. It was with the arrival of the Normans in 1185 that the first urban settlement was established. Its natural defensive position at the head of the lough led Hugh de Lacy to construct King John's Castle c.1200, and subsequently the town grew as an important trading centre. The mid 19th century saw the arrival of the railway and growth of the harbour and quay walls.

2.2 Character

The medieval character of the town is evident in the survival of the medieval street pattern which provides a striking sense of enclosure - its two parallel streets running north/south, cut by three cross streets, the principle of being Market Street, and the narrow interconnecting laneways. A remarkable feature of the town is the number of medieval buildings surviving – King John's Castle, the Dominican Abbey, the Mint, the Tholsel, Taaffe's Castle.

Buildings front directly onto the street for the most part, although the larger houses such as Carlingford House, the Churches, Court house and Garda Station, are set back from the street line with boundary walls and railings.

The 18th, 19th and early 20th century buildings are generally simple vernacular terraces of two and three-storey houses, gable ended, plastered and painted, and some attractive shopfronts.

2.3 Materials

Although the buildings are relatively unadorned, many retain original features such timber sash windows, raised plaster quoins and window surrounds, and with their slate roofs, make up the attractive streetscapes. Surviving medieval buildings have lost their traditional lime plaster finishes and the random rubble stonework of the walls are visible.

2.4 Views

1. The most important views are of the town against the mountain backdrop, showing the relation of the town and castle between mountain and water.
2. Views out from Carlingford across the Lough to County Down are also of importance for the appreciation of the context and setting of the town, including the harbour.

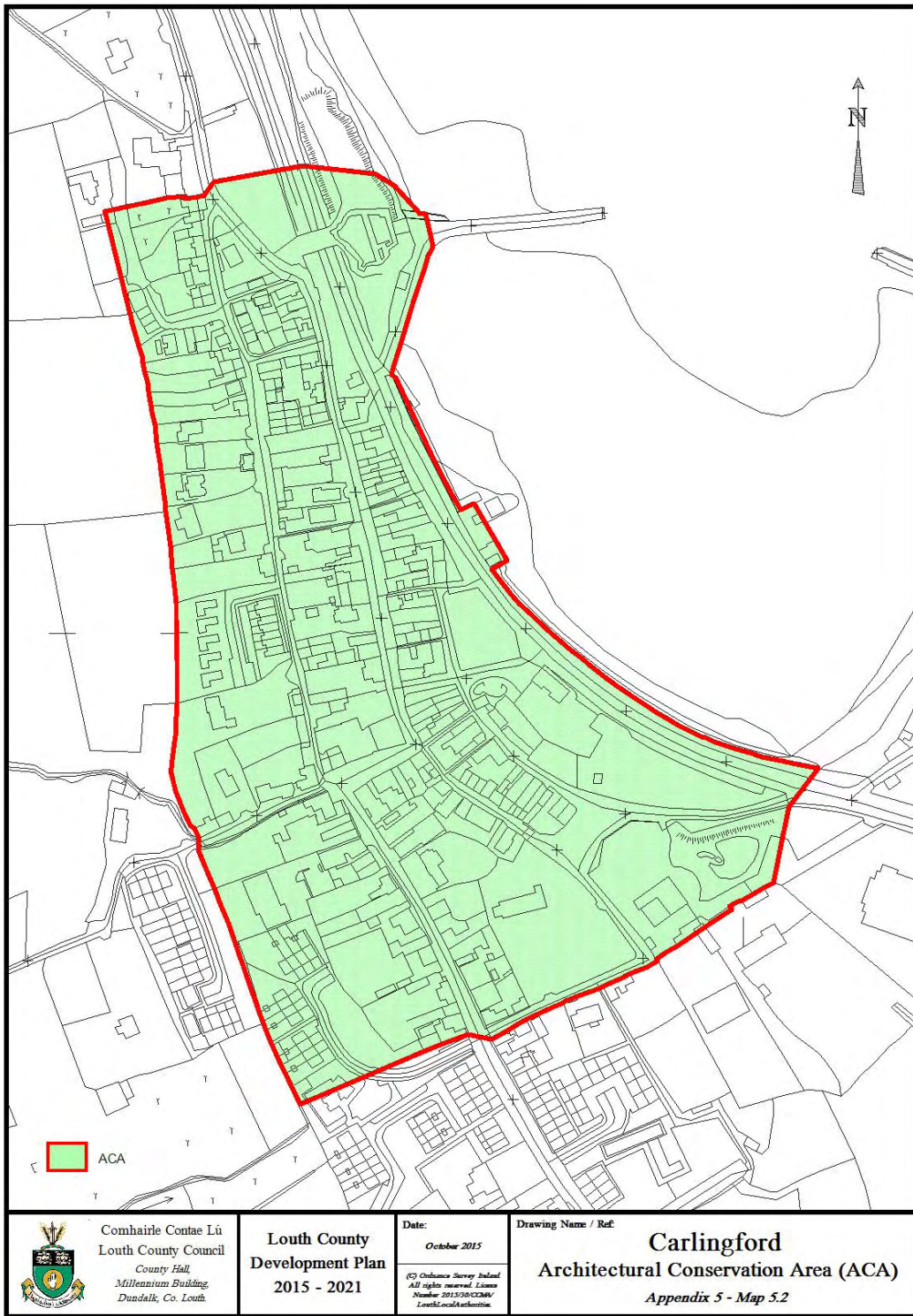
2.5 Objectives

1. To preserve the special character of the town, its medieval street pattern and its setting through positive management of changes to the built environment, in particular, by requiring that the height, scale, design and materials of any proposed development within the ACA and in the adjoining area should complement the character of the town and not diminish its distinctiveness of place.
2. To protect the landscape setting of the village and the views both inward and outward.
3. To encourage the removal of visually intrusive elements such as overhead cables and inappropriate signage.
4. To require the preservation and re-instatement of traditional details and materials on existing buildings and in the streetscape where improvements or maintenance works are being carried out.
5. To use appropriate materials, street furniture and lighting in any public development of the area.

2.6 References:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Bradley, John | Urban Archaeology Survey Part I, County Louth: Carlingford
(unpublished report) |
| Oxford Archaeology
Keith Simpson & Associates | Carlingford Town Walls Conservation & Management Plan
Carlingford Architectural Conservation Area Character
Appraisal 2007 |

Map 5.2: Carlingford Architectural Conservation Area



**Castlebellingham ACA
An Estate Village**



3.0 Location and Boundaries

Castlebellingham ACA is centred on the old Dublin –Belfast Road which winds north-south through the town. The ACA starts on the south bank of the river, includes the bridge, mill, and mill race, church of Ireland and widows cottages, the green, and the main street of the town as far as the intersection of roads at the northern end.

3.1 Historical Development of the Area

The town's history is linked with the Bellingham family and the brewing trade. The most prominent feature of the town is Bellingham Castle with its impressive entrance gate arch. Reminders of the brewing trade can be seen in the brewery grain store on the triangular green, recently converted to retail and residential uses.

3.2 Character

The deep river valley generates a strong focal point in the landscape drawing the countryside into the town. The urban form of the proposed Castlebellingham ACA is much as it was in the eighteenth and nineteenth century with the main road providing a series of pleasant views and interesting spaces – at the Gateway, the green, and terminating at the northern junction. The Castle, Church and estate cottages form a picturesque grouping near the river. The main street is made up of a combination of residential and commercial buildings linked in terraces, with an occasional detached house, all generally two storeys in height, with only one three storey house on the Annagassan Road. The roofs are pitched and gabled. Of particular notes are the widows cottages with their highly decorative chimneystacks, barge boards, and windows.

3.3 Materials

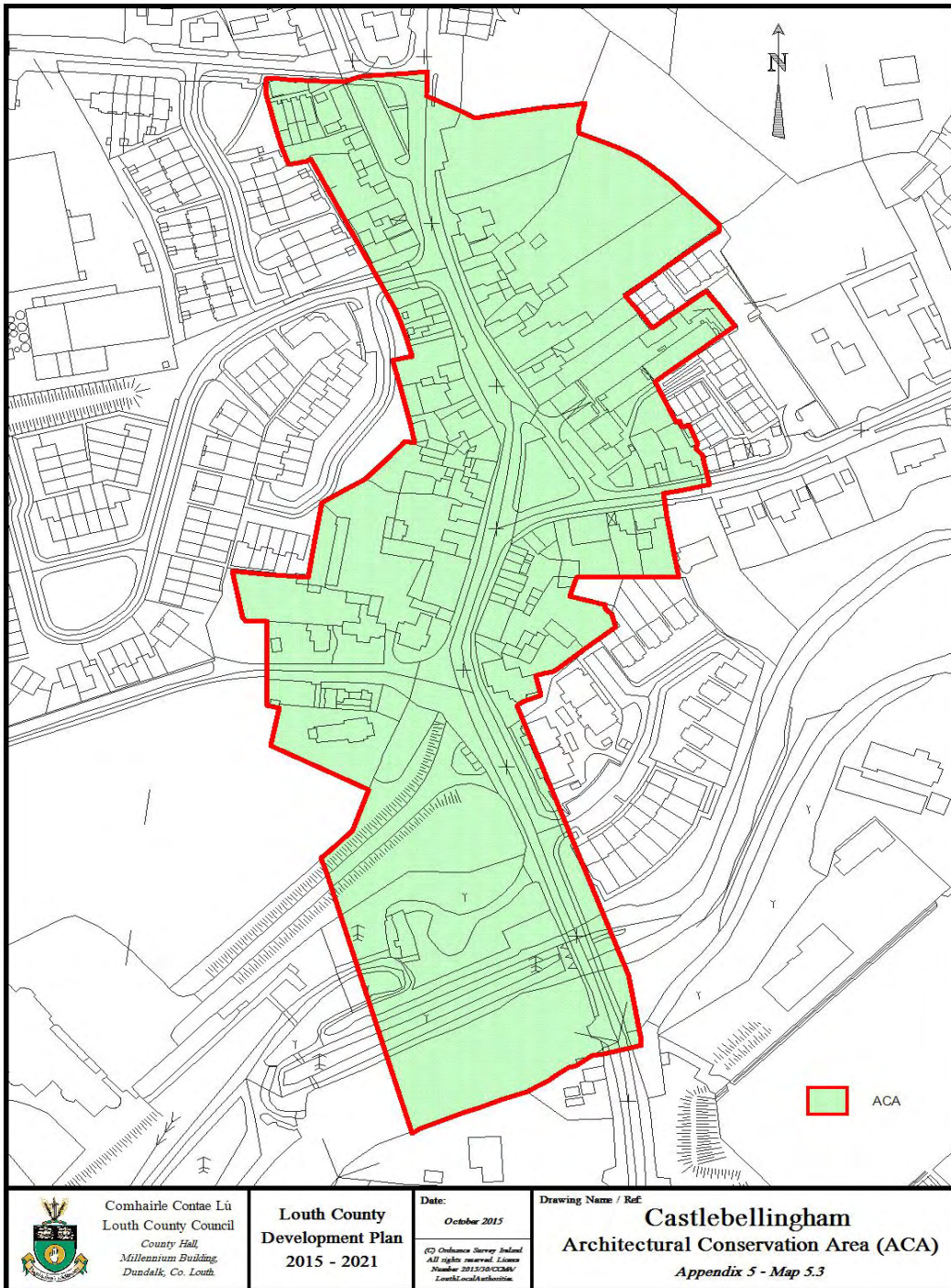
The prevailing materials in Castlebellingham, as in most Irish small towns are slated roofs and plastered facades with timber windows and shopfronts. The Church of Ireland is quite typically built of stone, and there are attractive stone boundary walls to the graveyard and from the Castle entrance area to the bridge. Castlebellingham is unusual however, for the inclusion of a number of brick buildings, particularly the brewery buildings, which formed the industrial core of the town, and the estate cottages which are of high quality stonework with brick trim.

3.4 Objectives

1. To preserve the special character of the village and its setting through positive management of changes to the built environment, in particular, by requiring that the height, scale, design and materials of any proposed development within the village and in the surrounding area should complement the character of the village and not diminish its distinctiveness of place.
2. To protect the landscape setting of the village and the views inwards.
3. To preserve the historic street pattern and character of the village, by the retention of buildings and materials as described above, and the retention of existing boundary features, walls.
4. To require the preservation and re-instatement of traditional details and materials on existing buildings and in the streetscape where improvements or maintenance works are being carried out.
5. To use appropriate materials, street furniture and lighting in any public development of the area.

Appendix 5
Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

Map 5.3: Castlebellingham Architectural Conservation Area



Collon ACA An Estate Village



4.0 Location and Boundaries

The village of Collon is built on a steep hill around the intersection of the N2, Dublin to Derry road, and the R168 road to Drogheda, with an outlook over the valley. The boundaries of the ACA extend from the Round House at the north end of the town, to the river at the south, and from the Mattock Inn on Drogheda Street to the rear of the Church of Ireland graveyard on the west.

4.1 Historical Development of the Area

The town and manor of Collon once belonged to the Cistercian order of Mellifont Abbey until the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry II. Development took place in the 18th century with the arrival of industry, sited to take advantage of the river. Between 1780 and 1790 a spinning mill, hosiery factory and weaving company were established by the Rt. Hon. John Foster. After the famine many corn mills in the district converted to milling flax.

4.2 Materials

Buildings generally have plastered walls, traditionally a lime render would have been used, often with a limewash finish. In a limited number of cases, most notably the Erasmus School, the rubble stonework is exposed, otherwise rubble stone is confined to boundary walls or outbuildings. Both churches have fine ashlar limestone to the front facades. There are some good examples of ironwork, typically in the gates to the former parochial house, and railings to Collon House and Elmview. Timber is used for windows and doors and as such forms standard elements of the shop-fronts. Many buildings within the ACA retain their natural slate roofs which add to the visual richness of the area.

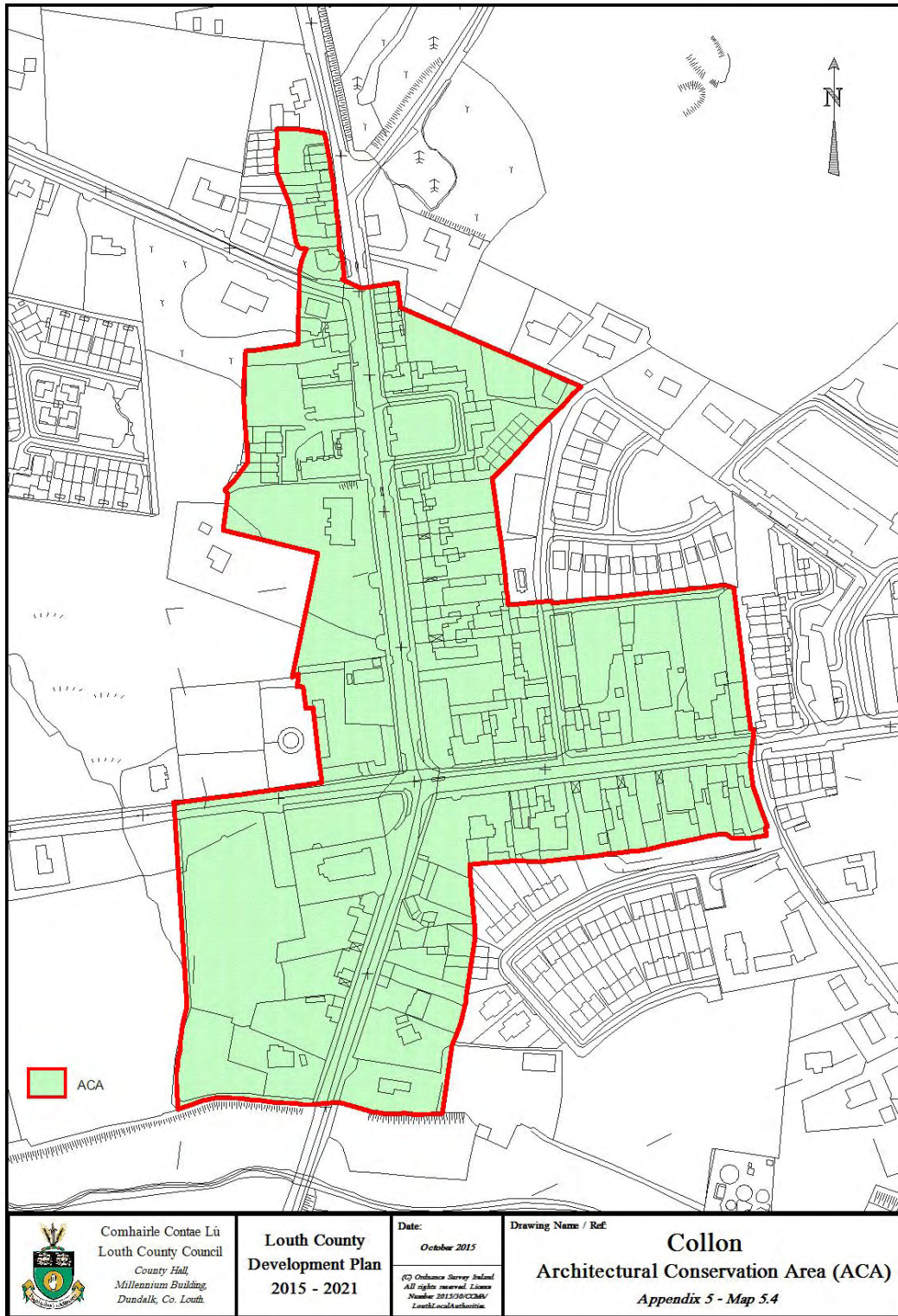
4.3 Character

The overall present impression is of a Regency character, the best preserved in the County, attributed to the local landlord, Lord Oriell, who built the main street in the “English style“. A significant early Georgian three storey house (built 1740) gives solidity to the north east corner of the junction. The village green, designed for an open air market, is set back from the road and creates a focus for the north end of the village. Later Victorian and early 20thC buildings have in general been consistent with the earlier buildings and blended well into the mix. Buildings both front onto the street or are set back with a boundary of railings, or railings and boundary wall. There is a gap in the streetscape on the north-west side.

4.4 Objectives

1. To preserve the special character of the village and its setting through positive management of changes to the built environment, in particular, by requiring that the height, scale, design and materials of any proposed development within the village and in the surrounding area should complement the character of the village and not diminish its distinctiveness of place.
2. To protect the landscape setting of the village and the views outwards.
3. To preserve the historic street pattern and Regency character of the village, by the retention of buildings and materials described above, and the retention of existing boundary features, walls, and railings.
4. To encourage the removal of visually intrusive elements such as overhead cables and inappropriate signage.
5. To require the preservation and re-instatement of traditional details and materials on existing buildings and in the streetscape where improvements or maintenance works are being carried out.
6. To use appropriate materials, street furniture and lighting in any public development of the area.

Map 5.4: Collon Architectural Conservation Area



Appendix 5
Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

Greenore ACA



5.0 Location and Boundaries

Greenore is located on the northern shore of the Cooley peninsula. The ACA starts at the bungalows on the southern outskirts, and includes Euston Street, Andlesey Terrace, and the coastguard houses.

5.1 Historical Development of the Area

Greenore was constructed to provide an alternative passenger train and ferry route from Ireland to England. The harbour complex, pier and railway station were designed by James Barton, a pupil of John Macneill – engineer for the Great Northern Railway line. A hotel, houses for the staff, and a school for the children was added, and in the late 1890's, a golf course and bungalows for the officers.

5.2 Character

Although Greenore ceased to operate as passenger port in 1952 this remarkable group of buildings survives in an almost complete state, the major casualty of recent years being the hotel. The stone and brick terraces of Euston Street, brick schoolhouse, and timber frame bungalows are one of the finest groupings in Ireland.

5.3 Materials

While the area is notable for the high quality stonework of Euston Street with its brick dressings, a lighter note is struck in the plasterwork of the coastguard houses, and delicate ironwork of lamp standards and decorative ironwork railings. Stone boundary walls surround the semi detached and

Appendix 5
Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

detached houses at the southern end, and form the eastern boundary of the ACA along the lane to the rear of Euston Street.

5.4 Views

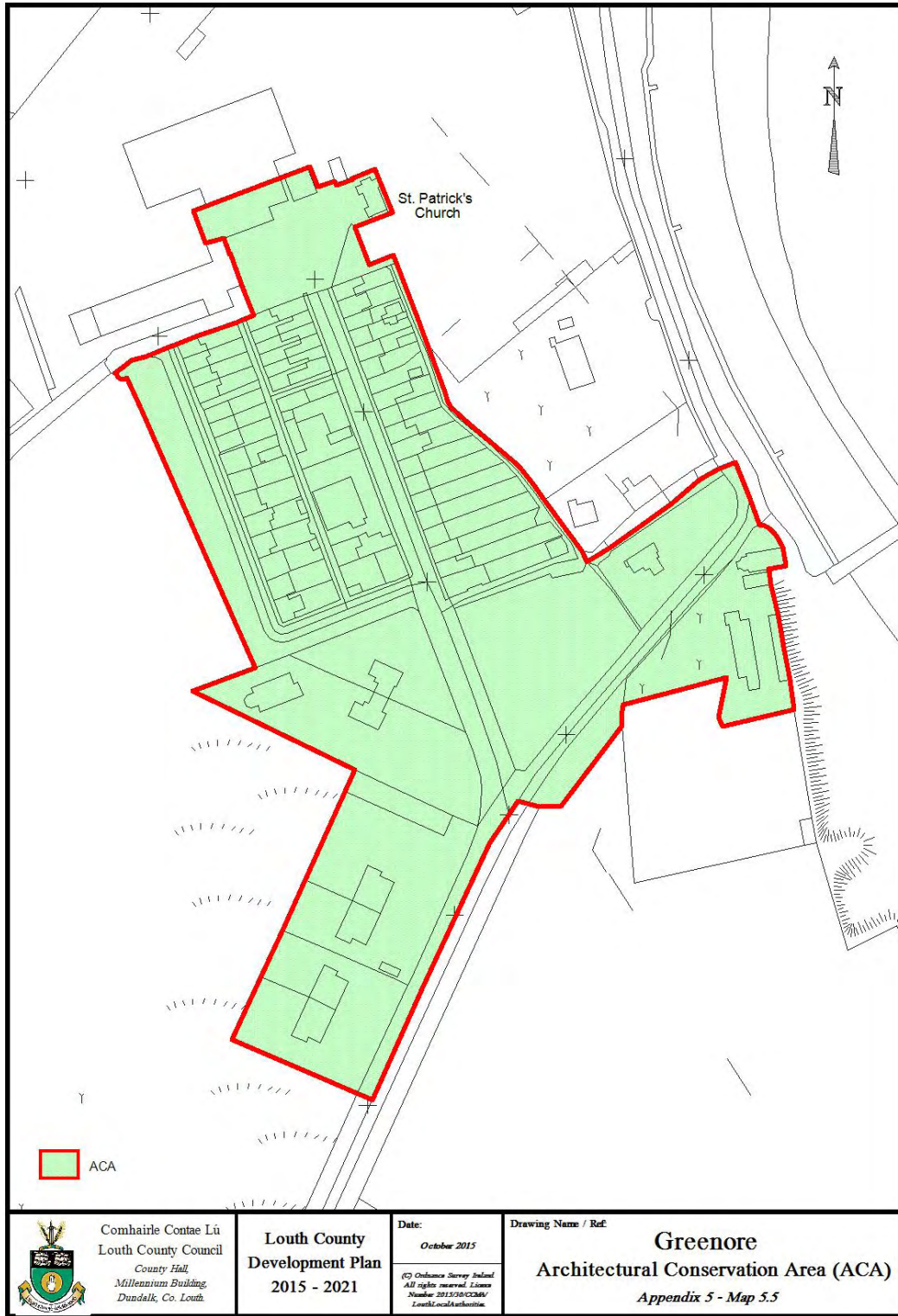
1. Along Euston Street, north to the Mournes.
2. Eastward from the coastguard houses and the seafront

5.5 Objectives

1. To preserve the special character of the village and its setting through positive management of changes to the built environment, in particular, by requiring that the height, scale, design and materials of any proposed development within the village and in the surrounding area should complement the character of the village and not diminish its distinctiveness of place.
2. To protect the landscape setting of the village and the views outwards.
3. To preserve the historic street pattern and character of the village, by the retention of buildings and materials as described above, and the retention of existing boundary features, walls, and railings.
4. To require the preservation and re-instatement of traditional details and materials on existing buildings and in the streetscape where improvements or maintenance works are being carried out.
5. To use appropriate materials, street furniture and lighting in any public development of the area.

Appendix 5
Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

Map 5.5: Greenore Architectural Conservation Area



Appendix 5
Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

Monasterboice ACA
Monastic Site



6.0 Location and Boundaries

The area of ACA covers the overall historic settlement, with its souterrain sites, and is largely unspoilt and free from modern development. There is archaeological evidence for enclosures and surviving deposits in the ground.

Traces of the circular earthen ramparts which once enclosed the monastery can be seen from the top of the tower.

6.1 Historical Development of the Area

This uniquely important early medieval monastic site was founded by St Búithe about AD 500 and was an important centre up to the twelfth century, when its importance was eclipsed by the foundation nearby of the first Cistercian abbey in Ireland at Mellifont.

The principle monuments are the Early Christian Round Tower, High Crosses, and Medieval church ruins. Muiredach's Cross and the Tall Cross, which date from the late ninth or early tenth century are among the most remarkable works of early Irish Art. These are beautifully carved with scenes from scripture and, as some of the finest examples of their type, are of undoubted international importance.

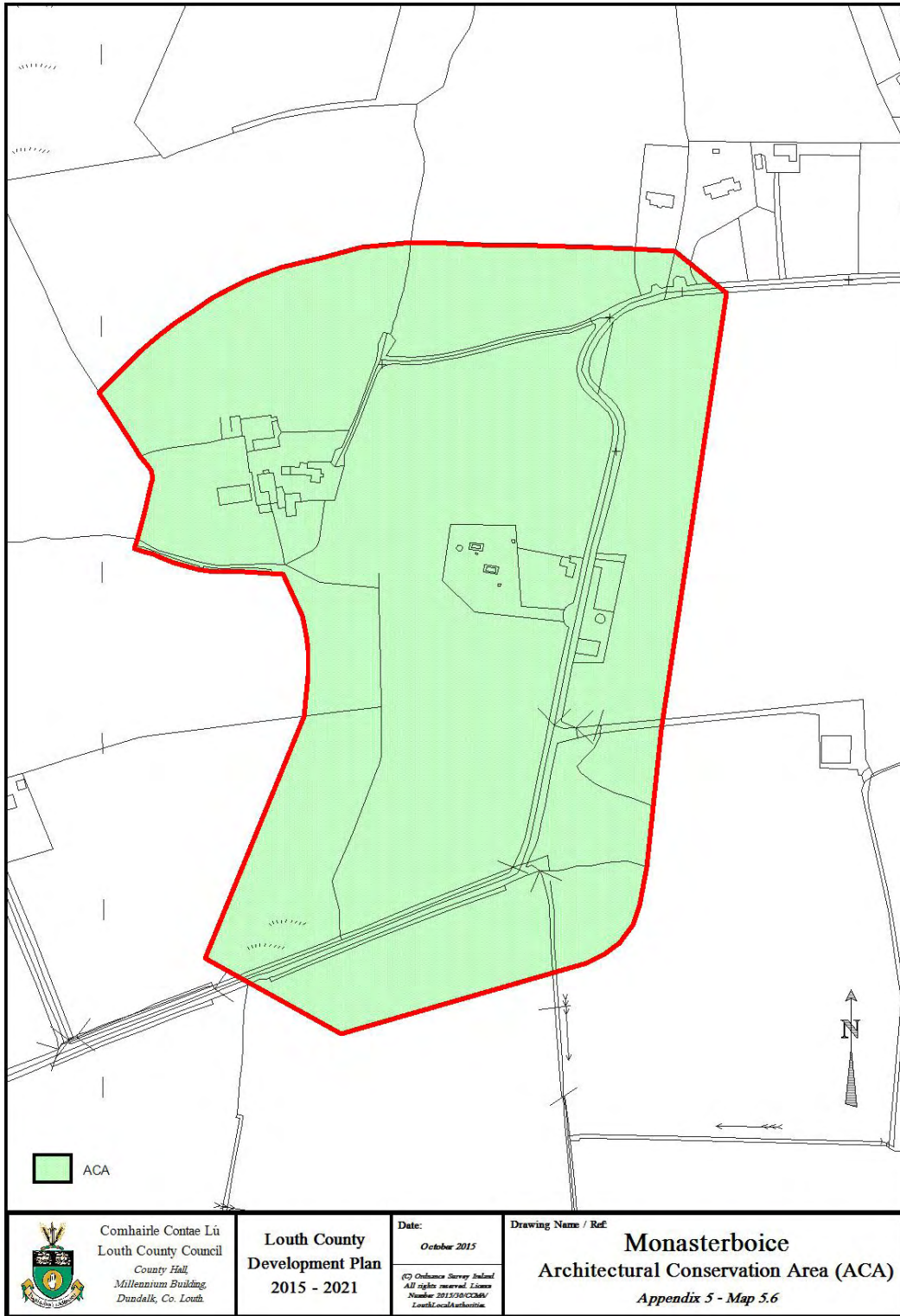
The Round Tower is 35m high and in very good condition.

6.2 Objectives

1. To protect the landscape setting of the mediaeval structures and ensure that the Round Tower remain the dominant vertical feature of the skyline.

Appendix 5
Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

Map 5.6: Monasterboice Ardee Architectural Conservation Area



**Newtown Monasterboice ACA
A Clachan Settlement**



7.0 Location and Boundaries

Newtown Monasterboice is located off the N1 to the north of the town of Drogheda. The ACA covers the area of the village to the rear boundaries of the plots.

7.1 Historical Development of the Area

A Clachan refers to a small settlement of clustered houses with no church, and usually, no shop or school. There would normally have been ties of kinship between the families in a clachan.

7.2 Character and Materials

Although a considerable number of new houses have been built in the area in the 20th century, the character has survived to a reasonable extent. The roadway is narrow and winding, with good and varied examples of stone walls and pleasant tree-lined views. The original buildings are vernacular, with single, 1 ½ or two storey dwellings with adjoining outbuildings, the roofs are slated, thatched or corrugated iron, walls are stone, natural, plastered or whitewashed.

7.3 Objectives

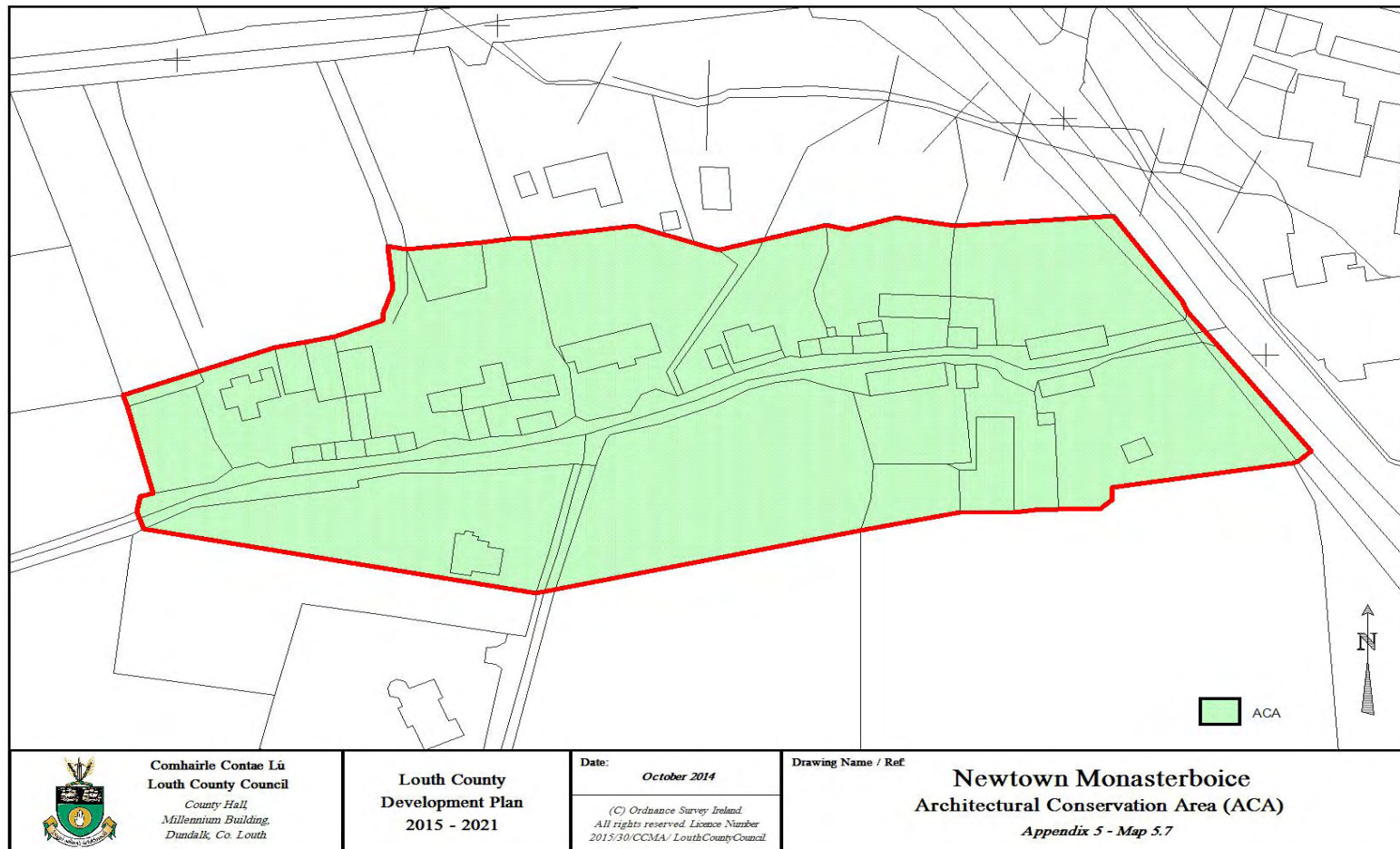
1. To preserve the special character of the village and its setting through positive management of changes to the built environment, in particular, by requiring that the height, scale, design and materials of any proposed development within the village should complement the character of the village.
2. To preserve the street pattern and character of the village, by the retention of buildings and materials as described above, and the retention of existing boundary features.
3. To require the preservation and re-instatement of traditional details and materials on existing buildings and in the streetscape where improvements or maintenance works are being carried out.

Appendix 5
Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

4. To use appropriate materials, street furniture and lighting in any public development of the area

Appendix 5
Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

Map 5.7: Newtown Monasterboice Architectural Conservation Area



**Salterstown ACA
A Clachan Settlement**



8.0 Location and Boundaries

Salterstown is located 2 km northeast of Annagassan. The ACA covers the area of the village to the rear boundaries of the plots.

8.1 Historical Development of the Area

A Clachan refers to a small settlement of clustered houses with no church, and usually, no shop or school. There would normally have been ties of kinship between the families in a clachan.

Salterstown is remarkable in that it has continued to evolve slowly, with new houses being built during the 20th century, but its traditional character has largely survived.

8.2 Character and Materials

The buildings are vernacular, with single, 1 ½ or two storey dwellings with adjoining outbuildings, the roofs are slated, thatched or corrugated iron, walls are stone, natural, plastered or whitewashed.

There are some good and varied examples of stone walls within the settlement and pleasant tree-lined views.

8.3 Objectives

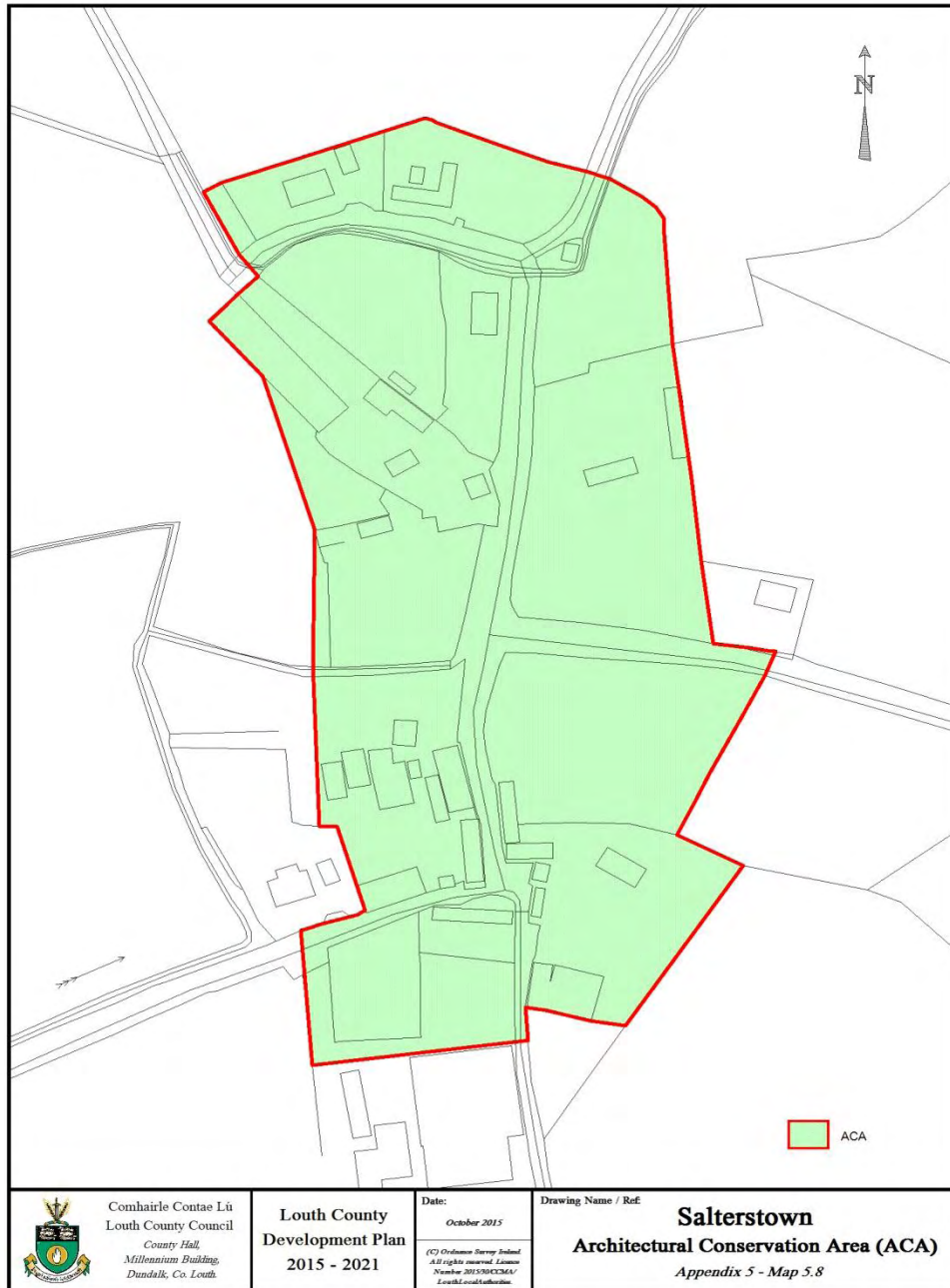
1. To preserve the special character of the village and its setting through positive management of changes to the built environment, in particular, by requiring that the height, scale, design and materials of any proposed development within the village and in the surrounding area should complement the character of the village and not diminish its distinctiveness of place.

Appendix 5
Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

2. To protect the landscape setting of the village and the views outwards.
3. To preserve the historic street pattern and character of the village, by the retention of buildings and materials as described above, and the retention of existing boundary features, walls, and railings.
4. To require the preservation and re-instatement of traditional details and materials on existing buildings and in the streetscape where improvements or maintenance works are being carried out.
5. To use appropriate materials, street furniture and lighting in any public development of the area.

Appendix 5
Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

Map 5.8: Salterstown Architectural Conservation Area



Whitestown ACA



9.0 Location and Boundaries

Whitestown is located on the south eastern tip of the Cooley peninsula, close to the coast. The ACA covers the historic area of the settlement to the rear of all plots and includes a buffer zone on all approach roads.

9.1 Historical Development of the Area

A Clachan refers to a small settlement of clustered houses with no church, and usually, no shop or school. There would normally have been ties of kinship between the families in a clachan. Whitestown is remarkable in that it has continued to evolve slowly, with new houses being built during the 20th century, but its traditional character has survived.

9.2 Character

The village consists of a single street, with clusters of buildings forming secondary spaces and courtyard areas set back from the street. Some houses face onto the street, some are end-on, producing a varied street edge.

The buildings are vernacular, with single, 1 ½ or two storey dwellings with adjoining outbuildings, Both gables and frontages face the road creating semi-enclosed spaces. The roads are not defined by kerbs, but edged with grassed verges, or change surface gently to meet the buildings.

9.3 Materials

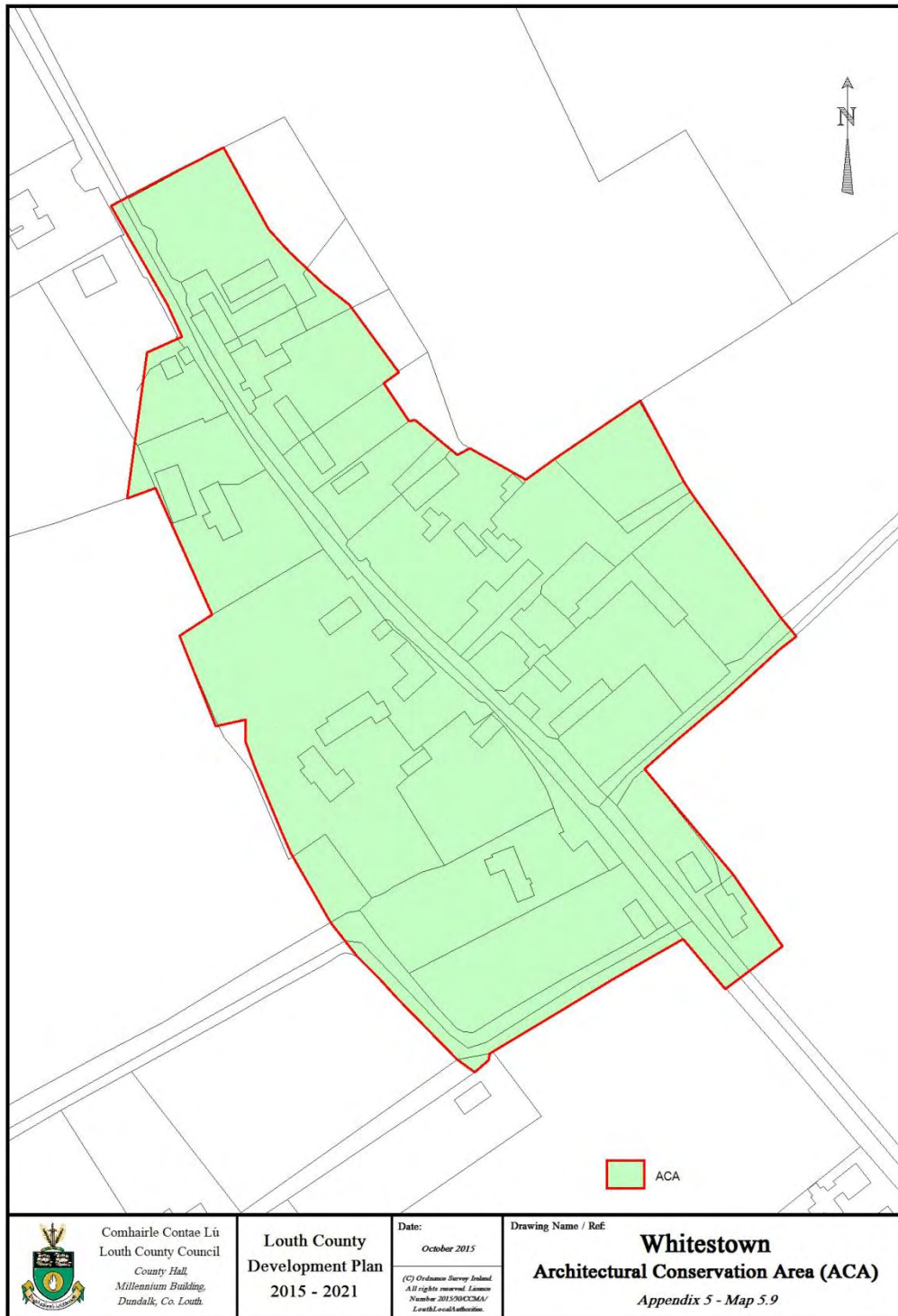
The roofs are slated, thatched or corrugated iron, walls are stone, natural, plastered or whitewashed.

9.4 Objectives

1. To preserve the special character of the village through positive management of changes to the built environment, in particular, by requiring that the height, scale, layout, design and materials of any proposed development within the village should be consistent with the character of the village and not diminish its distinctiveness of place.
2. To protect the integrity of the village and its landscape setting, by limiting the extent of development along the approach roads to the village, and requiring that any new development on its periphery should be compatible in layout, form and materials with the existing character of the ACA.
3. To preserve the historic building pattern and character of the village, by the retention of buildings and materials as described above, and the retention of existing boundary features, walls, and railings.
4. To encourage the retention or re-use where appropriate of intact structures, repair or reinstatement of derelict or disused structures, and to permit infill development where this is sensitive to the character of the settlement.
5. To require the preservation and re-instatement of traditional details and materials on existing buildings and in the streetscape where improvements or maintenance works are being carried out.

Appendix 5
Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

Map 5.9 Whitestown Architectural Conservation Area



Townley Hall Demesne ACA



10.0 Location and Boundaries

Townley Hall is located approximately 4Km to the west of Drogheda on the Drogheda to Slane road (N51) on the north side of the river Boyne, south-west of the village of Tullyallen and to the west of King William's Glen. It is situated on the higher ground to the north of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site and to the north of the Oldbrige Estate which is owned by the State in association with the site of the Battle of the Boyne. The ACA covers the historic Demesne including a number of gate lodges, the old church, school & glebe house.

10.1 Historical Development of the Area

Townley Hall is the demesne of the Nationally Important House. It is a fine demesne for an earlier house northeast of present house. The surviving informal landscape park for important house c.1798 by architect Francis Johnston; is noted in 'Gardener's Magazine' (1827) as "one of the most magnificent demesnes in the kingdom".

It sits in secluded private grounds, approached by a long wooded avenue. Commissioned as a private home for the Townley Balfour family. The house is set on elevated site in parkland, woodland and shelter belts beyond. Though the house in its setting is intact and the demesne retains its original layout, there have been internal alterations over time. There are fine mature trees and more recent planting near the house. Coillte manages much of the woodland and part is a forest park, with public access. A lot of the demesne is traditional farmland, but a golf course and many dwellings have been developed along the outskirts of the demesne. <http://www.townleyhall.ie/>

10.2 Objectives:

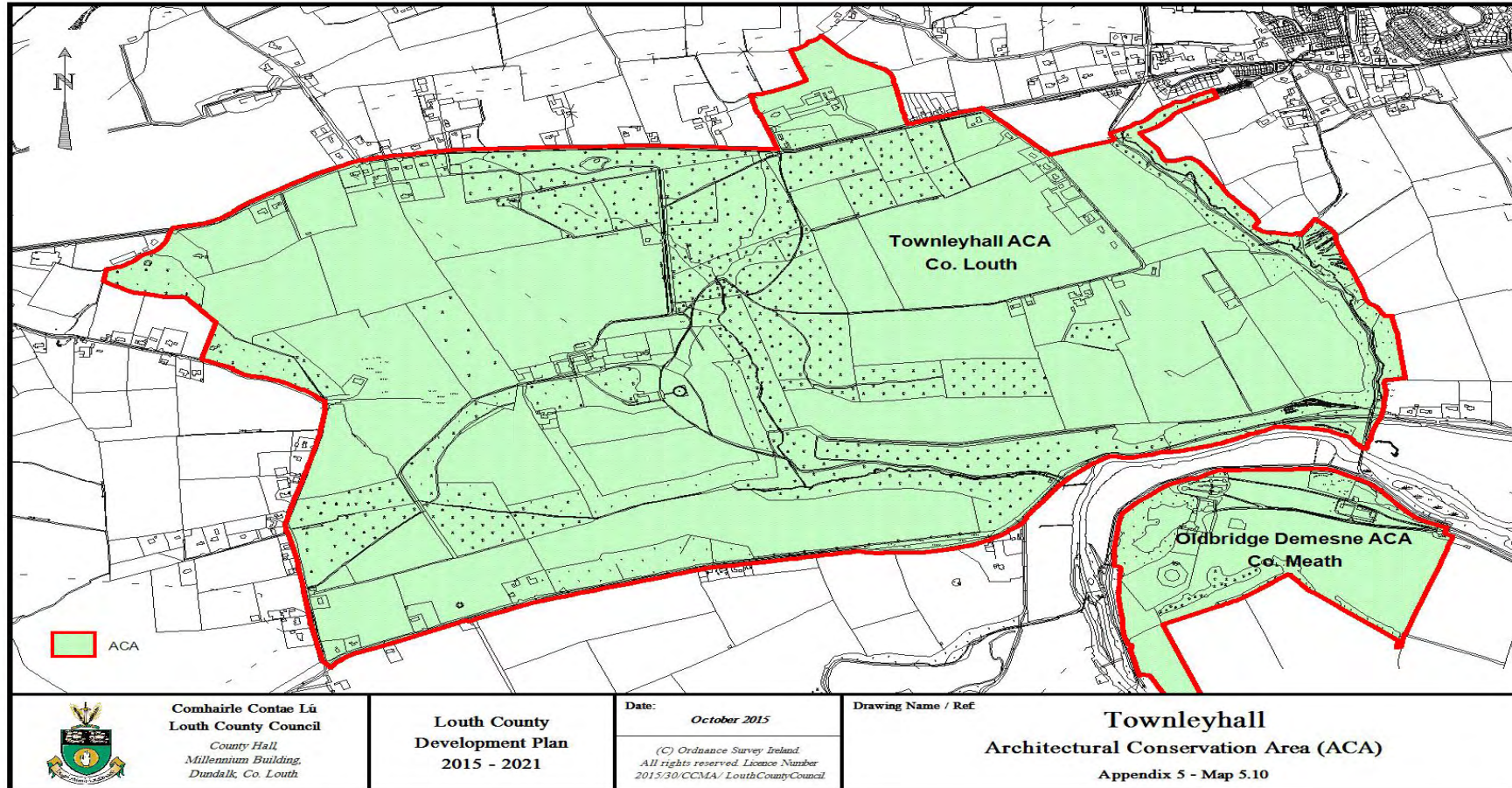
1. To preserve the character of the demesne, its designed landscape and built features by limiting the extent of new development permitted within the demesne and requiring that any such development respect the setting and special qualities of the demesne.

Appendix 5
Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

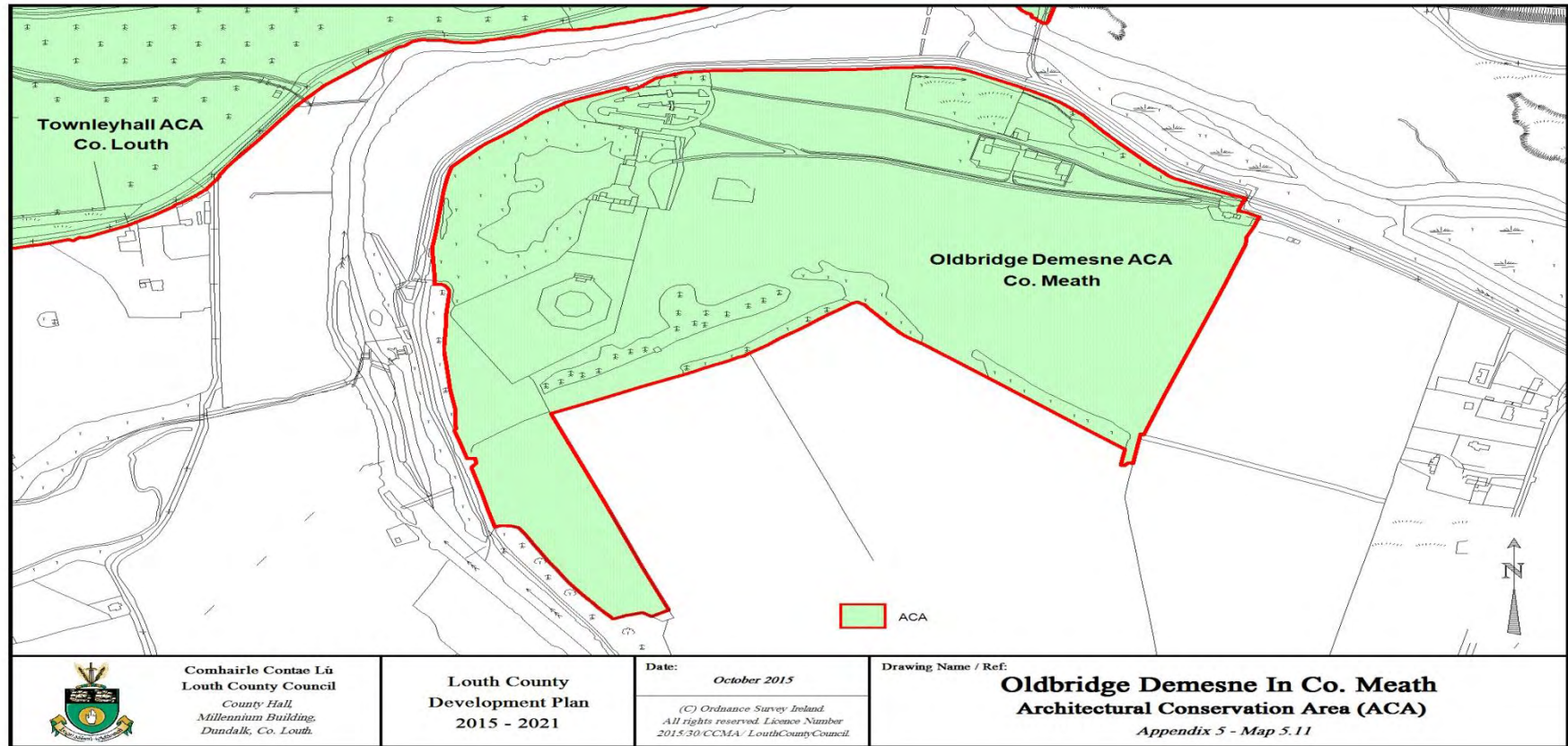
2. To require that all works, whether of maintenance and repair, additions or alterations to existing buildings or built features within the demesne shall protect the character of those buildings and features by the use of appropriate materials and workmanship.

Appendix 5
Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)

Map 5.10: Townley Hall Architectural Conservation Area



**Appendix 5
Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)**



**Map 5.11: Oldbridge Demesne County Meath –
See Section 5.9.7 in Chapter 5 on Notes for Applicants in County Louth**

Appendix 6

Characteristics of Vernacular Buildings

	Vernacular Architecture	Formal Architecture
Builder	From immediate locality Name rarely known	Usually from some distance away Name often known
Original Owner	Farmer, labourer, fisherman Often the builder	Includes wealthy & professional people Rarely the builder
Scale	Relatively small buildings	Often much larger buildings
Costs	Relatively low	Usually considerably higher
Design	Drawn from tradition Simple shapes, roofs Thick walls Little ornamentation	Often designed professionally Often complex shapes, roofs Usually much thinner walls Often ornamented, e.g. with carved bargeboards to gables
Inspiration	Tradition Strong regional character	Mainly influenced by architectural styles Designs can usually be found anywhere
Climate & Siting	Very carefully considered	Much less considered
Layout	One of two traditional plans No formal hall One room deep Kitchen is the hub of the house Small number of rooms	Can be of greatly differing type Usually a formal hall Frequently two rooms deep Kitchen is an ancillary room More rooms and more variety
Materials	From immediate locality Include mud, straw, wattle Rarely include fired brick, cement and metals Often unsawn roof timbers Rarely produced industrially Majority originally thatched	Often transported some distance Rarely include mud, straw, wattle Frequently include fired brick, cement, metals Usually sawn or squared timbers Often produced industrially Thatch used rarely, as ornament
Survival	Heavily rural	Greater proportion is urban
Dating	Rarely datable No longer built since c. 1900	Usually a precise date known Continues to be built today
Protection	Few protected by law	Proportionately more protected

Appendix 7

Ardee ACA Character Appraisal

Ardee Architectural Conservation Area,

Ardee County Louth,

Character Appraisal

This assessment of the special character area of Ardee Architectural Conservation Area was prepared in 2011 and revised in September 2013 by Lotts Architecture & Urbanism. The study was commissioned by Louth County Council.

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council



*for Louth County Council
with support from
the Heritage Council*



Ardee Architectural Conservation Area
Ardee, Co Louth

CHARACTER APPRAISAL

Preface

This assessment of the special character of Ardee Architectural Conservation Area was prepared in 2011 and revised in September 2013 by Lotts Architecture and Urbanism.

The study was commissioned by Louth County Council and its progress was guided by Brendan McSherry, Louth Heritage Officer and Angela Dullaghan, Conservation Officer.

Richard McLoughlin

Lotts Architecture and Urbanism Ltd.

September 2013

Acknowledgements

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Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction	6
1.1	Architectural Conservation Areas	6
1.2	Location and Setting of ACA.....	6
2.0	Historical Development of Ardee	8
2.1	Historical overview	8
2.2	Medieval period	8
2.3	Seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.....	12
2.4	Nineteenth century developments	14
2.5	Twentieth century	19
2.6	Historical Sources	20
3.0	Statutory Protection and Planning Objectives	21
3.1	Protected Structures in the ACA.....	21
3.2	Historic Designed Landscapes	23
3.3	Recorded Monuments in the ACA	23
3.4	Ardee Local Area Plan (LAP) 2010-2016	23
3.5	Ardee Age Friendly Town Strategy	24
4.0	Description of Historic Built Environment	25
4.1	Defining Characteristics.....	25
4.1.1	Layout.....	25
4.1.2	Socio-economic Functions	26
4.1.3	Building Types, Scale and Materials	27
4.1.4	Quality and treatment of Open Space.....	30

4.2	Street by street appraisal	32
4.2.1	Dundalk Road and Carrick Road	32
4.2.2	Fair Green	34
4.2.3	Irish Street	35
4.2.4	Market Street	37
4.2.5	Castle Street	41
4.2.6	Bridge Street	43
4.2.7	Plots to rear of main thoroughfare	45
4.2.8	Markethouse Lane	46
4.2.9	Sean O’Carroll Street	47
4.2.10	College Lane	48
4.2.11	Ash Walk	49
4.2.12	Barret’s Lane	49
4.2.13	The Boat Trench	50
4.2.14	Patrick Tierney Street	51
4.2.15	Riverside walk and Moorhall (West)	52
4.2.16	William Street and Moorhall Street (East)	54
4.2.17	John Street	56
4.2.18	Convent of Mercy	56
4.2.19	Ardee Demesne	57
4.2.20	Views	58
5.0	Summary of Special Character	60
6.0	Implications for Planning and Development	62
6.1	Planning Control	62
6.1.1	Limits to Exempted Development	62

6.1.2	Protected Structures	62
6.1.3	Non-protected Structures.....	63
6.1.4	Public Domain.....	63
6.2	Works which do not affect the character of the ACA.....	64
6.2.1	Maintenance & Repairs.....	64
6.2.2	Internal Alterations	64
6.2.3	Restoration of Character.....	64
6.3	Works which affect the character of the ACA.....	65
6.3.1	External Walls	66
6.3.2	Windows & Doors.....	70
6.3.3	Medieval Structures.....	73
6.3.4	Vernacular Buildings	73
6.3.5	Shopfronts	74
6.3.6	Signage and External fittings.....	76
6.3.7	Boundary Treatments.....	77
6.3.8	Demolition.....	78
6.3.9	New Build Interventions.....	78
6.3.10	Amalgamation of Properties or Sites	79
6.3.11	External Lighting.	80
6.3.12	Views	80
6.4	Works To The Public Realm	80
6.4.1	Works by the Local Authority	80
6.4.2	Works by Statutory Undertakers.....	81
6.4.3	Historic Paving & Street Furniture	81
6.4.4	Drainage	81

6.4.5	Street Lighting	81
6.4.6	Traffic and Management Signage	82
6.4.7	Management of Parking	82
6.4.8	Planting & Landscaping	83
6.4.9	Service Utilities	84
6.4.10	Wires and Distribution Poles	84

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Architectural Conservation Areas

Planning legislation allows a planning authority to include objectives in its development plan to preserve the character of places, areas, groups of structures, or townscapes that:

- are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or value, or
- contribute to the appreciation of protected structures.

Such areas, places or groups are known as Architectural Conservation Areas, or ACAs. Thirty four ACAs have been designated in County Louth.

An ACA could be an historic town centre, a distinctive streetscape, a terrace of houses, or it might be a wider group of structures associated with a specific building such as a country house or an old mill.

The aim of ACA designation is to preserve and enhance the character of the area or group. The form and arrangement of buildings, structures and landscape features within an ACA are important in how they contribute to the character of the area or group. Historic materials, architectural features, prevailing heights, building lines and plots sizes, as well as the scale and arrangement of streets and open spaces all make a contribution to the character of an ACA.

For this reason, the external appearance of buildings and the features of the open space are protected in an ACA. Planning permission is

required for any works that would have an impact on the character of an ACA. Importantly, works which in other locations would meet the criteria for Exempted Development as outlined in the Planning Regulations will require planning permission if they are within an ACA.

Designation as an ACA does not prevent alterations, extensions or new build within the area, but aims to ensure that any new development respects or enhances the special character of the ACA. Works must therefore be carried out in consultation with the planning department and conservation officer, and this is usually through a planning application.

This document is one in a series that set out to define the special character of each individual ACA and give guidance to homeowners, developers, architects and planning professionals on the type of works that would require planning permission in that specific area.

1.2 Location and Setting of ACA

Ardee, in Irish Baile Átha Fhirdhia, is a small market town situated in the west of County Louth. It lies at the junction of the Dublin to Monaghan road (N2) and the Dundalk to Kells road (N52), 16.5km north of Slane, and 17.5 km south east of Dundalk. The town lies 8km west of the M1 motorway, to which it is connected by the N33. These busy national routes bring a lot of traffic into and through Ardee. The town is served by regional routes R170 to Dunleer to the east and R171 to Louth village in the north.

Ardee is organised around a main axis that runs roughly north-south, named variously along its length as Irish Street, Market Street, Castle Street and Bridge Street. A number of approach roads gather at either end of this axis and several others branch off perpendicular to it along its length.

Louth County Council's Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) of December 2002 locates Ardee in a landscape area called the 'Muirhevna Plain'. This is described having 'flat undulating features drained by the meandering lazy rivers of the Fane, Glyde, White and Dee rivers'. Ardee lies on topography that slopes downwards from south to north. The River Dee (An Nith in Irish) flows from west to east to flow into the Irish Sea at Annagassan. The river runs to the south of the old town and is crossed by a historic bridge at the southern end of the main street.

The Landscape Character Assessment notes the rich tree cover in Ardee. The various groups of mature broad leaf trees and the river corridor create rich visual and ecological assets that contribute much to defining the special character of the town. Specimen trees also include cedars and Scots pine.

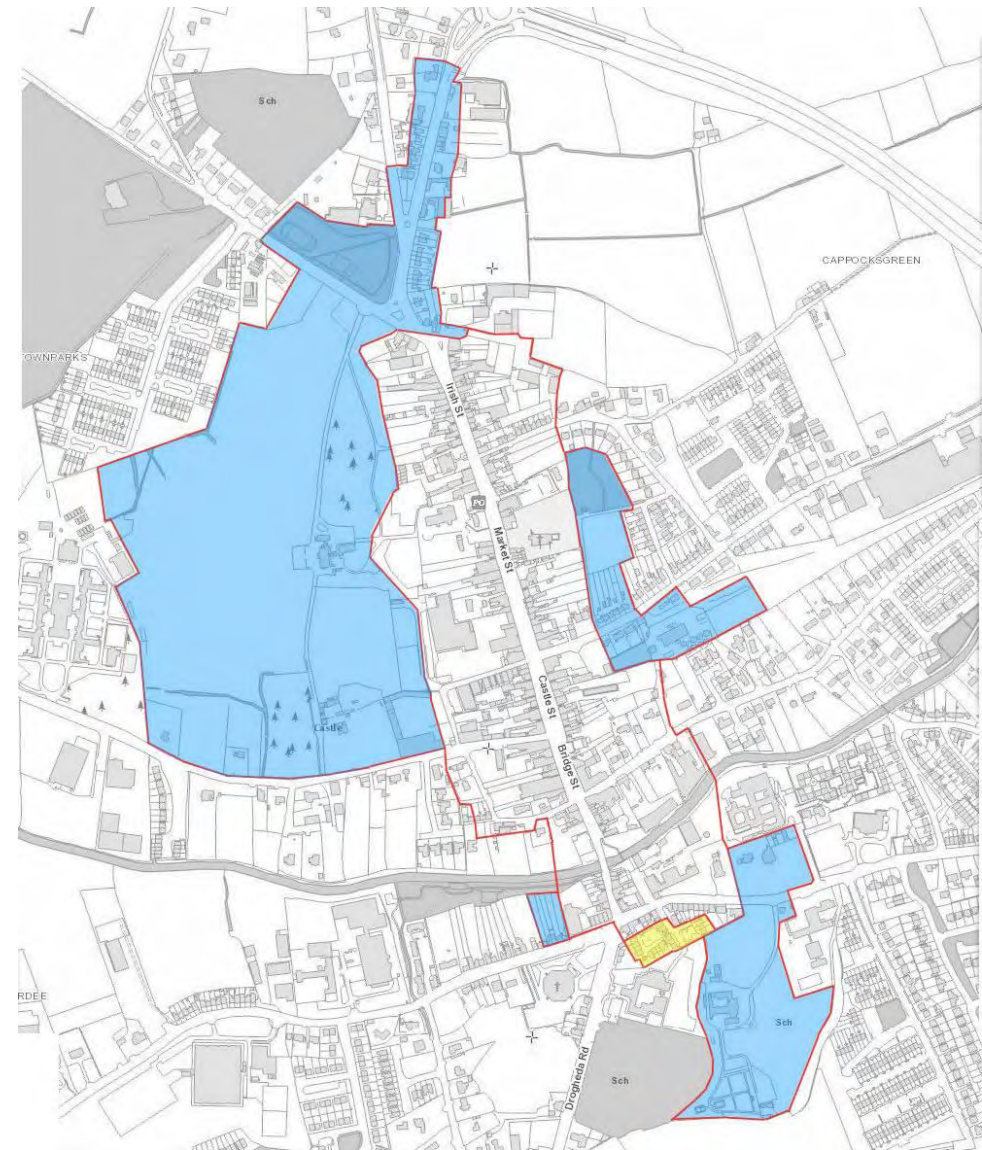


Fig. 1: Proposed alteration of ACA boundary

2.0 Historical Development of Ardee

2.1 Historical overview

Ardee, known as Atherdee into the nineteenth century, derives its name from the Irish *Áth Fhirdia*, ‘the Ford of Ferdia’. The ford, an ancient river crossing located upstream from the present bridge is held to be the site of the heroic three-day single combat in which the Connacht warrior Ferdia was slain by his friend and foster brother Cúchulainn, as recorded in the *Táin Bó Culaigne* or Cattle Raid of Cooley, the epic tale in the Ulster Cycle of Irish mythology.

The town originated as a Norman settlement dating from the late twelfth century, and received five murage grants between 1376 and 1416. Ardee is one of the best examples of a medieval market town in Ireland, and its early footprint still endures today, with the broad linear pattern of Market Street and Castle Street forming the main artery through the town, intersected by narrower streets and laneways running east and west to the former line of the town walls. Long burgage plots are still evident, with a tight network of rubble stone walls delineating the former holdings.

The townscape is dominated by the fortified houses of Ardee Castle (formerly St Leger’s) and Hatch Castle, robust reminders of its medieval past. Architects involved in the town’s development include Thomas Duff, J.J. McCarthy and the nineteenth-century county surveyor John Neville.

2.2 Medieval period

The early settlement was established soon after the Norman Invasion by Gilbert Pipard, who accompanied King John to Ireland in 1185. Developments of this time included the Pipard castle at Castleguard to the east of the town, which as late as 1795 still contained vestiges of two octagonal buildings, and the foundation in 1207 of a monastery and hospital for the *Fratres Cruciferi* or Crutched Friars. A Carmelite monastery was founded by Ralph Pipard in the early 1300s in the east of the town on the River Dee. In 1315 the Scottish invasion of Edward Bruce passed through the town, and the medieval parish church or St Mary, in which the townspeople had taken refuge, was destroyed.

During the later Middle Ages Ardee was an outpost at the northern edge of the Pale bordering Gaelic Ulster, where it was highly vulnerable to attack and was used as rallying point of the English on regular raids against the Ulster Irish. Murage grants given in the early fifteenth century triggered the first major building phase within the town, which saw market areas laid out and streets paved. The town was encompassed by walls as far as the River Dee, with an area of almost 62 acres enclosed. There were six gates in all, Irish Gate, Head Gate, Ash Gate, Blind Gate, Bridge Gate and Cappock’s Gate to the east, which survives to the present day in a fragmentary state, the only surviving remains of a gate in the town.

Once established, the walls seem to have acted as the bounds of the town until the end of the medieval period, when the extramural suburb of Irish Street was formed to the north, but the town was not entirely

built up inside the defences leaving large tracts of undeveloped areas. While there is clear evidence for high stone walls on the western side, the side facing away from the Pale, the form of enclosure on the eastern side is less clear, and it is possible that this was an earthen bank rather than a wall of stone. The linear form of the town and the strong building line on its eastern side might indicate that there was once a wall on this line, and that the eastern area was an extension which was never fully walled in or developed. One explanation for the open area within the town would be as a refuge of English settlers driven into the town during periods of conflict.

At some point before the end of the seventeenth century Irish Street was taken into the town and a gate built at its northern end, but it does not appear that the town walls were extended to enclose this suburb.

The footprint within the walls emerged as a linear pattern, with a broad thoroughfare running north-south through the town, formed by the combination of Irish Street, Market Street, Castle Street and Bridge Street, and a number of narrow streets and laneways intersecting it. The smaller streets of Ash Walk and Lamb's Lane forming a cross-street were referred to in 1540 as the 'great cross of the town'. Market Street is mentioned in early sources in 1344 and was the site of the medieval market place where the market-cross (1450) would have originally stood. The layout of many of the burgage plots in the town would appear to have survived, as reflected in the nature of the narrow plots with rubble stone dividing walls to the rear of the both sides of the main street.

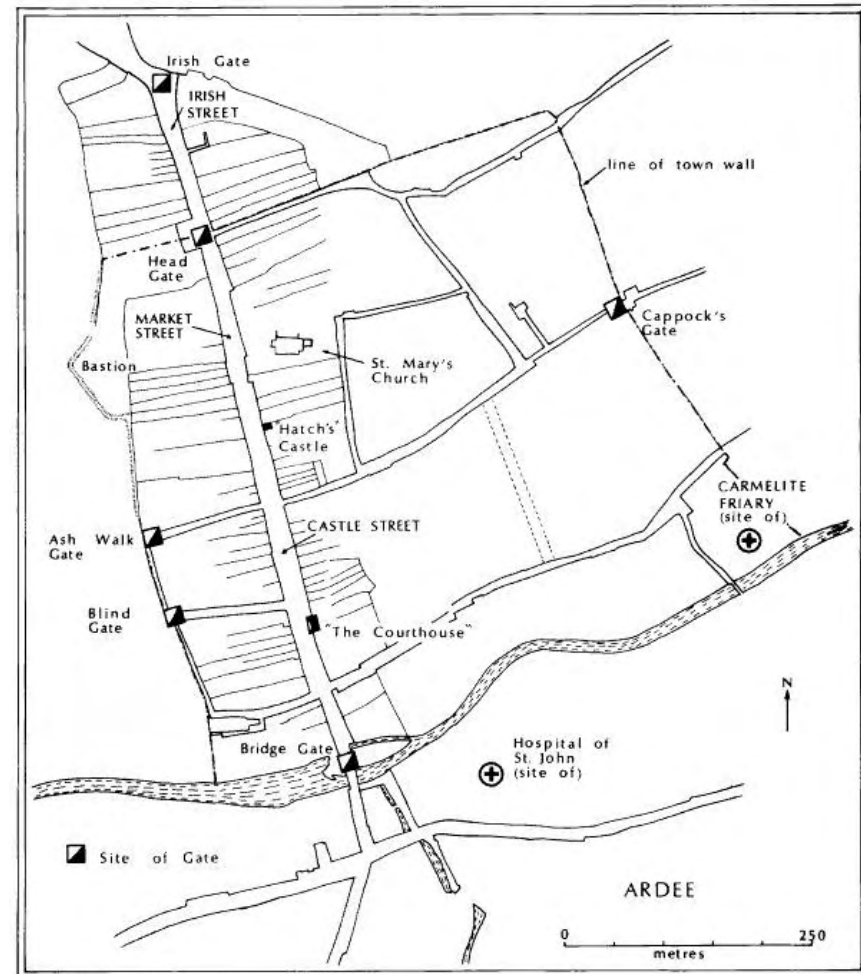


Fig. 2: Reconstruction of historical layout by John Bradley (1984)



Fig. 3: Ruins of St Mary's Church from Grose's Antiquities (1791-6)

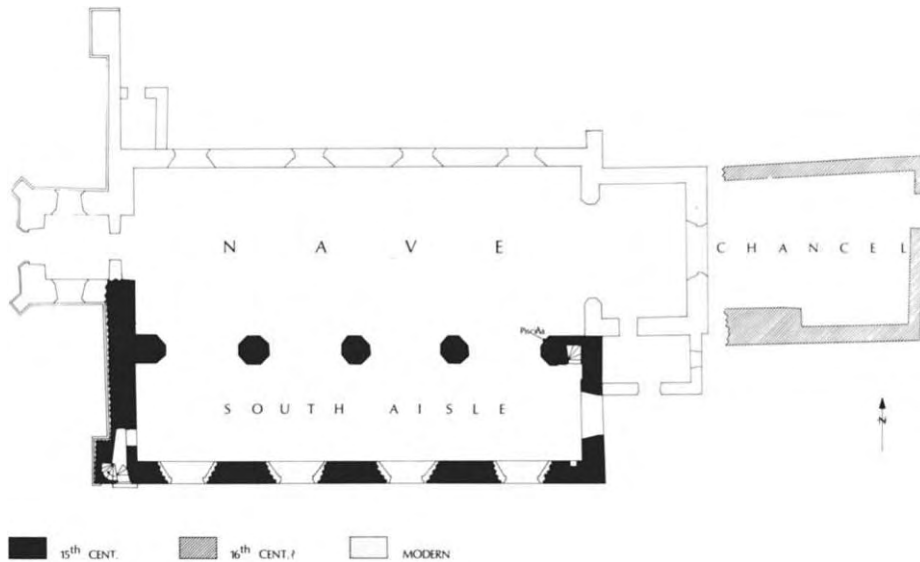


Fig. 4: Plan of St Mary's church, from Bradley

The parish church of St Mary and two chantries had been founded in the fourteenth century. The ruined south aisle, depicted in Grose's Antiquities of c.1791-6 (Fig. 7), were later integrated into the present Church of Ireland Church (Lhs017-006 NIAH 13823052). The unroofed ruin of the Chantry College, established before 1487 by Walter Verdun chaplain of Ardee, survives east of the church site, being the southern part of the original structure, and one of the few chantries to survive in this country. Ardee Castle at the south end of Castle Street (Lhs017-017 NIAH 13823004), formerly St Leger's Castle, replaced an earlier structure founded by Roger Pipard in 1207. It is the largest fortified medieval townhouse to survive in the country, although its function changed through the centuries.



Fig. 5: Ardee Castle, section and elevation from Murtagh

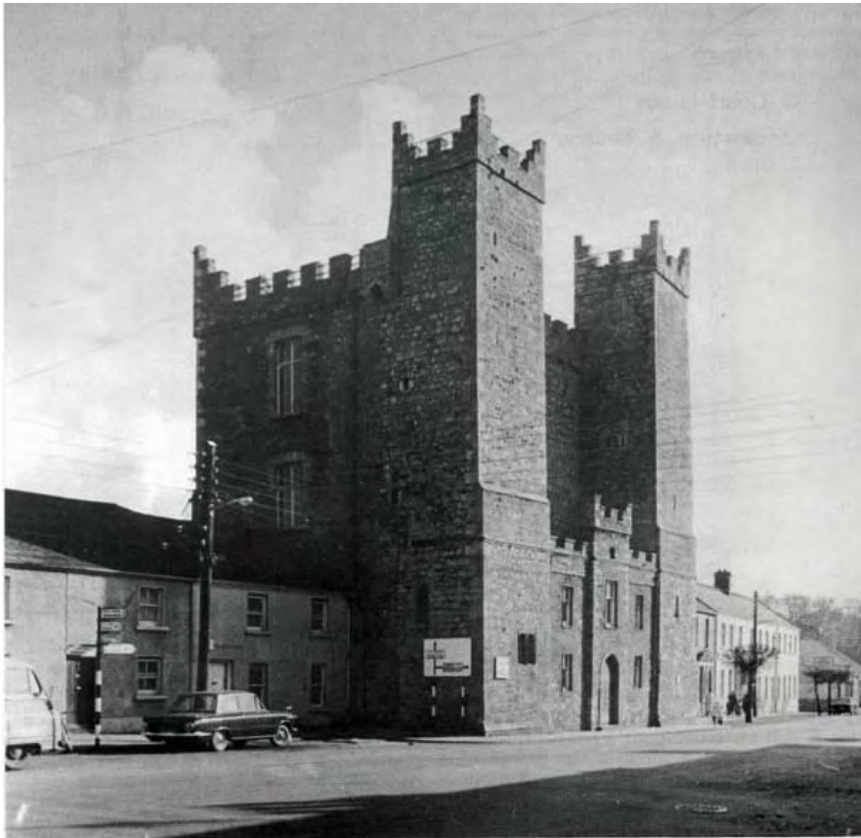


Plate 192—Tower house, 'The Courthouse', at Townparks, Ardee (No. 1137)

Fig. 6: Photograph of Ardee Castle, formerly St Leger's Castle, c. 1970

Hatch's Castle (further north) was built two or three hundred years later and remained a residence for the Hatch family who modernised the tower house and added revival battlements, window openings and hooded mouldings in the early nineteenth century (Lhs017-009 NIAH 13823055).

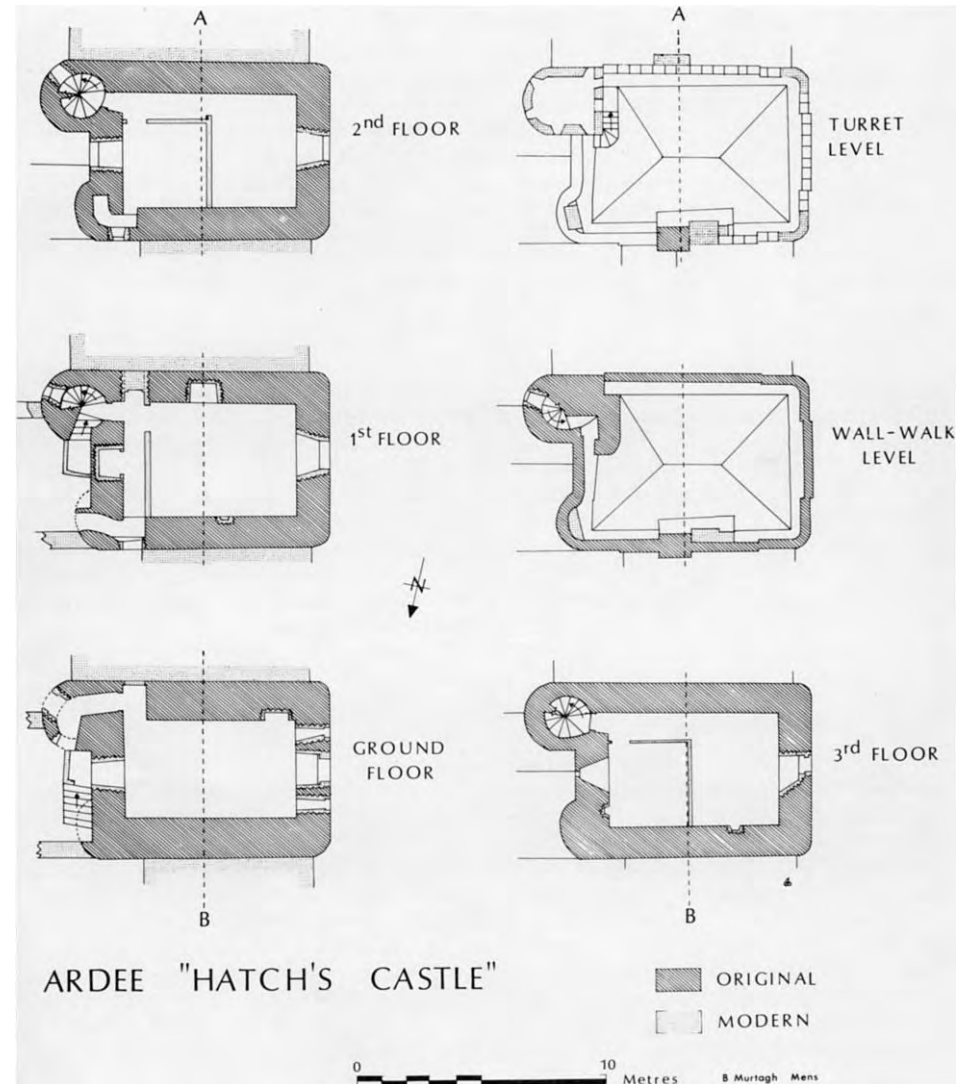


Fig. 7: Floor plans of Hatch's Castle, from Murtagh

2.3 Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

A market charter was granted to the town in the seventeenth century and the current town is largely made up of the urban footprint and street architecture which emerged in the ensuing period. The Down Survey, drawn up in 1657 as part of the Cromwellian plantation, shows little detail, but the river appears to form the eastern boundary of Ardee. An extramural religious house is shown to the west of the walled town as a building with a cross on its roof. This tower house (Lhs017-037 SMR:LH017-009) dating from the fifteenth-century survives today forming part of the farmyard of the demesne of Ardee House now St Joseph's Hospital(Lhs017-035 13823055) to the north of Jervis Street.

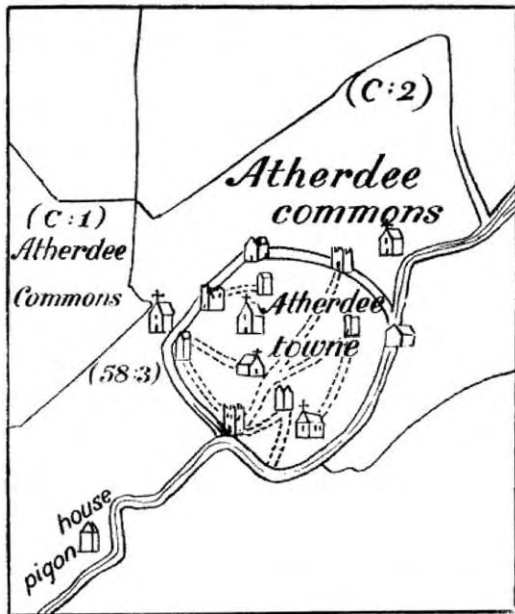


Fig. 8: Down Survey map of Ardee, 1657



Fig. 9: Extract from 1908 OS map showing location of 14th century tower house within Ardee Demesne, relative to former Ash Gate



Fig. 10: 14th century tower house within farmyard of Ardee Demesne.

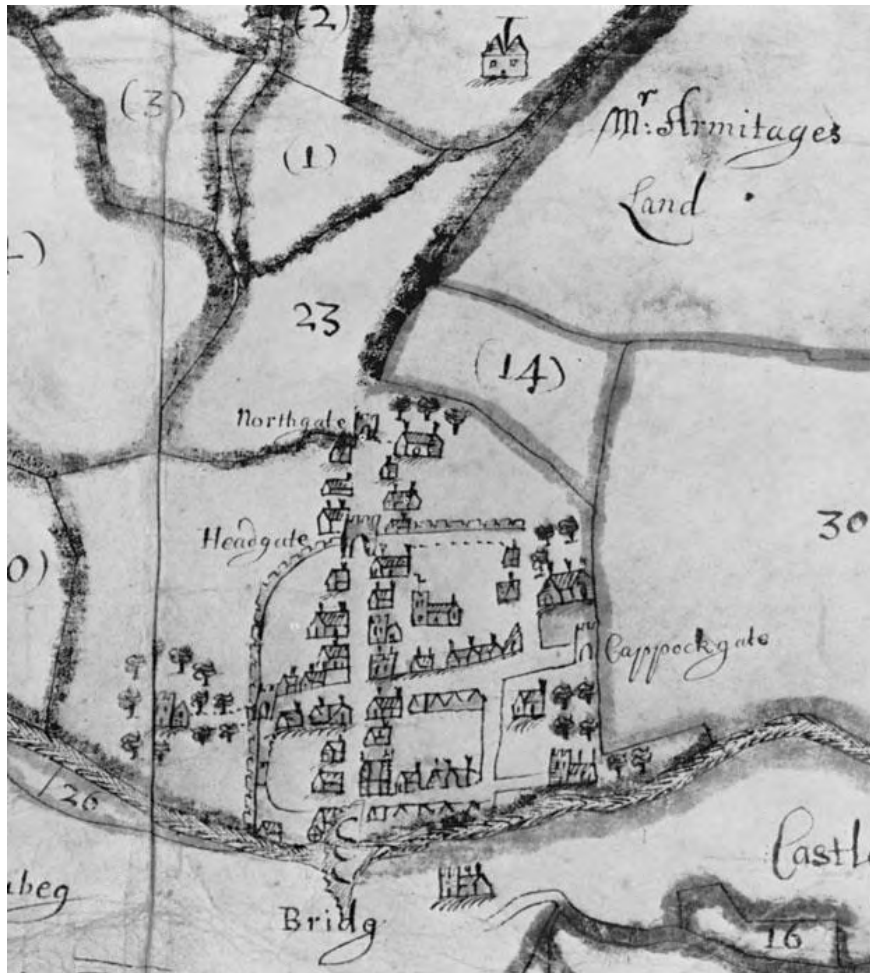


Fig. 11: Richardson map of 1677

Richardson's map of 1677 depicts the town in considerable detail. The main street is shown leading from a triple-arched stone bridge of over the river in the south to Head Gate in the north and beyond to the extramural suburb around Irish Street, with North Gate at its northern

end. Town walls are shown on the north and west sides only, with Ash Gate and Cappoock Gate connected by what is now Sean O'Carroll Street and Ash Walk. The eastern boundary is marked but not indicated as walled. The religious house referred to above is shown to the west surrounded by trees with an extramural extension of Ash Walk leading from Ash Gate. Tierney Street, St Mary's Church, The Carmelite Priory and south of the river the Hospital of St John are also shown.

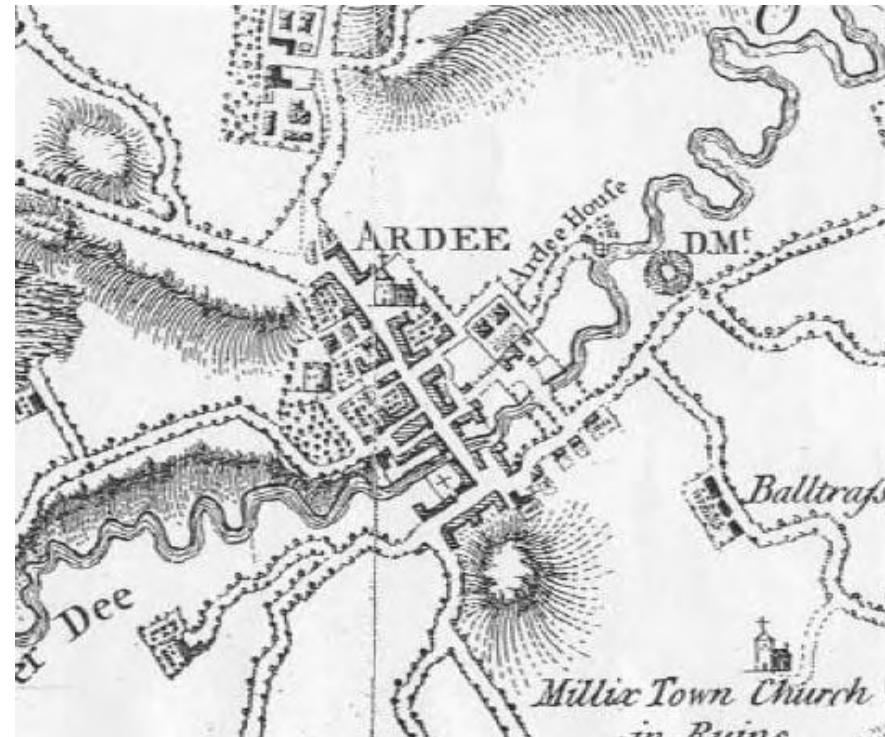


Fig. 12: Extract from Matthew Wren's Map of the County of Louth, 1766

A fortification in the form of a pointed artillery bastion on the western wall of the town is believed to have been constructed by French engineers in the army of James II during the Williamite-Jacobite War of 1689-91. The mass of this feature can still be seen between Market Street and the former Ardee House, a substantial red brick structure of classical design at the centre of a landscaped demesne to the west of the town, built and laid out c.1780 for the Ruxton family, whose ancestor Captain John Ruxton was granted the lands of the Flemings of Slane by Cromwell.

Matthew Wren's map of 1766 shows the evolving town in this period, and marks an earlier Ardee House on the east of the town, probably that shown on Richardson's map, adjoining the Cappock Gate.

During the eighteenth century, in addition to the two castles towering over the east side of the main street, the town was dominated by the market house, sited centrally on the main street. A typically plain building with a raised arcade through which carts and cattle could pass, it also served as a sessions-house and town assembly at the upper level. It was replaced by a later building in the early nineteenth century.

Ardee was situated in a very fertile corn district at that time and there were many flour mills and early malting houses. An extensive milling and tannery was built on the corner of Bridge Street and William Street at a later period.

2.4 Nineteenth century developments

In the early nineteenth century a series of improvements enhanced the major buildings fronting the main thoroughfare of the town. In 1804 St Leger's Castle, a massive four-storey rectangular house with projecting towers, was in ruins when acquired by the Louth Grand Jury. Between 1805 and 1810 the structure was extensively rebuilt as a courthouse and a bridewell.

The tower interrupts the natural line of Castle Street and projects imposingly into the street. Despite the nineteenth-century renovations the building retains its ground-floor barrel vaults, a spiral stair and some small corbelled rooms. The old bridewell was replaced in 1863 by John Neville's austere building to the rear.



Fig. 13: Main streets and courthouse, Lawrence Collection , c. 1900

The free-standing market house was rebuilt in 1810 on a newly laid out market square on the west side of Market Street. This was an elegant, low and elongated classical building, with screen walls, a clock tower and cupola. It was used as a centre for municipal affairs, and for religious activities when St Mary's Parish Church was undergoing reconstruction. The building survived until 1987 when it was replaced by the present structure.



Fig. 14: Ardee market house and square, Lawrence Collection, c. 1900

During the same period (c. 1810) the ruins of St Mary's Parish Church, were incorporated into a new structure for the Church of Ireland (NIAH 13823052). This was substantially rebuilt again in 1899 and a picturesque crenellated façade, which gave symmetry to the older structure, is now a notable landmark breaking the street-front of the east side of Market Street.

St Mary's Catholic Church, attributed to Thomas Duff, was built on John Street in 1829, probably to replace a simpler structure on the same site, marked as a cross on Wren's map of 1766. The main body of the chapel is screened to the front by a battlemented three-bay entrance front, its character is derived from its colourful coursed rubblestone and limestone trim. J.J. McCarthy extended the building in 1864, and it was deconsecrated just over a hundred years later (Lhs017-036 NIAH 13823026).



Fig. 15: St Mary's Catholic Church on John Street, Lawrence Collection, c. 1900

The three-arched bridge shown on Richardson's map of 1677 map was replaced by a simple, single-span road bridge in the mid nineteenth century (Lhs017-056 NIAH 13823008).

Although the town of Ardee did not expand significantly beyond the extent recorded on Wren's 1766 map, the face of the town did change

considerably as a result of the changes described above and a number of new public buildings, which included a police barracks, post office, two schools, and the Ardee Union workhouse, parts of which survive on John Street (Lhs017-063 NIAH 13823025). The polychrome brick railway station and station master's house on Lambs Lane were built in 1896 (Lhs017-040 NIAH 13823059 and Lhs017-039 13823060) as the terminus of a branch off the Dublin-Belfast railway line, which remained in use for goods until 1975.



Fig. 16: Main Street and Hatch's castle, Lawrence Collection, c. 1900

Historical photographs taken at the end of the nineteenth-century show streets of Ardee lined with low, unassuming two-storey houses and commercial buildings in a typical Irish vernacular punctuated with elegant timber shopfronts and ample carriage arches, which still

distinguish the streetscape today. Historian and geographer John Bradley suggests that it is very likely that some of the existing structures in the town incorporate earlier structures, the like of which have been identified in other medieval towns such as in Carlingford.

Notable shops and public houses include the former bakery on the corner of Castle Street and Tisdale Street (now Tierney Street) which contains a very fine curved glass window display and Hamills on Bridge Street designed by Paul Cahill c.1900. The latter is faced with elaborate faience tiles with mouldings and decoration in deep relief, and also contains robust curved glass windows. This is one of the few surviving examples of faience majolica in the country (Lhs017-024 NIAH 13823028).

Many street house and commercial premises had small industrial buildings to their rear, primarily granaries, breweries and tanneries. Several of these modest but well built stone buildings still survive today.

Three detailed maps of the town chart the development of the town over the course of the nineteenth century, the Ordnance Survey (OS) first edition of 1835, the Griffith valuation town plan of 1854, and the 25 inch OS map of 1908 (see Figs. 16 and 17 below, and extracts in Section 4). Notable changes over this period include the disappearance of College Lane east of St Mary's Church, the realignment of Moorhall south of the river, and the arrival of the railway.



Fig. 17: Extract from first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1835 (enlarged from original scale of 6" to 1 mile).
Map may be viewed at large scale on www.osi.ie

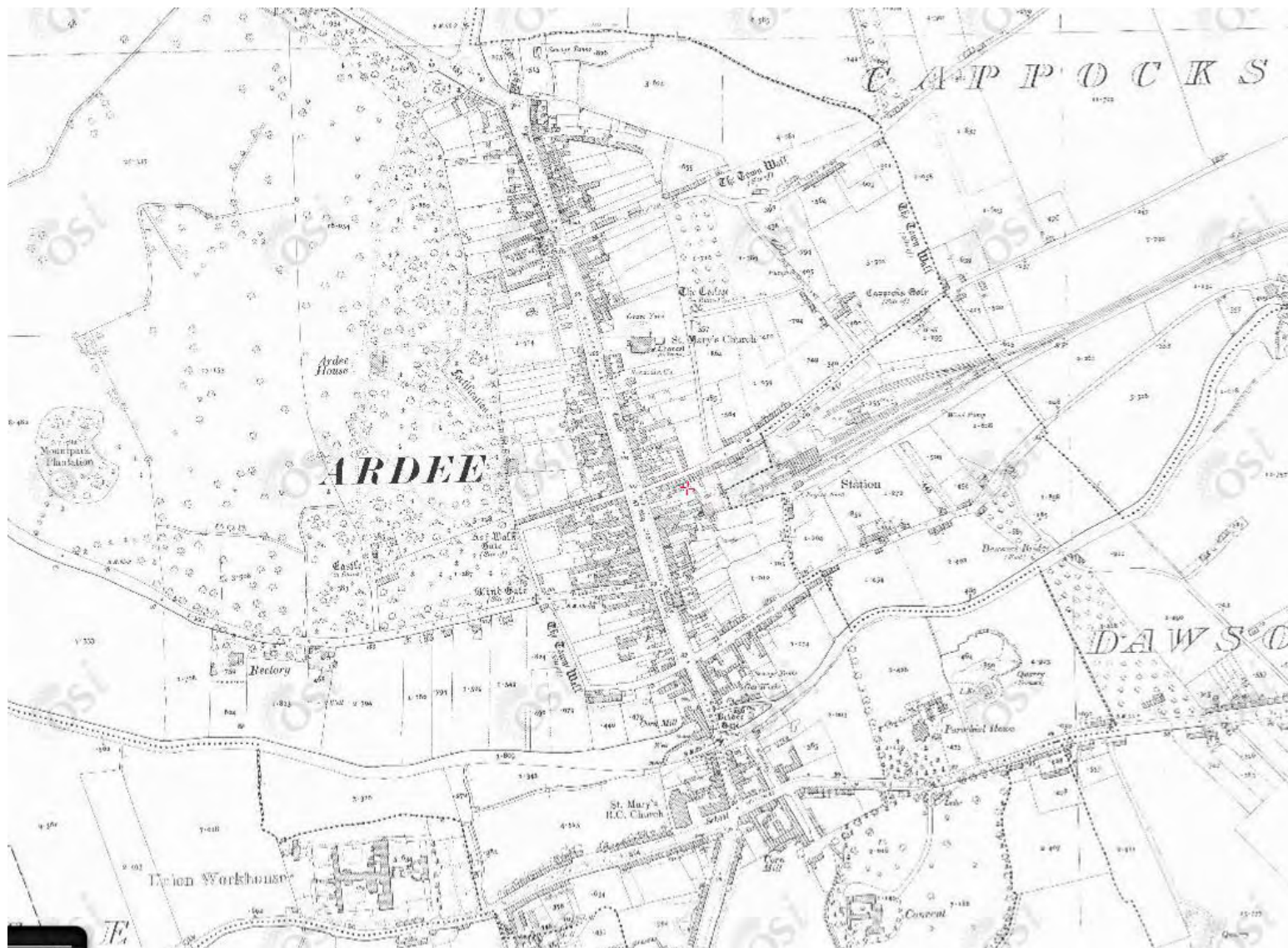


Fig. 18: Extract from Ordnance Survey map of 1908 (enlarged from original scale of 25" to 1 mile).
Map may be viewed at large scale on www.osi.ie

2.5 Twentieth Century

Comparison of the Ordnance Survey map of 1908 with Bradley's reconstruction of the medieval town plan shows that Ardee was a spacious walled town, which by the beginning of the twentieth century had not expanded into the area enclosed by the town wall. Much of the area within the circuit of the former walls remained as open space until recent decades, with development extending to the eastern side of the town.

A notable change to the architectural landscape of the main street came at turn of the twentieth century in the form of the imposing bank buildings for Bank of Ireland on Castle Street (Lhs017-011 NIAH 13823001) and Ulster Bank on Irish Street (Lhs017-003 NIAH 13823051), which counterbalanced the historic primacy of the two castles in the streetscape.

Although several shopfronts maintained their original features, and many architectural features of high quality remain, the unfortunate and widespread loss of shopfronts and erosion of fine details such as sash windows and original doors over the latter half of the twentieth century have diminished the architectural character of Market and Castle Street, which had developed over eighteenth and nineteenth-century, as seen in photographs of the earlier part of the century.

A new Catholic church, the Church of the Nativity of Our Lady, by Guy Moloney & Associates was built in 1974 on John Street (Lhs017-062 NIAH 13823024) to replace the older now deconsecrated chapel.



Fig. 19: Hatch's castle and Main Street c. 1950



Fig. 20: Ardee Castle, formerly St. Ledger's castle, c. 1950

2.6 Historical Sources

- J. Bradley, Ardee, an archaeological study, Journal of the County Louth archaeological & historical society, Vol. 20, No.4 (1984), 267-296
- P.J. Geraghty, Ardee and its market square, Journal of the County Louth archaeological & historical society, Vol. 22, No. 1 (1989), 54-66.
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- P.J. Geraghty, Urban Improvement and the Erection of Municipal Buildings in County Louth during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries, Journal of the County Louth archaeological & historical society, Vol. 23, No. 3 (1995), 295-317.
- C. Casey, An introduction to the architectural heritage of County Louth (National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, Dublin, 2008).
- Websites:
www.buildingsofireland.ie
www.osi.ie
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3.0 Statutory Protection and Planning Objectives

In addition to the protection afforded by the ACA designation, some individual structures within the ACA are protected in their own right by other statutory designations.

3.1 Protected Structures in the ACA

The structures listed below, many of which lie within the boundary of the Architectural Conservation Area are included in the Louth County Council Record of Protected Structures (RPS), Volume 2 in the County Development Plan 2009-2015.

In addition to the protection conferred by the ACA, these structures and their attendant grounds, known as their curtilage, are protected in their own right under Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

Lhs 017-002	J.Malone, Irish Street, shop
Lhs 017-003	Ulster Bank, Irish Street, bank
Lhs 017-004a	Stone Warehouse at rear of Ulster Bank, Irish Street,
Lhs 017-004b	Samson Electirc, Irish Street, warehouse
Lhs 017-005	First Active, Market Street, office
Lhs 017-006	St Mary'sChurch of Ireland, Market Street, church
Lhs 017-007	Former Wesleyan Chapel, Market Street, former chapel
Lhs 017-008	House, Market Street
Lhs 017-009	Hatch Castle, Market Street, towerhouse
Lhs 017-0010	House, Market Street
Lhs 017-0011	Bank of Ireland, Castle Street, bank

Lhs 017-0012	Kearney's Drapery Store, Castle Street, shop
Lhs 017-0013	Liscou, Castle Street, shop
Lhs 017-0014	J.Kiernan Solicitor, Castle Street, office
Lhs 017-0015a	House, Castle Street
Lhs 017-0015b	House, Castle Street
Lhs 017-0016	Water pump, Castle Street
Lhs 017-0017	Ardee Castle, Castle Street, castle
Lhs 017-0018	Ardee Bread Company, Castle Street, shop
Lhs 017-0019	Lanney's, Castle Street, shop
Lhs 017-0020	Ardee Fireplaces, Castle Street, shop
Lhs 017-0021	Sweeny Byrne/Imbue, Castle Street, shop
Lhs 017-0022	Allied Irish Bank, Castle Street, bank
Lhs 017-0023a	House, Bridge Street
Lhs 017-0023b	House, Bridge Street
Lhs 017-0023c	House, Bridge Street
Lhs 017-0023d	House, Bridge Street
Lhs 017-0024	Hamill's Public House, Bridge Street, public house
Lhs 017-0025a	House, Bridge Street
Lhs 017-0025b	House, Bridge Street
Lhs 017-0027a	House, Market House Lane, cottage
Lhs 017-0027b	House, Market House Lane, cottage
Lhs 017-0027c	House, Market House Lane, cottage
Lhs 017-0027d	House, Market House Lane, cottage
Lhs 017-0027e	House, Market House Lane, cottage
Lhs 017-0027f	House, Market House Lane, cottage
Lhs 017-0027g	House, Market House Lane, cottage

Lhs 017-0028	Chantry College, College Park, ruin	Lhs 017-0041	Former locomotive shed, Sean O'Carroll Street
Lhs 017-0029a	House, St.Vincent's Road, cottage	Lhs 017-0042	V1 Clothing, Castle Street, shop
Lhs 017-0029b	House, St.Vincent's Road, cottage	Lhs 017-0043	U4Coffee, Castle Street, shop
Lhs 017-0029c	House, St.Vincent's Road, cottage	Lhs 017-0044	Ferdia Arms, Castle Street, public house
Lhs 017-0029d	House, St.Vincent's Road, cottage	Lhs 017-0045	Anderson's, Irish Street, public house
Lhs 017-0029e	House, St.Vincent's Road, cottage	Lhs 017-0046	House, William Street
Lhs 017-0029g	House, St.Vincent's Road, cottage	Lhs 017-0047	House, Irish Street
Lhs 017-0029g	House, St.Vincent's Road, cottage	Lhs 017-0048	House, 20 Irish Street
Lhs 017-0029h	House, St.Vincent's Road, cottage	Lhs 017-0049	Annie's, William Street, house
Lhs 017-0030	Cappock's Gate, Ardee Town Wall (see also RMP)	Lhs 017-0053	Warehouse, Market Street
Lhs 017-0031	De La Salle Monastery, Moore Hall, monastery	Lhs 017-0055	Sheridan Services, Castle Street, house
Lhs 017-0032	Parochial House, Moore Hall, house	Lhs 017-0056	Bridge, Bridge Street
Lhs 017-0033	Convent of Mercy, Moore Hall, convent	Lhs 017-0057	Ardee Clinic, Bridge Street, house
Lhs 017-0033b	Convent of Mercy, former school, now convent	Lhs 017-0059	Bridge Leisure, Bridge Street, granary
Lhs 017-0033c	Convent of Mercy, gates	Lhs 017-0060	Odea Agri Seeds, Moore Hall, warehouse
Lhs 017-0033d	Convent of Mercy, gate lodge	Lhs 017-0061	Ardee Monastery School, Drogheda Road
Lhs 017-0033e	Convent of Mercy, school	Lhs 017-0062	Church of the Nativity, John Street
Lhs 017-0033f	Convent of Mercy, chapel	Lhs 017-0063	Ardee Workhouse, now Farrells Factory, John Street
Lhs 017-0034	Castle Guard Fort Dawson's Demesne (see also RMP)	Lhs 017-0064	Stone Gate, John Street
Lhs 017-0035	St.Joseph's Hospital, Fair Green Road, hospital	Lhs 017-0065	Cuchulainn House, Bridge Street, house
Lhs 017-0036	St Mary's former church, John Street, church	Lhs 017-0070	Sir Frederick Foster Memorial, Market Square
Lhs 017-0037	Tower House, Kells Road (see also RMP)	Lhs 017-0072	Manor Mill Cappocksgreen
Lhs 017-0038	St Brigid's Hospital, Kells Road	Lhs 017-0073	House, Castle Street
Lhs 017-0038b	St Brigid's Hospital Chapel, Kells Road	Lhs 017-0075	St.Joseph's Terrace, Lambs Lane, house
Lhs 017-0039	Former railway station, Sean O'Carroll Street	Lhs 017-0082	House, Irish Street
Lhs 017-0040	Former station master's house, Sean O'Carroll Street	Lhs 017-0083	House, Irish Street

3.2 Historic Designed Landscapes

The NIAH Survey of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes includes the grounds of Ardee District Hospital and of the Red House, Ardee, with identity numbers LH0002 and LH0064 respectively. The hospital landscape includes the eighteenth-century former Ardee House, its demesne and the earlier tower house which survives within the complex.

3.3 Recorded Monuments in the ACA

The following archaeological sites, features and artefacts within the Ardee ACA are listed in the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) as Recorded Monuments and are thereby protected under the National Monuments Acts of 1930 to 2004:

RMP No LH017-101	Historic town
RMP No LH017-009	Castle-tower house
RMP No LH017-101001	Town defences
RMP No LH017-101011	Graveslab
RMP No LH017-101006	College
RMP No LH017-101007	Church
RMP No LH017-101008	Building
RMP No LH017-101009	Cross
RMP No LH017-101010	Font
RMP No LH017-101012	Graveslab
RMP No LH017-101013	Architectural fragment
RMP No LH017-101015	Castle-tower house

RMP No LH017-101018	Castle-tower house
RMP No LH017-101022	Religious house
RMP No LH017-101023	Midden
RMP No LH017-101025	Graveyard
RMP No LH017-101026	Graveslab
RMP No LH017-101027	Graveslab
RMP No LH017-101028	Building
RMP No LH017-101033	Building
RMP No LH017-101030	Kiln-pottery
RMP No LH017-101031	Kiln-pottery
RMP No LH017-101032	Burial
RMP No LH017-101034	Excavation

3.4 Ardee Local Area Plan (LAP) 2010-2016

Under section 19(1) of The Planning and Development Act, 2000, the LAP is part of the Louth County Development Plan 2009-2015 with specific focus on the town of Ardee. The LAP zones land for particular uses and provides a policy framework for individual planning decisions.

The ten strategic objectives of the plan described in Section 1.11 include an objective in regard to the heritage of the built environment. The objectives of the Ardee ACA are described in Section 6.9. The plan is accompanied by a Land Use Zoning Map.

3.5 Ardee Age Friendly Town Strategy

Louth has been designated the first Age Friendly county in Ireland and Ardee as the first Age Friendly Town. This is an initiative piloted by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Policies for Ardee are reflected in the Louth Age Friendly County Strategy 2009 and they highlight challenges faced by elderly living in and visiting the town.

4.0 Description of Historic Built Environment

4.1 Defining Characteristics

The special character of the Ardee ACA can be defined under the following distinctive attributes:

- Layout
- Socio-economic functions
- Building types, scale and materials
- Quality and treatment of open spaces.



Fig. 21: Ardee Castle and Castle Street

4.1.1 Layout

The morphology of Ardee is regular but informal, the result of its medieval origin as a planned defensive outpost of loosely rectangular form, overlaid with subsequent informal development over the centuries.

The town consists of a wide north-south street forming the main route from the bridge through the town, which though straight is informal in character and slightly varying in width, and a series of narrow secondary side lanes broadly perpendicular to the main route, three to the west and three to the east, their position determined by medieval gates in the defensive circuit, as well as some other historic connecting lanes.

An important element of the development of the layout are the more irregular areas of expansion outside the original walls at the north and south end, consisting of the Irish town at the Fair Green, with forking streets leading into the rural hinterland, and the informal area of intimate scale to the south of the river.

The position of the medieval town defences, though not readily perceptible on the ground is a primary character of the town layout. The defences ran on three sides, which with the river formed a broadly rectangular enclosure. A standing wall ran to the rear of the plots on the western side of the main street, and crossed it at Market Square where the library now stands. The subdivision of the areas between these is in long narrow parcels known as ‘burgage plots’ perpendicular

to the main street. This type of site division survives to a large extent in the modern town of Ardee, and is one of its defining characteristics.



Fig. 22: Extract from Griffith Town Plan of 1854, showing characteristic irregularity of the Market Street, and narrow side lanes

The path of the former defensive enclosure can be traced in places along property boundaries and routes, and its course is important in the understanding of the historic town. A number of gates located on the main and secondary streets, though mostly gone, are significant features of the town layout, their positions being of particular importance as they form a connection to the historic form of the town.

The main street lies in the western half of the walled town, and the eastern part is more open, traversed by a series of paths which survive from medieval times, one of which, College Lane was built up until the mid-nineteenth century.

The rectilinear layout is not a strict right-angled arrangement and side roads are laid out at slightly skewed angles relative to the main street or with shallow curves or varying width along their length. The slight irregularity in the orthogonal arrangement adds an informal character, a distinctive feature typical of towns of medieval origin.

4.1.2 Socio-economic Functions

Uses associated with Ardee's role as a traditional market town contribute to its historic architectural character.

Ardee is the main town serving mid Louth, as well as neighbouring areas in Co Meath. It provides a centre of employment as well as commercial, administrative and other services to its population and to the surrounding rural hinterland. Over the latter half of the twentieth century the trend was for traders and professionals to move away from the town centre, as happened in most other Irish market towns. Though

residential use is still an important component of the ACA, most residential houses in the ACA are located in the side streets, and most of the town population now lives outside the immediate core. The area now designated an ACA was formerly characterised by the close mix of shops at street level with family accommodation above or adjoining it, and there were many other dwellings opening directly to the street. This mix is important to preserve the character of the town, and those properties still used as family dwellings make a strong contribution to the architectural character of the town.

Most of the shops were traditionally small units and were located on the main street. Some plots have historic warehouses located to the rear of the street-side buildings, reached through arched openings from the street.

As well as Catholic and Protestant churches, Ardee contains a county council administrative building, a court house, a fire station, hospital, Garda station, several banks, schools, a convent.

4.1.3 Building Types, Scale and Materials

The quality of the historic building stock in the Ardee ACA reflect its historic, architectural and social heritage and give form to its architectural character.



Fig. 23: Houses to east side of Irish Street

The street architecture of the town follows a clear hierarchy. The wide main street is the primary artery, lined with predominantly two-storey and occasional three-storey buildings, all arranged in orderly continuous rows of consistent building line and restrained expression, generally rendered and having vertical window openings with shopfronts or elaborate doorcases at ground level, the street frontage modulated by arched and gated openings giving access to the rear. Commercial buildings which intersperse the streetscape are marked by more conscious design in their expression, scale, detailing and choice of materials. This homogenous arrangement is interrupted by two

medieval tower houses, which break the prevailing continuity by their increased height, striking castellated profile, and in the case of the Ardee Castle, by standing proudly forward of the building line.

The side streets branching off the main street have less continuity in their buildings. The sense of continuity in the main street and contrasting discontinuity in the side streets are important characteristics of the ACA.

The town centre and the outlying streets within the ACA are punctuated by a number of civic and religious buildings, which are good examples of their types, exhibiting architectural expression and decoration of high quality. Aside from Hatch's Castle and Ardee Castle, St Mary's Church of Ireland church is significantly located on the highest point in the main street, and the former Catholic church is the primary feature of John Street. Larger nineteenth-century commercial bank buildings break prevailing eaves height on the main street or express a larger scale in the treatment of their elevations. These 'special' buildings give hierarchy to the long continuous runs of houses and shops, they enrich characteristic views as well as the general skyline of the ACA, and this contrast in scale and architectural detail is an important character feature of the ACA.

A group of religious buildings to the south east of the ACA dominate the character of their immediate area forming an ecclesiastical sector of particular character, encompassing the Convent of Mercy complex, the De La Salle building and parochial house to the south of the town.



Fig. 24: Houses on east side of Castle Street

The muted palette and homogeneity of materials in the ACA is typical of buildings in rural Irish towns. Rendered and painted elevations are the mainstay of street scenes. The prevailing materials are rendered walls, many buildings having window surrounds of stucco. Most have little and simple decoration, though some the more special buildings have elaborate plasterwork marking richer or commercial uses. Roofs are typically of natural Welsh slate, though many have been replaced over the years with modern coverings. Slate roofs are detailed without fascia or bargeboards and this emphasises the plain clear forms of the buildings, lending a neat appearance in contrast to the suburban detailing of more recent buildings, having fascia and soffits to eaves, and gable ends with oversailing verges, inappropriate details which undermine the simplicity of the prevailing historic character. Chimney stacks are an essential character feature of the skyline of the ACA, cases where these have been removed constitute a weakening of the historic architectural character of the town.



Fig. 25: Detail of shopfront on Castle Street

Red brick elevations are present, but represent an exception rather than the rule, being used in later one-off designs such as the Bank of Ireland, the railway station, a later commercial building now 'Footloose' or in the eighteenth-century Ardee House, and its extensions to form the district hospital.

Public and religious buildings predominantly have elevations of exposed rubble limestone some with ashlar dressings, examples being Hatch's Castle, Ardee Castle, St Mary's Church of Ireland church, the former Catholic church and the Convent of Mercy.

Some of the buildings retain historic timber doors or sash windows and any surviving joinery is of therefore of crucial historic importance to the character of Ardee.

The general built fabric of Ardee ACA conforms to the following typologies:

- Two-storey 18th and 19th century houses of more formal appearance with slate roofs, rendered walls and vertical windows.
- Two and three storey 19th century shops, commercial premises and banks with varying degrees of architectural decoration and articulation.
- 19th century shops and public houses of varying degrees of richness in elevation treatment
- Single-storey 18th and 19th century vernacular houses in secondary streets.
- Rubble stone warehouses, outbuildings, farm buildings, mill buildings and corrugated-iron barns
- Carriage arches giving access to rear yards

One-off buildings include:

- Fourteenth century tower house within Ardee Demesne, formerly an extramural religious house, due west of the Ash Gate.
- St Mary's Church, a 14th century south aisle integrated into an early 19th century Gothic Revival Church of Ireland church, set in a churchyard with fine trees.

- Chantry College, a ruined 15th century stone structure, east of St Mary's Church.
- Ardee Castle, a late medieval tower house with corner towers and later crenellated parapets.
- Hatch's Castle, a small 15th-16th century tower house
- Ardee House, a three-storey 18th century country house of classical design, set in a designed landscaped in the English Landscape style.
- St Mary's former Catholic Church in John Street, an early 19th century Gothic Revival church with rectangular stone front.
- A former 19th century modest stone Methodist church.
- St Mary's Convent of Mercy, a two and three storey 19th century complex of stone buildings, with tower and chapel, set within landscaped grounds with outlying gate lodge.
- De la Salle monastery, a two storey 19th century building with rendered elevations.
- The parochial house, a two storey 19th century residence with hipped slate roof and rendered elevations.
- Late nineteenth century former railway station buildings of polychrome brick

4.1.4 Quality and treatment of Open Space

The main public space in Ardee is the main axis composed of Castle Street, Market Street and Irish Street. The width of the space and the reflection of its natural topography with views to the hills beyond are strong characteristics of the ACA. Most buildings on this axis open

directly onto the footpath, whilst in the secondary streets there is a less formal mix of direct frontage and setbacks.



Fig. 26: Irish Street looking north

Simplicity is the key design characteristic of the open spaces in Ardee, typical of towns of this size throughout Ireland. Unfortunately, there are no visible remains of historic paving materials in the ACA, which historic photographs show to have included cobbled drains and stone paving. Modern street surfaces are for the most part tarmac and footpaths are of modern unit paving of precast concrete.

The main north-south streets have lost most of the historic street trees, planted since the Laurence Collection photographs, at some point during the twentieth century. A formal open space on the west side of Market Street, formerly the market place where the market house of 1810 was once located, marks the historic position of the northern or

Head Gate. A classical monument of 1861 at the centre of this space designed by Thomas Farrell (1827-1900) commemorates a local landowner Sir Frederick Foster, and makes a strong architectural statement. The most significant boundary treatment in the street is to the front of the Church of Ireland, marked by high ironwork railings and gates.

Green spaces within the ACA include the Church of Ireland churchyard, a more recent green area adjoining it around the ruin of the Chantry College', a small riverside park adjoining the bridge, the former fair green. Outside the town core three expansive designed landscapes form the demesne of Ardee House, and the landscaped grounds of the Convent of Mercy and of the Red House.

Built features of the open spaces include the 19th century single-arched stone bridge and numerous gates, walls and railings marking entrances and boundaries, including the demesne walls to the former Ardee House and boundaries to the De La Salle monastery, the Parochial house and Convent of Mercy, with cast iron gates.

Trees contribute significantly to defining the outer boundaries of public spaces in Ardee ACA and signal the presence of the River Dee. The abundance, size and maturity of the trees contribute significantly to the special character of the ACA.

A historic weir once located to the west of the bridge no longer survives, the area east of the bridge, once an island in the River Dee with a channel to the north feeding a corn mill, is now a small park of intimate scale alongside the bridge.



Fig. 27: Historic street furniture on Market Street



Fig. 28: Park on former island in River Dee

4.2 Street by street appraisal

4.2.1 Dundalk Road and Carrick Road

The OS map of 1835, the Griffith valuation town plan of 1854 and the OS map of 1908 all show these northerly approach roads into Ardee as largely undeveloped. There was a dispensary on the Carrick Road, and on the Dundalk Road a Protestant boy's school on the western side, run by the Erasmus Smith Trust, and a girl's school on the eastern side, later a Sunday School. All three of these buildings remain today, the boy's school now integrated into the Educate Together National School.

Today these streets mark an important historic transition between the urban core of Ardee and the landscape to the north of the town. An informal collection of single and two-storey structures align the Dundalk Road, mostly on the street line on the east side. A small development of mid-twentieth century houses known as Moore Park occupies the angle between the streets, composed of paired houses forming a U-plan with entrances in the inner corners, distinguished by good architectural detail, red brick ground floors and hipped tile roofs.

The structures along Dundalk Street frame views to Ardee Demesne and the Fair Green, marking the point where Irish Street leads into the urban core of the town. Structures of particularly strong architectural character are a number of single-storey cottages, Branigan's shop, and a vernacular farmhouse and corrugated-roofed outbuilding to the east of the roundabout.

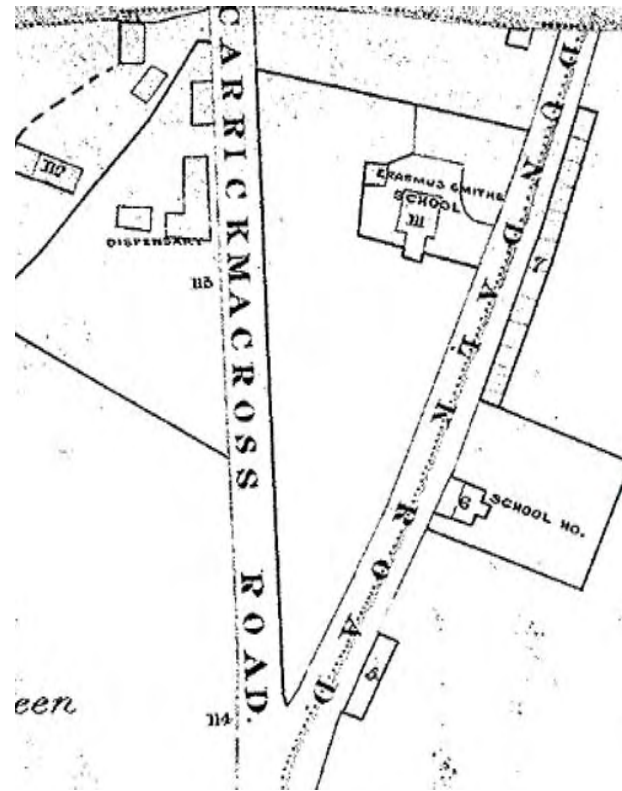


Fig. 29: Extract from Griffith valuation town plan, surveyed 1854



Fig. 30: Dundalk Road looking south to the Fair Green



Fig. 31: Paired houses on the west side of Dundalk Road



Fig. 32: Vernacular farm on east side of Dundalk Road at Fair Green



Fig. 33: Former shop on east side of Dundalk Road

4.2.2 Fair Green

The Fair Green is today a public park, bounded by the Carrick Road and Golf Links Road. Fair greens often developed in Irish towns as informal spaces outside the town core. The triangular green can be seen Wren's map of 1766 and in more detail in the nineteenth century maps, situated just outside the North or Irish Gate, between converging routes leading out into the rural hinterland. This space is an important location marking the entrance to the urban core and demonstrating the historical evolution of the town. It is bounded on the south side by the demesne wall and entrance to Ardee Demesne, the demesne trees strongly marking the presence of the park landscape beyond.



Fig. 34: Extract from 1908 OS map showing the Fair Green

A two-storey terrace continuing the line of the demesne wall presents an urban elevation to the approach from the north and west.

The boundary of the Fair Green itself is marked with large mature trees which determine the mature character of the park.



Fig. 35: Buildings south of the Fair Green intersection



Fig. 36: The fair green looking towards Dundalk Road

4.2.3 Irish Street

Irish Street developed as an extramural suburb outside the north end of the medieval town, clearly shown on Richardson's map of 1677. It stretches from the area beside the Fair Green in the north to the former market place in the south, and is the first of four segments which make up the main north-south thoroughfare of Ardee.



Fig. 37: Extract from 1835 OS map showing Irish Street

The street is characterised by rows of two-storey houses and shops lining a street space which widens gradually to the north, the site of the medieval North or Irish Gate. The straight line of the north-south axis was historically terminated here by a row of houses facing down the street. Today a pair of two-storey houses survive from this row, angled in the direction of the Fair Green, and it is probable that the gate stood in the centre of the space which they address.



Fig. 38: Houses on west of Irish Street

The structures along the street are relatively uniform in size, scale and architectural expression. This architectural and spatial definition is lost in a stretch of the north-west side of the street where an unsympathetic modern structure is set back from the existing building line.

The structures are a mix of small shops and dwellings and some have arched and gated street access to the properties behind. The roofs are pitched and lend definition to the street space. The southern end of Irish Street is marked by a large three storey Ulster Bank building on the east side of the street and a large type two-storey building on the west side that marks one corner of the former market place. This portion of Irish Street sets the character of the main thoroughfare that will vary as it progresses south through the ACA.



Fig. 39: Ulster Bank building



Fig. 40: Anderson's public house



Fig. 41: Cast-iron street sign

4.2.4 Market Street



Fig. 42: Market Street in extract from Griffith Town Plan, surveyed 1854

Market Street is the part of the main street which extends from the former Market Square, site of the medieval Head Gate, to Sean O'Carroll Street and Ash Walk, formerly narrow side lanes leading to Cappock's Gate and Ash Gate respectively. The street is defined to both

sides by a more or less continuous line of buildings of different size, architectural style and function, the building line forming an irregular line typical of streets of medieval origin. The street ascends from the north towards a high mid-point at St Mary's Church of Ireland church, from where it falls slightly to the south.



Fig. 43: Market Square and Market Street

The market place, laid out in 1810 and formerly addressed by a classical market house (see Fig. 13) retains little of its historic character and is now a cluttered and inharmonious space. The former elegance of this square is recalled by the fountain, a striking classical monument at its centre dating to 1861, representing Sir Frederick Foster, designed by the Irish sculptor Thomas Farrell (1827-1900) and similar in style to his

monuments to William Smith O'Brien and Sir Thomas Gray in O'Connell Street, Dublin. Today the square suffers from use as a car park, has confused hard and soft landscaping and no coherent scheme of street furniture or signage. The present library building which replaced the market house, has a formal symmetrical elevation, but lacks a suitable sense of scale or architectural expression.



Fig. 44: Monument in Market Square

The street boundary to St Mary's Church of Ireland church commands the highest point of Market Street and the church itself is on higher ground again. The churchyard extends behind the houses on either side and the open frontage is bounded high wrought-iron railings. The churchyard is an ancient site with a rich layering of features, including artefacts of medieval origin, the south aisle of the church itself dating to the fourteenth century. The slightly raised site allows views to Hatch's Castle and to the Chantry College to the east and these connections enable a clear appreciation of the medieval origin of the town, and enrich the experience of its long history.



Fig. 45: St Mary's Church of Ireland church



Fig. 46: Railings to St Mary's Church



Fig. 47: Medieval Cross at St Mary's Church

On the west side a single-storey symmetrical health centre is set back from the street with a small car park alongside, a situation which weakens the architectural definition of Market Street. Future redevelopment of the car park should ideally reinstate the building line in this area and incorporate a pedestrian linkage to the former Ardee House (now the St Joseph's hospital). These sites correspond to a former pedestrian route which linked Ardee House (now the St Joseph's hospital) to St Mary's Church via a walled garden fitted in between the plots on the western side of the street.



Fig. 48: Extract from OS map of 1908 showing connection to Ardee House

The street line south of St Mary's Church is broken by a setback in front of the former Methodist chapel of 1852 (NIAH 13823053). The church as a modest stone gable and double windows, the opening in the street building edge affords a view of the tower of St Mary's from the southern part of Market Street. This is an important view as the tower cannot be

easily seen from close up street except from directly in front of the main entrance.



Fig. 49: St Mary's church tower over railings to former Methodist Church

Market Street is part of the medieval thoroughfare and has a busy and urban character reflected in more individual architectural expression than seen in Irish Street. Rich architectural details and larger buildings are characteristic of the street. The continuous terrace character of the eastern side of the street is interrupted by Hatch's Castle the medieval stone tower. On the western side a three-storey building with a pyramidal roof and classical architectural detail continuing to the side elevations takes on a tower-like presence echoing the Hatch's Castle opposite.

The street has suffered from some developments of unsympathetic character that serve to fragment the unity of the historic street scale and architectural expression.



Fig. 50: Market Street with Hatch's Castle and three-storey building opposite



Fig. 51: Hatch's Castle, Market Street

4.2.5 Castle Street

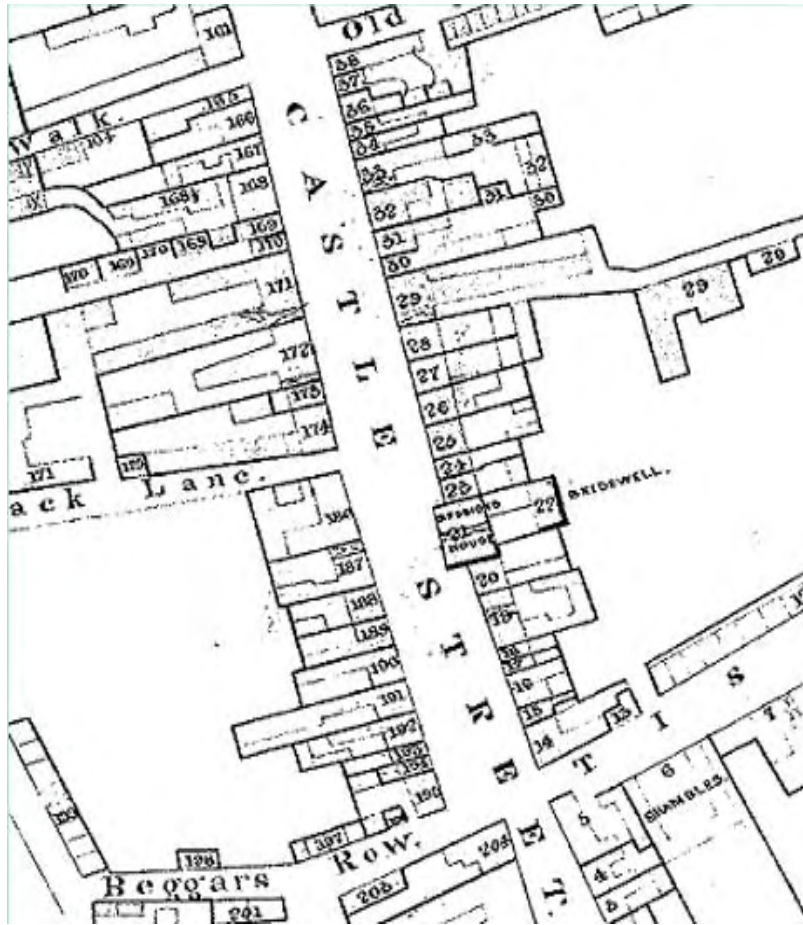


Fig. 52: Castle Street in extract from Griffith Town Plan, surveyed 1854

Castle Street is the southern half of the medieval thoroughfare of Ardee within the original town defences. It stretches from the junction with Sean O'Carroll Street (formerly Old Chapel Lane or Lamb's Lane) and

Ash Walk in the north to the junction with Tierney Street (formerly Beggar's Row and Tisdale Street) in the south. The northern portion of this continues the character of variety of scales, functions and architectural expression found in Market Street. The southern portion returns to a smaller scale and stylistic continuity more typical of Irish Street. The street continues its gradual fall towards the river from its highest point in Market Street opposite St Mary's Church. When seen from the south the structures present prominent gables, chimneys and roofs stepping up above one another, and this is a significant character attribute of the urban form.



Fig. 53: Castle Street, west side looking north

The primary feature of Castle Street is Ardee Castle, later the court house. The castle, set within a terrace of two storey houses with the former judge's quarters (Lhs017-073NIAH 13823005) to the south, stands proud of the building line, presenting its side elevations to the street to the north and south. The modest scale and form of the adjoining houses serves to emphasise the contrast in scale between the castle and its context. The houses are therefore of key important to the character of the street.



Fig. 54: Castle Street looking south

A small but prominent two-storey redbrick bank building marks the eastern corner with Sean O'Carroll Street. It has a symmetrical elevation with elaborate brick, stone and plaster banding and a projecting eaves with decorative timber brackets in a finely balanced Arts-and-Crafts influenced composition.

The view south from Castle Street leads to Bridge Street and is closed in the far distance by the mature trees set in the elevated grounds of the Convent of Mercy. This visual relationship is an important element defining the special character of Castle Street.



Fig. 55: Doorway on Castle Street

4.2.6 Bridge Street



Fig. 56: Bridge Street from OS map of 1908

Bridge Street extends across both sides of the bridge from Tierney Street in the medieval town to William Street and John Street on the south of the river. Historically the Bridge Gate stood on the northern

end of the bridge, being the southern entrance to the fortified town. Richardson's 1677 map shows a triple-arched bridge and a mill. The maps of 1835 and 1854 show a widening of the river on the east of the bridge retained by a weir to power a mill on the west of the bridge. By 1908 this had become an island with a mill race to the north, and now the mill race has gone and the island is small riverside park entered alongside the bridge, with a collection of mature trees that signal the presence of the river, attractively sited beside the finely wrought elevation of the bridge.



Fig. 57: Bridge Street looking south from Castle Street

The street itself forms the continuation of Castle Street, but narrower in width, and is defined by a closed uniform line of modest two-storey houses which open directly to the footpath. A large five-bay three-storey Georgian house with a good quality stone doorcase, probably

associated with the mill, dominates the western side north of the now vacant site where the mill once stood. This vacant site upsets the characteristic definition of the street edge, and future redevelopment should aim to reinstate the building line.



Fig. 58: Hamill's public house on the west side of Bridge Street

Most of the buildings are modest and similar to the types that characterise Irish Street at the other end of the town core. Hamill's public house one of a red brick pair, is one of the most important

buildings in the town, having a rare highly moulded ceramic tiled shopfront with bowed windows either side of an arched entrance.

The street forms a gentle curve with a picturesque arrangement of buildings that lead the eye to Ardee Court House to the north and to the junction with Moore Hall Street to the south.

Bridge Street continues the use of building types and sizes found elsewhere on the main thoroughfare, it signals the presence of the river with a bridge and park and channels picturesque views to the north and south.



Fig. 59: Bridge seen from site of the former mill building

4.2.7 Plots to rear of main thoroughfare

Historically the main north-south street was the location of all commercial and activity in the town. The products traded in the shops facing the street were produced, handled and stored in the long burgage plots to the rear, which also provided living accommodation and stabling, as well as having productive gardens to support the households. A good many such outbuildings and warehouses survive today, some of substantial size. Warehouses and rear outbuildings are often of rubble stone with brick dressing and some yards continue through a second covered passageway to a second yard. The rear sites were reached through archways in the front buildings, many having painted timber gates, or in some cases through narrow passageways between houses. The archways are a distinctive architectural feature of the streetscape, and the rear sites are a key aspect of the architectural and social history of the ACA.



Fig. 60: Rubble stone wall with cut stone gate detailing



Fig. 61: Warehouses to rear of Ulster Bank, Market Street



Fig. 62: Former dwelling to rear of Market Street

4.2.8 Markethouse Lane

Market House Lane, once called Bye Lane, is a narrow side lane, which ran inside the original town wall, shown on Richardson's 1677 map. A vacant dwelling and warehouse at the western end adjoining Market Street demonstrate the hierarchy of the historic built fabric of the town core, and reflect the historic character of the side lanes which has now largely disappeared, yet which is important to the understanding of the ACA.

Beyond this to the east a row of single-storey cottages holds the north side of the street with only a boundary wall to the opposite south side. The historic character of the lane further east has been lost with the presence of ubiquitous suburban style houses.

Markethouse Lane frames a view to the west of the present library with the large scale trees of Ardee demesne in the background.



Fig. 63: Smaller scale buildings characteristic of secondary streets



Fig. 64: Row of cottages in Markethouse Lane

4.2.9 Sean O'Carroll Street

Formerly Old Chapel Lane, part of a network of lanes within the less developed eastern section of the medieval walled town, and later developed as Lamb's Lane, Sean O'Carroll Street still retains the late nineteenth-century former railway station, shed and rail platform, set back from the road, and the station master's house. Rows of cottages once aligned the street but today only the early twentieth-century Railway Terrace remains on the site of earlier cottages, distinguished by good architectural detail and composition. The Castle Street end, once a side lane resembling Market House Lane has been widened in the twentieth century, and frames the view to Ash Walk with the large trees in Ardee demesne forming the backdrop.



Fig. 65: End house of Railway Terrace with sash windows and railings



Fig. 66: Former Railway station



Fig. 67: Former station good shed

4.2.10 College Lane

College Lane takes its name from the surviving ruin of a part of the 15th century Chantry College associated with St Mary's Church. The lane opens off Carroll Street as a pedestrian lane running alongside a stone wall behind the plots on Market Street, the plot behind Hatch's Castle having a blocked opening and plaque bearing the inscription 'M.W. HATCH /OCTR 1906'. The lane was lined by buildings, probably cottages, until at least 1854, and today only the unroofed college building survives, set in a small park. Fine trees punctuate the cemetery and rear gardens of the properties on Market Street.

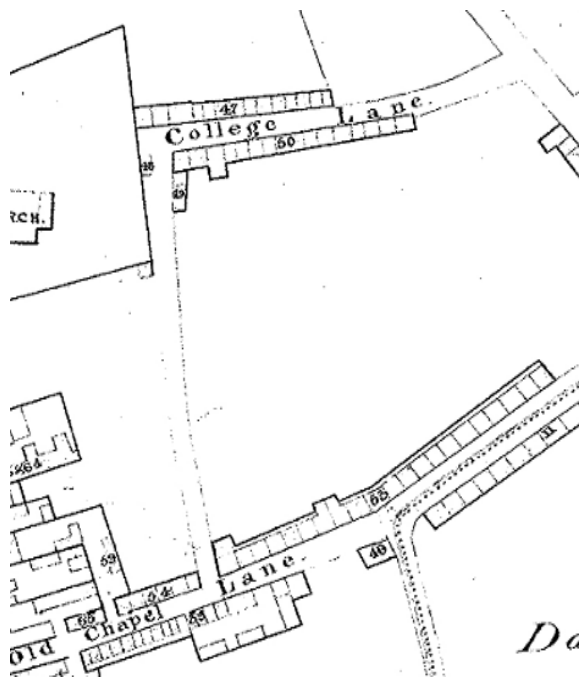


Fig. 68: Buildings on Chapel Lane shown on Griffith town plan of 1854



Fig. 69: Ruin of the Chantry College with St Mary's Church



Fig. 70: Blocked doorway to rear of Hatch's Castle site

4.2.11 Ash Walk

Ash Walk connected the main junction in the medieval town with the gate, Ash Gate, one of two eastern entrances to the town. Today the street is an access route to a large shopping centre that lies to the back of Market Street to the west. Recent two-storey shops and commercial premises have replaced historic structures so that the only remaining historic frontage to the street are the much altered side elevation of The Railway Bar forming the north corner to Market Street and the gable of a shop forming the opposite corner. These two corners define the historic street proportions reflecting the hierarchy between the wide main thoroughfare and the narrow side lanes, and represent an important surviving feature of the medieval town plan.



Fig. 71: South elevation of the Railway Bar on Ash Walk

4.2.12 Barret's Lane

Barret's Lane, mistakenly referred to as Barrack Lane on Griffith's town plan, historically led to the Blind Gate. It is a typical Ardee side street with a narrow street profile defined by the main buildings on Castle Street and their long rear outbuildings forming the building line into the lane. These buildings have rendered elevations with few openings and natural slate roofs, giving the east end of the lane a simple utilitarian character. This changes at the site of the Blind Gate where the street becomes Jervis Street at the junction with the lane known as Boat Trench, where a number of modern commercial buildings and a Garda Station are gathered, the corner distinguished by a distinctive curved corner building. The view to Castle Street is an important characteristic of the street with Ardee Castle visible above the roofscape and a narrow glimpse of Castle Street itself.



Fig. 72: View west towards Castle Street



Fig. 73: Building at the corner of Barret's Lane and The Boat Trench

4.2.13 The Boat Trench

The character of the Boat Trench is of a quiet unassuming lane serving backlands to properties to the rear of Bridge Street. The northern stretch of lane was once the line of the town wall. The lane is bordered by single storey outbuildings with rendered walls and corrugated metal roofs. An interesting stretch of single storey cottages lies to the west of the lane turn and lends it a residential character. The picturesque and low-key character of the southern portion of the lane is supported by large mature trees that emphasise its narrow street profile. The northern stretch of lane suffers from poor quality border treatment and loss of historic character.



Fig. 74: View west from Bridge Street



Fig. 75: Row of cottages at western lane turn

4.2.14 Tierney Street

Formerly Tisdale Street, Tierney Street is the widest side street off the main north-south thoroughfare. The street once had a continuous building line on the south side, but this has been eroded by removal of structures and new developments. It retains a narrow opening to Bridge Street characteristic of other historic side street junctions in Ardee, as well as a number of single and two-storey buildings that give good definition to the street. The north side of the street is occupied by suburban-type houses, some with large setbacks which do not contribute to its historic character.



Fig. 76: Two-storey dwelling to south side of the street



Fig. 77: Tierney Street looking west to Bridge Street



Fig. 78: Rear view of Ardee Castle from Tierney Street



Fig. 79: Finlay's Funeral home to the south-east end of the street

4.2.15 Riverside walk and Moorhall (West)



Fig. 80: Extract from OS map of 1835 showing expansion south of the Dee

The town of Ardee had already expanded south of the river by 1766, as seen on Wren's map, and the western part of Moorhall, running parallel to Bridge Street can be identified on that map. The 1835 OS map shows this area as an industrial enclave with a series of mills, kilns and tan yard, powered by the River Dee and a mill race descending from high ground to the south and running along Moorhall, with bridges at each

end and at the end of what is now William Street. Today Moorhall is a short street of intimate quality free of traffic connecting to the banks of the River Dee, but retaining this distinctly industrial character bordered by tall historic warehouse buildings of exposed stone and rendered finish. The view to the north is closed by dense trees in the small park, formerly an island in the River Dee, and a timber footbridge leads across to the park. The view to the south is to the elevated Convent of Mercy, which can be seen through a border belt of trees in its grounds.



Fig. 81: Warehouses on Moorhall with park on former island in the River Dee. The riverside bank is bordered by a limestone wall and affords views to the park opposite as well as the bridge in Bridge Street. The bank is wide in places with mature trees that echo the character of the park. A riverside walk connects across Bridge Street to a linear park the south

bank of the river west of Bridge Street, once the location of a weir, mill race and mill building, none of which survive. The linear park affords fine views of the historic stone bridge and trees on the former island as well as the rear of the former St Mary's Catholic church.



Fig. 82: Historic stone bridge in Bridge Street seen from the west



Fig. 83: Stone riverside wall and view east to park on former island



Fig. 84: Trees define the parkside character of the river north of Moor Hall

4.2.16 William Street and Moorhall Street (East)

William Street was originally a short street, but since the realignment of the western part of Moorhall Street in the latter part of the nineteenth century now forms part of an east-west route south of the river. This route of which John Street is also part, became the site for a series of nineteenth century buildings associated with the Catholic Church, including the former church, a school, parochial house and Convent of Mercy, their position outside the historic town core being a recurring feature of Irish towns, reflecting the later development of Catholic institutions.

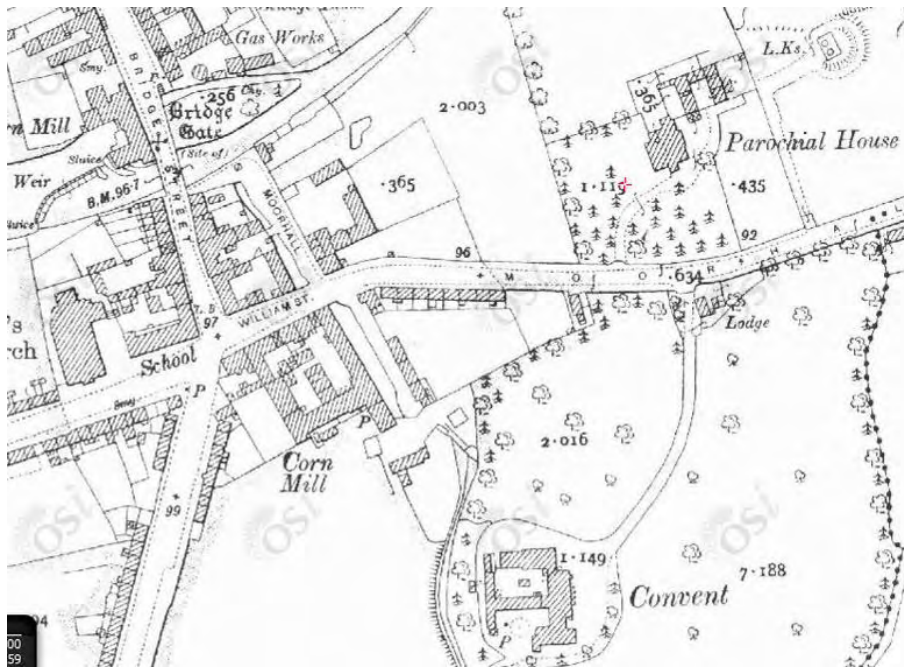


Fig. 85: Extract from 1908 OS map showing realigned Moorhall



Fig. 86: Terrace of houses to the south of William Street

The south side of William Street is defined by a row of fine two-storey houses and shops. The north side has a varied building line of one, two and three-storey structures. Both sides give a strong and urban character to the street that contrasts to the more peripheral character of Moorhall to the east. The houses on the north side retain covered passageways characteristic of other historic streets in Ardee. Some fine door and window details remain. The street frames good views to the west to the former St Mary's Catholic church and to the grounds of the religious institutions with many their mature trees to the east.

The character of Moorhall Street, the continuation of William Street to the west is defined by stone boundary walls, a row of single-storey

cottages and large mature trees in the grounds of the neighbouring religious institutions. The trees can be glimpsed above the row houses and have a strong presence in the street space. The De La Salle building, Parochial House and Convent of Mercy with its gate lodge can be glimpsed from the street. The strongest characteristic of this stretch of Moorhall Street is of a park landscape with stone boundary walls and cast iron entrance gates.



Fig. 87: De La Salle House



Fig. 88: Moorhall Street looking west



Fig. 89: Gate lodge and trees to the Convent of Mercy

4.2.17 John Street

John Street gives important definition to the southwestern approach to the ACA. The former St Mary's Catholic Church dominates this part of the street with an imposing early Gothic Revival screen elevation. This is flanked to the west by a row of historic single-storey houses. The historic structures to the east of the former church no longer survive. The linear row of dwellings and broad elevation of the church serve to direct the open street space towards Bridge Street and are an important urban ensemble.

The end gable of the row houses at the church is made of stone and echoes the stone elevation of the church itself. The boundary of the church site to the street is formed with cast iron railings and piers and arched openings of stone.



Fig. 90: Former St Mary's Catholic church and adjoining cottages

4.2.18 Convent of Mercy

Apart from its interesting historic buildings this complex has large grounds with substantial borders of tree shelter belts and free standing specimen trees. The effect is one of a picturesque park landscape. It echoes strongly Ardee demesne to the west of the town. This landscape defines much of the historic character of Moor Hall Street and the trees contribute as backdrops to important views within the town.



Fig. 91: Convent to the west

4.2.19 Ardee Demesne

Ardee house, built for the Ruxton family has had an important role in the development of Ardee since the eighteenth century, and a number of physical connections to the town once existed. The large scale of the parkland plays an important visual role as a backdrop to views within the town and emphasises the importance of trees throughout Ardee.

The historic defensive bastion between the former Ardee House and the town, said to date to c. 1690, can be seen from the supermarket car park west of Castle Street.

The demesne centres on the historic 18th century house and also encompasses a 15th century tower house to the south. The demesne walls give important definition to the surrounding areas and streets.



Fig. 92: Western side of shelter belt east of Ardee House



Fig. 93: View of the former Ardee House from the south



Fig. 94: Site of the defensive bastion from the south, said to date to c. 1690

4.2.20 Views

The following views are significant features of the ACA:

- View south along Irish Street.
- Views south from Market Street towards Ardee Castle.
- Views south from Castle Street and Bridge Street across the bridge, closed in the far distance by the mature trees set in the elevated grounds of the Convent of Mercy.
- View north from Bridge Street towards Ardee Castle.
- View north from lower part of Castle Street towards Ardee Castle.
- Views north from Castle Street to Market Street.
- Views north from Market Street to Irish Street.
- Views from and towards the Fair Green.
- View from St Mary’s Churchyard to Hatch’s Castle.
- View from St Mary’s Churchyard to the Chantry College.
- Views to the rear of both castles from side and back lanes.



Fig. 95: View to Hatch's Castle from St Mary's churchyard



Fig. 96: View to Chantry College from St Mary's churchyard



Fig. 97: Ardee Castle from Bridge Street



Fig. 99: Rear view of Ardee Castle



Fig. 98: Rear view of Hatch's castle



Fig. 100: View to Hatch Castle from Castle Street

5.0 Summary of Special Character

- Ardee has retained the characteristic charm of a smaller market town. It has a strong setting in the rural landscape, sited in a wider rolling terrain, and the relationship between the built and designed landscape environment of the town and the rural landscape beyond remains strong.
- Underlying natural landscape: The River Dee and the rising ground to the south of the town are key defining features of the larger scale natural landscape, which contribute significantly to the special character of the town.
- Archaeological Significance: Ardee traces its name back to the pre-historical period, and the foundation of the town to the Norman invasion. As a walled town which has been settled throughout the medieval period it is of great archaeological interest. It contains many standing medieval structures which add great depth to its historical interest and value. The town defences developed further in the seventh century with the addition of a bastion fortification during the Williamite-Jacobite War.
- Morphology of the Town: The historic layout was defined by the walled enclosure with gated entrances to routes from the north, south, east and west. The location of the walls can be traced in the present day layout. The main thoroughfare evolved to lie in a north-south direction. In recent times the town has been restricted in its growth to the west by Ardee demesne and to an extent to the south by the grounds of the Convent of Mercy and other religious institutions.
- Architectural Significance: Ardee contains many significant buildings from the fourteenth to the nineteenth centuries. These include infrastructural, defensive, administrative, religious, commercial, industrial and domestic structures of different types, both vernacular and of formal design. The compact urban layout allows for appreciation of these buildings in a richly varied context. The informal mix of functions is significant in forming an intact and historically authentic architectural setting of informal simplicity and differing scales which defines the character of the town.
- Architectural Character: Ardee is a good example of an Irish town in which many houses conform to a simple typology of rendered street architecture with slate roofs and simple sharp detailing. In addition many outbuildings and warehouses have exposed stonework walls. These are interspersed with more elaborate structures with fine detailing and expressive use of stone and brick as building materials. The intrinsic value of the architecture lies in the mix of appealing historic formality and informality, contextual grouping and the survival of early detailing.
- Vernacular architecture: The informality of the town is reinforced by the survival of many vernacular buildings. These simple buildings reinforce the character of Ardee as a small rural market town.

- Tree planting: Rows and groups of trees in the ACA play a very important role in defining the spatial character of Ardee. These belong to characteristic landscape layouts as in the case of Ardee Demesne to the west, in the grounds of the religious institutions to the south, as well as marking the course of the river through the town. Some street planting remains as do individual specimen trees to rear gardens.
- Built landscape features: Walls, gates and railings give strong boundary definition to properties and add considerable diversity to the streetscape.
- Social and Cultural Heritage: The intact nature of the fabric of the town and the continuity of uses provide valuable insight into the social history of the Ardee.



Fig. 101: Tiling to shop entrance on Castle Street



Fig. 102: Decorative stucco bracket to shopfront on Castle Street

6.0 Implications for Planning and Development

6.1 Planning Control

The objective of Architectural Conservation Area designation is to protect the special character of an area through the careful control and positive management of change in the built environment.

6.1.1 Limits to Exempted Development

The Planning & Development Act 2000 requires that planning permission be obtained for all development works, except for those deemed to be Exempted Development. In Architectural Conservation Areas only works which do not affect the special character are exempt, and many interventions which may otherwise be exempt will require permission. Section 82(1) and (2) of the Act defines exempted development in the context of an ACA:

(1) Notwithstanding section 4 (1)(h), the carrying out of works to the exterior of a structure located in an architectural conservation area shall be exempted development only if those works would not materially affect the character of the area.

(2) In considering an application for permission for development in relation to land situated in an architectural conservation area, a planning authority, or the Board on appeal, shall take into account the material effect (if any) that the proposed

development would be likely to have on the character of the architectural conservation area.

Assigning ACA status therefore imposes restrictions on works to the exteriors of structures within the designated boundary. Planning permission is required for any new-build works to visible sides of buildings or for changes to original materials, such as windows, wall finishes, boundary walls, roof coverings etc. New infill development and alterations to existing structures are subject to planning permission, and only proposals which respect or enhance the special character of the area can be granted permission.

More detailed direction is given in the following section on the type of works that will or will not require planning permission.

6.1.2 Protected Structures

Planning permission is required for all works that would materially affect the character of a protected structure, or any element of the structure including its curtilage, which contributes to its special character. Works to a protected structure that constitute essential repairs or maintenance require written agreement from the Conservation Officer. This can be sought in the form of a Declaration from Louth County Council under Section 57 of the Planning & Development Act 2000. A declaration issued under this section sets out the type of works the Planning Authority considers would or would not affect the character of a structure or any elements which contribute to its special interest.



Fig. 103: Ionic detail to doorcase on William Street

6.1.3 Non-protected Structures

Owners and occupiers of non-protected structures located within the ACA should be aware that works, which in the opinion of the Planning Authority would materially affect the character of the Architectural Conservation Area will require specific grant of planning permission under Section 82(1) of the Planning & Development Act 2000.

6.1.4 Public Domain

Works in the public domain are generally carried out by the Louth County Council and its subcontractors, or by statutory undertakers such as gas, electricity or telecommunication network companies, in consultation with the local authority. Larger scale works will require permission under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations.

Agencies and service-providers carrying out works to the public realm e.g. footpaths, planting, street furniture, parking schemes, public lighting, etc., are required to consider the special character of the area as identified in this document, new infrastructure should not be positioned where it will detract from the special character of Protected Structures or the ACA. Agencies and service-providers should consult with the Planning Department of Louth County Council and the Conservation Officer for Louth Local Authorities. Only materials appropriate to the character of the ACA should be permitted.

Private sector utilities should employ professional conservation advice to minimise and mitigate the impact of any proposed intervention.

6.2 Works which do not affect the character of the ACA

6.2.1 Maintenance & Repairs

Planning permission is not required for regular maintenance and necessary repair works, such as to roofs, rainwater goods or windows within the ACA, as long as original materials are retained, and necessary replacement is strictly limited to damaged fabric, and made on a like-for-like basis.

6.2.2 Internal Alterations

ACA designation for Ardee does not prevent internal changes or re-arrangements to those buildings within the area that are not Protected Structures (see list of Protected Structures in Section 3.1 of this document), and as long as these changes do not impact on the exterior of the building.

6.2.3 Restoration of Character

Where original materials have been removed and replaced with modern or inappropriate alternatives, the restoration or reinstatement of these features will not require planning permission where the method, materials and details for the works have been agreed with the Conservation Officer.



Fig. 104: Traditional stone masonry wall on Dundalk Road

6.3 Works which affect the character of the ACA

6.2.1. Roofs

Roofing Materials: The removal of the original roofing material, ridge tiles, chimneys, bargeboards, eaves details, cast-iron gutters and downpipes, and their replacement with modern materials can seriously damage the character of the ACA. Original coverings and elements can generally be repaired and reused and should always be retained as they are essential to the character of the area. Where original roofing materials have been lost, replacement with historically correct materials will be encouraged. Materials used in repairs should also be historically correct to prevent incremental erosion of the character of the ACA.



Fig. 105: Loss of chimneys upsets the proportions of this Georgian house

Chimneys: Chimney stacks are an essential component of the roofscape in a historic urban environment. Removal of stacks will not be deemed acceptable, and any external alteration will require permission.

Roof Lights: The installation of roof lights is only acceptable on hidden roof pitches, as they can fundamentally alter the visual character of the streetscape.

Dormer Windows: There is not a tradition of dormer windows within the Ardee ACA. Dormers would fundamentally change the special character of the town and are therefore only acceptable on hidden pitches.

Eaves Fascias, Soffits and Bargeboards: Most traditional buildings in the ACA were built without timber eaves details, and this historic detail should be retained if roof coverings are renewed. Verge details at gable ends typically have no bargeboards and render extends to the underside of the roof slates, forming a neat junction characteristic of Irish traditional buildings. This detail should always be retained. Projecting eaves or verges should be avoided except in buildings where this was the historic detail. UPVC fascias or bargeboards should never be used within the ACA. A few buildings have projecting eaves and gable bargeboards. These tend to be used in Gothic Revival or Arts and Crafts influenced buildings. In these cases the detail is an important element in defining the character of the building and should always be retained.

Roof pitch: The alteration of the roof profile affects the character of the building and changes to the angle, ridge height, eaves level or span of roofs would not be deemed acceptable within the ACA.



Fig. 106: Typical slate roof detail without overhang at eaves and verge



Fig. 107: Decorative bargeboards to convent gate lodge

6.3.1 External Walls

Rainwater Goods: Historic gutters, downpipes and hopper-heads, generally of cast-iron, constitute a significant enrichment of the character of the ACA. All intact surviving elements of rainwater goods should be retained, and only individual components which are damaged beyond repair should be replaced. All replacements should be like-for-like to match the surviving elements. Where historic rainwater goods have been inappropriately replaced, the historic type should be reinstated in any associated works.



Fig. 108: Down pipe with decorative fixings, Bridge Street

Alterations to facades: Alterations to historic facades or window openings will affect the character of the exterior and may not be permitted. Previous unsympathetic alterations will be required to be reversed where a proposal affects that part of the historic structure

Brickwork Elevations: Any proposal to restore historic brick facades must retain the historic patina and character of the façade. Renewal of pointing to facades of exposed brick can substantially alter the appearance of a building. Such work must retain intact historic pointing mortar, and care must be taken to use the correct material and detail. Removal of earlier inappropriate pointing can result in damage to the host brickwork. Pointing work will generally require planning permission, unless carried out in consultation with the Conservation Officer.



Fig. 109: Cut stonework to former Methodist Church

Stonework Elevations: Renewal of pointing to exposed stonework can substantially alter the character of a building. Such work must retain intact historic pointing mortar, and care must be taken to use the correct material and detail. This work will generally require planning permission, unless carried out in consultation with the Conservation Officer.



Fig. 110: Traditional rendered elevation

Removal of Render: The loss of historic external render damages the authentic character of the ACA and removes a water-resisting surface that protects rendered buildings from decay. The removal of render in such cases would be deemed unacceptable. Removal of render from

buildings may be acceptable where it can be conclusively demonstrated that the underlying substrate was intended to be exposed. In particular the reinstatement of brick facades may be considered desirable in order to restore the former character of a street. Removal of render in such cases will only be considered acceptable where the historic substrate will not suffer inordinate damage and only where agreed with the Conservation Officer.



Fig. 111: Decorative render detail, Irish Street

Un-rendered elevations: Some structures have traditionally had exposed stone or brick facades. The addition of external render to these houses damages the authentic character of the town and may add a water-

resisting surface that hinders the free exit of water from the building. The addition of render in such cases would be deemed unacceptable.



Fig. 112: Exposed brick and rubble stone wall

Unpainted buildings and features: Some structures within the ACA have a render finish that was always intended to remain unpainted. Such renders add to the aged patina of the ACA and should not be painted over. Similarly, structures originally constructed with exposed cut-stone or brick were not intended to be painted and later removal of such paint can damage the external surface of the material.

Painting: Painted finishes are a characteristic feature of the ACA. Repainting of facades, shopfronts, doorcases and other features can alter the character of the ACA and should be undertaken in consultation with the Conservation Officer. Muted colours will be preferred and

garish colours or painting of shopfronts or facades for brand identity should be avoided. Modern chemical based paints can have a detrimental effect on historic buildings by trapping moisture in the fabric causing dampness and decay. For this reason external paints used in historic buildings must be breathable.



Fig. 113: The non-historic paint scheme obscures the quality of this doorcase

Cleaning: Abrasive cleaning methods such as sandblasting damage the external surface of natural building materials. They often remove the hand-tooled surface from stonework or the protective fired surface from bricks, leading to porosity and harmful water ingress. Generally sandblasting of external walls is not advised on historic buildings. Other non-abrasive cleaning methods may be appropriate, but these must be non-destructive and must preserve the aged appearance of historic buildings. Cleaning measures will always require planning permission or consultation with the Conservation Officer.

External Cladding: Most historic buildings in Ardee tend to have a rendered finish, outbuildings and warehouses are of exposed stone and a few buildings are of brick. The alteration of the original finish by cladding external walls with stone, tiling or timber is generally not acceptable in the historic buildings of the ACA. Original historic external finishes must always be retained. Any proposal for the alteration of the existing finishes will require planning permission, and changes which affect the special character of the ACA will not be acceptable. However the addition of cladding to more modern structures may be considered, but only in consultation with the conservation officer and area planner.

Rear Elevations: In many instances the rear elevations of buildings play a key role in the character of the group. It is important to note the ACA protection pertains to the rear as well as to the front of buildings in an ACA.



Fig. 114: Rear of house on Bridge Street seen from Moorhall

Satellite antenna, TV aerials and other communications devices: The addition of such installations to the front elevations or roofs of structures within the ACA would be considered to have a negative impact on the character of the area. Satellite dishes should not be visible on the front elevation of buildings. Planning permission is required for the erection of a satellite dish on the front elevation of any

property, whether in an ACA or not. Less visible methods of TV reception, such as cable, should be used and where the existing aerials have become redundant they should be removed.



Fig. 115: Proliferation of fittings diminishes the character of the ACA

6.3.2 Windows & Doors

Alteration of Openings: Enlargement of window or door openings or the removal of stone sills or doorsteps can alter the prevailing proportions of the townscape, and result in incremental loss of historic materials on whose texture and authenticity the special character to the village relies. Any proposed change to openings would therefore require planning permission.



Fig. 116: Decorative fanlight on Irish Street

Replacement of Windows or External Doors: Original timber or metal windows, doors and fanlights are key features which enrich the character of the ACA. Examples of authentic historic fenestration and external doors are becoming relatively rare and their retention is therefore crucial to the preservation of the character of the ACA. Decayed timber windows can in most cases be repaired and cannot be accepted as a reason for replacement. Replacement of original windows and doors with modern artificial materials such as uPVC or aluminium has a particularly negative impact and will always be deemed unacceptable. Where windows and doors have been altered or replaced prior to ACA designation, the reinstatement of windows of correct historic design will be encouraged, and where planning applications are

made for the buildings concerned such reinstatement may be made a condition of permission. Any alteration to windows or doors within the ACA requires planning permission.



Fig. 117: Historic windows are perhaps the single most important element of an historic streetscape



Fig. 118: Historic doors, formal and vernacular, add richness to an ACA

Ironwork: Window guards, balconettes, grilles, bootscrapers, and other ironwork fittings are essential to the palette of materials in the ACA, and may not be removed or altered. Repairs should follow best conservation practice using traditional techniques, and welding should be avoided. Any such work must be undertaken in consultation with the planning authority.



Fig. 119: Archway doors are key character features of the historic town



Fig. 120: Ironwork window guard on Castle Street

6.3.3 Medieval Structures

Archaeology: The entire ACA lies within a designated Zone of Archaeological Interest, and any excavation work below ground level may uncover archaeological material.

Standing structures: In addition to below-ground archaeology, all standing structures built before 1700 or containing any pre-1700 fabric are protected under National Monuments legislation. Any works must be carried out in consultation with the National Monuments Section of the Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Medieval structures are key to the appreciation of the character of the ACA, and due to their great rarity must be given very careful consideration in any repair or development proposal.



Fig. 121: The chantry college is a rare surviving example of its type

6.3.4 Vernacular Buildings

Vernacular houses and functional buildings built of simple materials in unpretentious style are an important component of the special character of the Ardee ACA and demolition or replacement of vernacular buildings is therefore not acceptable. Raising of eaves levels, alteration of roof pitches or insertion of dormer windows fundamentally change the character of vernacular buildings and are similarly unacceptable. Alterations to provide modern facilities must be carried out in sympathy with the historic value of these buildings. Alterations to increase the size of vernacular houses are not always appropriate and must be confined to the rears of houses. Reinstatement of traditional vernacular features such as lime-washed external walls, timber sheeted doors and sash windows will be encouraged, but must conform to correct historic detail in form, material and technique.



Fig. 122: Vernacular shop on Irish Street adds to the variety of the streetscape

6.3.5 Shopfronts

Historic shopfronts: A considerable number of historic shopfronts survive throughout the ACA, varying from modest to elaborate detail, and contribute strongly to the special character of the Ardee ACA. Alterations to historic shopfronts should be restricted to a minimum and will require planning permission.



Fig. 123: Elaborate shopfront on Castle Street



Fig. 124: Traditional timber shop front on Castle Street

Painting of historic shopfronts: Repainting in the historic colour, or in another appropriate muted tone, may not affect the character of a shopfront, and may be undertaken with the approval of the conservation officer. Paint may not be stripped from historic shopfront elements without approval of the conservation officer, as earlier layers, in particular overpainted traces of former signage, can be of particular interest.

Existing non-historic shopfronts: Alterations to any shopfront in the ACA will require planning permission. Care must always be taken in works to seemingly non-historic shopfronts in historic buildings, as concealed features of earlier frontages may be concealed beneath. Such concealed features as may come to light in works shopfronts must be notified to

the conservation officer, even in cases where planning permission has been obtained.

New shopfronts: Insertion of shopfronts in historic buildings where none has previously existed can damage the special character of the ACA and will normally be seen as unacceptable. New shopfronts, whether in contemporary or traditional style should reflect the principle of historic examples and be restricted in size to enclose a display window and entrance door only. New shop fronts should not rise higher than the prevailing height in the street and should not alter or obscure architectural details of the original building such as sills, stringcourses, windows, doorways, etc. New signage boards to shopfronts in the ACA, whether in contemporary or traditional style, must reflect the detail of historic examples. Deep fascias and off-the-shelf brackets should be avoided.

Replacement shopfronts: Shopfronts may only be replaced where the replaced frontage is not historic. Surviving components of historic shopfronts, such as pilasters or vitrolite signage fascias, should always be retained.

Shopfronts of contemporary design: Shopfronts of contemporary design can enhance the layered character of the ACA if properly considered. Where non-traditional designs are proposed, a design statement should be submitted outlining the rationale and concept of the design and demonstrating the intended contribution to the character of the ACA.



Fig. 125: Traditional shopfront on Irish Street



Fig. 126: Both elaborate and simple details add to the character of the town



Fig. 127: Inappropriate alterations obscuring a decorative shopfront

Awnings: Historic awnings are a feature of nineteenth century display windows and should be retained where they survive. Where new canopies or awnings are deemed acceptable, they should be made of heavy-duty cotton material with painted metal or timber hardware. Plastic should not be used.

6.3.6 Signage and External fittings

New signage: Signage may only be permitted on shopfronts. Such signage should be of appropriate design to complement or enhance the structure, and should not be overtly dominant on the streetscape. Internally illuminated and plastic fascia boxes will not be considered acceptable. Standard corporate signage which would detract from the character of the ACA should be adapted in scale, colour or material colour to be more in keeping with the area.

Outdoor Advertising Billboards: Care should be taken that outdoor advertising does not detract from the special character of the ACA. Billboards which conceal historic features or impinge on significant views will not be deemed acceptable.

Shutters: The design of security shutters should complement rather than damage the character of the building and the ACA. Metal roller shutters with visible boxes are not acceptable within the ACA boundaries. Shutter boxes should be positioned discreetly behind the fascia board, or sliding lattice grills be positioned behind the shop window. Security shutters should not cover the whole commercial frontage but only the vulnerable glazed areas. Where appropriate to the type of shop or to the historic interior arrangement, security shutters should be placed behind the window display. Where external security screens are deemed acceptable they should be of transparent open chain-link grille design rather than solid or perforated shutters, which are not transparent when viewed obliquely. Shutters and grilles should be painted or finished in colour to complement the rest of the exterior.

External Seating and Screening: Planning permission and a Section 254 license are required for external seating. Seats should be of wood, painted metal or other traditional material which enhances the visual appearance of the ACA. Plastic is not an acceptable material for seating. Enclosing ropes and canvas windbreaks can incrementally damage the special character of an ACA and must be carefully considered and assessed as part of the overall level of existing street furniture. Screens to enclose external seating areas should be made of heavy-duty cotton, glazed or metal panels and should not be used for advertising purposes.

Other External Elements to Commercial Premises: Canopies, vending machines, newspaper receptacles, etc. can damage the special character of an ACA, and can only be accepted to a limited degree. Where canopies or awnings are deemed acceptable in the ACA, they should not be made of plastic but of heavy-duty cotton material with painted metal or timber hardware. Planning permission is required for external vending machines, ATMs, newspaper receptacles, storage bays etc. Commercial premises should limit the clutter of temporary external retail furniture, such as external heaters, bins, menu-boards, etc. Such fittings are only acceptable where their design complements or enhances the character of the area.

6.3.7 Boundary Treatments

Alteration or removal of historic railings, boundary walls, piers, gates, etc. always requires planning permission. Loss of such features can be

seriously damaging to the character of the ACA and is therefore not acceptable. Reinstatement of lost features such as ironwork details to correct historic detail will be encouraged by the planning authority, or required by condition where appropriate when granting permission for developments within the ACA.



Fig. 128: Railings and steps on Bridge Street



Fig. 129: Decorative ironwork on Dundalk Road

6.3.8 Demolition

Demolition of any building visible within the ACA, whether it is a Protected Structure or not, will require planning permission. Demolition will only be permitted where the structure makes no material contribution to the character or appearance of the area, or does not have the potential to do so through reinstatement of historic features. There will be a presumption in favour of retaining any structure that makes a positive contribution to the character of the ACA to avoid incremental loss or damage to its special character. Where permission is sought for demolition on the grounds of structural defects or failure, a condition report produced by a suitably qualified and experienced conservation professional, supported by photographs and drawings indicating locations of defects will be required. Justification on structural grounds for any demolition within the ACA must include details of repairs or remedial works normally used in similar circumstances demonstrating why they are not suitable in that instance. A full photographic record and measured survey will be required before any demolition commences.

Façade Retention: Although interiors are not protected within an ACA 'façade retention' will not be considered an acceptable approach, except in cases where only the façade survives.

6.3.9 New Build Interventions

Plot Size: New buildings should follow existing plot boundaries to retain the existing grain which is an important determining factor of the special character of the ACA. In larger developments on sites where former individual boundaries have already been removed, the original plot divisions should be articulated in the volume and composition of the new buildings, both to the front and the rear.



Fig. 130: New buildings which ignore the established building line and plot sizes damage the character of the street space

New and Infill Developments: Designation as an ACA puts an onus on prospective developers to produce a high standard of architectural design, which respects or enhances the particular qualities of the area. New buildings should be designed to blend into the streetscape using the prevailing materials, proportions and massing. Buildings should follow the eaves heights, roof pitches, building lines which predominate in the surrounding context. Chimney stacks should be included where these are a feature of the roofscape. Windows should be of matching

proportions and alignments at head and sill, and the window-to-wall ratio should be derived from the historic buildings forming the context of the infill site. Contemporary interpretations and detail which allow the new building to be identified as an addition should be favoured over pastiche styles in order to avoid undermining the authenticity of ACA.

Alternative Design Approach: New buildings which depart from the proportions and façade arrangements typical of the context must be of a very high standard of architectural design and must positively contribute to the character of the area. A design impact statement outlining the concept of the design and providing justification for the proposal, demonstrating a considered response to the scale, materials and grain of the ACA must accompany any such application.

Materials and Features: Only materials of good visual quality and durability may be used in new developments. Features which are not typical of the historic buildings of the village should be avoided. These include roof lights, standard-issue concrete sills or copings, top-hung casement windows, pressed aluminium gutters or uPVC features of any kind. Roofs should be covered with natural slate, lead or other roofing materials which enhances the character of the ACA.

Extensions to Front or Side: All new additions to the front or visible elevations of structures within the ACA will require planning permission. Very careful consideration will be given to applications for extensions to the side or front of a structure within the ACA, as these can be particularly detrimental to the character of the area.

Rear Extensions: Additions to the rears of properties can often be visible from other parts of the ACA and can affect its character. Rear extensions which may otherwise constitute exempted development can materially affect the external appearance of a building within the ACA and would in that case require planning permission. Extensions should be designed to minimise their visibility from any public area in the ACA, they should be subsidiary to the main building, of an appropriate scale, and should follow the guidance for new infill buildings given above.

6.3.10 Amalgamation of Properties or Sites

Amalgamation of Structures: Joining buildings together into one functional unit requires planning permission irrespective of whether located in an ACA or not. Any proposals for the amalgamation of properties within the ACA will be considered with regard to the impact of the change on the special character of the ACA, whether in its visual appearance or characteristic use. Original entrances should therefore remain in use to maintain an active and vibrant street frontage. Treatment of facades to joined buildings should emphasise the individual plot. Paint finishes or shopfronts should not aim to present adjoining buildings which have been joined in the same ownership in a uniform manner.

Amalgamation of Plots: Any proposed development of a group of sites within the ACA, especially at an increased density, must respect the scale, mass, height, and design of adjoining buildings and of the whole

streetscape. This does not preclude modern design but should reflect the predominant and historically significant grain of the town, informally arranged buildings of intimate scale and narrow frontage. Developments which span across former individual plot boundaries, should be articulated in their volume and facades to reflect the historic plot divisions, both to the front and the rear, avoiding wide frontages of continuous height. The demolition of buildings that contribute positively to the character of the ACA is not acceptable. All such buildings should be retained and incorporated sensitively into any proposed re-development with respect for their historic and architectural qualities and original plot form.



Fig. 96: left: boundary stone walls

Fig. 97: right: cast iron gates and stone piers

6.3.11 External Lighting

Proposals for the illumination at night of buildings and other features within the ACA requires the consent of Louth County Council. The

method of lighting, i.e. type of fitting, fixing method and type of light, must be specified by the applicant in seeking permission and should be designed so that it does not affect public lighting levels, result in light pollution, or negatively impact on other structures in the ACA.

6.3.12 Views

Key views as outlined in this document must be preserved and any works within the ACA should not adversely impact on or block these views. These views will be considered for 'Protected View' status in the next review of the Local Area Plan.

6.4 Works To The Public Realm

6.4.1 Works by the Local Authority

Most works undertaken in the public realm are carried out by Louth County Council, or for it by subcontractors. These works include road opening works for drainage, water supply and metering, road resurfacing, paving works, accessibility improvements, street lighting, street furniture, controls and signage for traffic and pedestrians, parking provision and meters, etc. Larger-scale works will require planning approval under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001. The Conservation Officer should always be consulted in this process.

In smaller scale interventions, the relevant engineering department should consult closely with the Conservation Officer to ensure that any unavoidable impact on the character of the ACA is suitably mitigated.

Where subcontractors are used, the tender documents should inform bidding companies of the constraints imposed by working within an ACA. Subcontractors should be carefully overseen or should be required to engage professional conservation advice in any interventions within a historic context.

6.4.2 Works by Statutory Undertakers

Infrastructure for supply of gas, electricity, telecommunications, cable tv, etc. is provided by a range of providers, and all of which can have a damaging impact on the historic built environment.

Utility and service providers are each governed by different legislation, but all must consult to a greater or lesser degree with the local roads authority and obtain permission for any road-opening works.

The road authority as the overseeing body should inform the relevant service provider of the constraints imposed on work within an ACA, and should consult with the Planning Department of Ardee Town Council and the Conservation Officer for Louth Local Authorities before approving interventions.

Private sector utilities should be required to employ professional conservation advice to minimise and mitigate the impact of any proposed intervention in a historic context.

6.4.3 Historic Paving & Street Furniture

Alterations to paving and street furniture should be in keeping with the visual simplicity of the town. Where historic evidence of street furniture does not survive, new elements should be chosen to be high quality and low-key. Conspicuous arrays of litter bins or bollards should be avoided through the use of integrated designs to minimise clutter. The impact of necessary items should be mitigated by careful consideration of their position in the streetscape.

The Conservation Officer of Louth Local Authorities should be consulted before any works commence, to ensure that works do not adversely affect, but rather enhance the character of the area.

6.4.4 Drainage

Sewers culverts etc which are not visible contribute nonetheless to the historic character and civil engineering heritage of the ACA. Works to this infrastructure should be respectful of historic features and should favour repair over replacement.

6.4.5 Street Lighting

The street lighting in parts of the ACA is utilitarian roadway lighting. Consideration should be given to improving the lighting scheme with lower lamp standards to produce a more intimate lighting which would reinforce the town character.

6.4.6 Traffic and Management Signage

The roads in Ardee are in the care of Louth County Council. There is considerable traffic due to the strategic location of the town in the network of national and local roads. It is important that all signage and other traffic management features be carefully sited to cause the minimum impact. Traffic engineers should consult the Conservation Officer regarding any changes or improvements proposed.

6.4.7 Management of Parking

Parking has a generally negative effect on the character of the ACA in the areas where it is provided. Cars detract from the historic character of streets, and impede proper appreciation of historic buildings and spaces. In addition off-street surface car parks also add to the degradation of the character of the town. Parking is provided throughout the ACA in different arrangements. This should be revised when possible to allow structures to regain their historic boundaries or to be free of cluttering vehicles. Site boundaries, understanding of historic plot sizes and landscape features should not be sacrificed to providing parking spaces.



Fig. 131: Civic space devoted to car park use

To enhance the character of the ACA, the exclusion of parking from key positions in the ACA might be considered. The configuration of parking bays in sensitive areas should be designed for the best possible presentation when cars are not present. For disabled-accessible parking spaces alternatives to blue surfacing should be provided.



Fig. 132: Open expanse of car parking causing loss of street definition



Fig. 133: Loss of rear boundary definition



Fig. 134: Loss of front boundary definition

6.4.8 Planting & Landscaping

Good quality landscape design can enhance the setting of historic buildings and improve the appreciation of the urban spaces. Such designs should employ good quality natural materials which are already found in the streetscape, or are in sympathy with its scale and materials.

The quantity and quality of planting and trees within the ACA is an essential contributing element of its special character. Good quality planting maintenance and design can support this in the present and into the future. This also applies to areas in private property that are not in the street space such as front and rear gardens as they can be seen from public routes and are part of the larger landscape makeup of Ardee. The Conservation Officer should be consulted in the design of any such schemes, to ensure that the impact on the historic character of the village is acceptable.



Fig. 135: Rear gardens with hedges and mature native and exotic trees contribute significantly to the less public views in the ACA.



Fig. 136: Need for replacement trees and protection from vehicles

6.4.9 Service Utilities

Where underground services are proposed beneath historic paving, this should be carefully lifted by suitably skilled operatives and laid in the original position and detail.

Where cabling on facades is not avoidable, these should be placed neatly in discreet positions using dark coloured cable as approved by the Conservation Officer

6.4.10 Wires and Distribution Poles

Overhead electricity supply and telephone cables and poles detract significantly from the character of Ardee. The Council should facilitate and support any initiatives to place overhead services underground

within the historic ACA. The removal of redundant services and signage from the facades of buildings should also be encouraged.

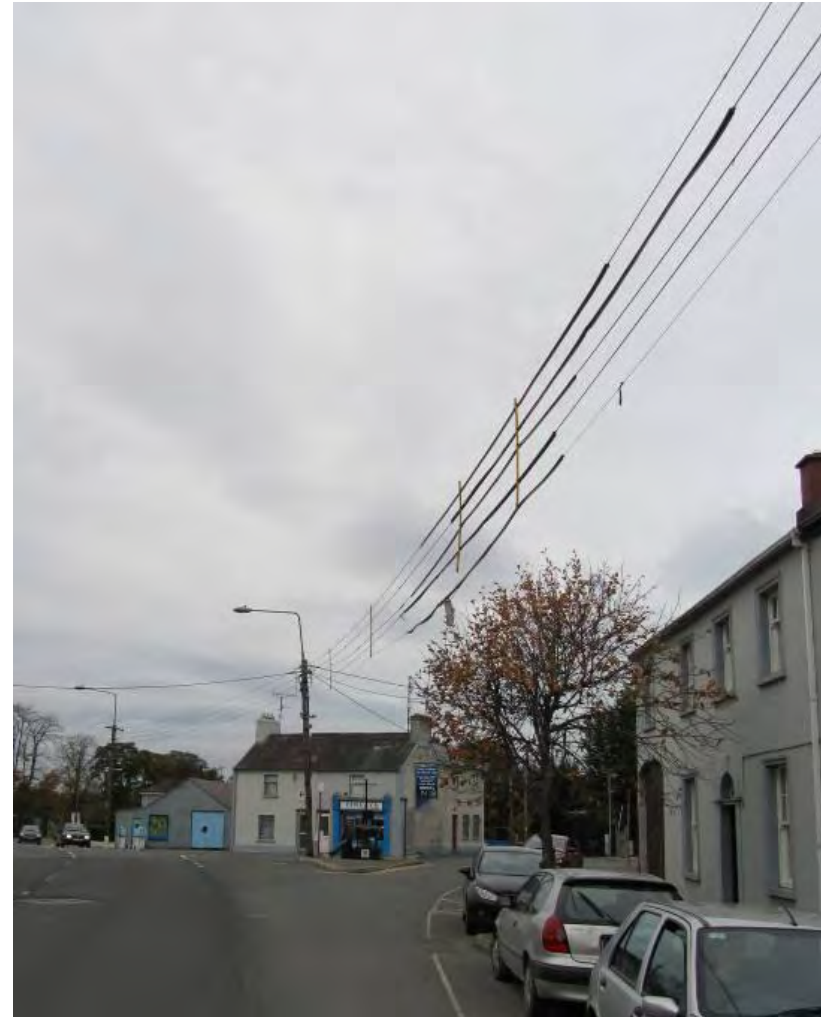


Fig. 137: Obtrusive overhead cables on Irish Street

NOTE:

Some of the works listed overleaf require planning permission irrespective of whether they are located within an ACA or not, but are included to highlight the need for careful consideration of the design of the proposed works to ensure that they do not impact negatively on the character of the area.

The guidance given above is not in itself a comprehensive list of all works, in all circumstances, that require planning permission, but identifies those works that would impact on the character of the ACA. Development works would still have to adhere to the general provisions of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2006 and Planning Regulations. The Area Planner and Conservation Officer of Louth County Council can be consulted if there is any doubt as to whether planning permission is required or not.

Table of Figures

Fig. 1: Proposed alteration of ACA boundary.....	7
Fig. 2: Reconstruction of historical layout by John Bradley (1984)	9
Fig. 3: Ruins of St Mary’s Church from Grose’s Antiquities (1791-6).....	10
Fig. 4: Plan of St Mary’s church, from Bradley.....	10
Fig. 5: Ardee Castle, section and elevation from Murtagh.....	10
Fig. 6: Photograph of Ardee Castle, formerly St Leger’s Castle, c. 1970	11
Fig. 7: Floor plans of Hatch’s Castle, from Murtagh	11
Fig. 8: Down Survey map of Ardee, 1657.....	12
Fig. 9: Extract from 1908 OS map showing location of 14th century tower house within Ardee Demesne, relative to former Ash Gate	12
Fig. 10: 14th century tower house within farmyard of Ardee Demesne (NIAH)	12
Fig. 11: Richardson map of 1677.....	13
Fig. 12: Extract from Matthew Wren’s Map of the County of Louth, 1766	13
Fig. 13: Main streets and courthouse, Lawrence Collection , c. 1900	14
Fig. 14: Ardee market house and square, Lawrence Collection, c. 1900.....	15
Fig. 15: St Mary’s Catholic Church on John Street, Lawrence Collection, c. 1900	15
Fig. 16: Main Street and Hatch’s castle, Lawrence Collection, c. 1900	16
Fig. 17: Extract from first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1835 (enlarged from original scale of 6” to 1 mile).	17
Fig. 18: Extract from Ordnance Survey map of 1908 (enlarged from original scale of 25” to 1 mile).	18
Fig. 19: Hatch’s castle and Main Street c. 1950	19
Fig. 20: Ardee Castle, formerly St. Ledger’s castle, c. 1950	19
Fig. 21: Ardee Castle and Castle Street	25
Fig. 22: Extract from Griffith Town Plan of 1854, showing characteristic irregularity of the Market Street, and narrow side lanes	26
Fig. 23: Houses to east side of Irish Street	27
Fig. 24: Houses on east side of Castle Street.....	28

Fig. 25: Detail of shopfront on Castle Street	29
Fig. 26: Irish Street looking north	30
Fig. 27: Historic street furniture on Market Street	31
Fig. 28: Park on former island in River Dee	31
Fig. 29: Extract from Griffith valuation town plan, surveyed 1854	32
Fig. 30: Dundalk Road looking south to the Fair Green	32
Fig. 31: Paired houses on the west side of Dundalk Road	33
Fig. 32: Vernacular farm on east side of Dundalk Road at Fair Green	33
Fig. 33: Former shop on east side of Dundalk Road	33
Fig. 34: Extract from 1908 OS map showing the Fair Green	34
Fig. 35: Buildings south of the Fair Green intersection	34
Fig. 36: The fair green looking towards Dundalk Road	34
Fig. 37: Extract from 1835 OS map showing Irish Street	35
Fig. 38: Houses on west of Irish Street	35
Fig. 39: Ulster Bank building	36
Fig. 40: Anderson's public house	36
Fig. 41: Cast-iron street sign	36
Fig. 42: Market Street in extract from Griffith Town Plan, surveyed 1854	37
Fig. 43: Market Square and Market Street	37
Fig. 44: Monument in Market Square	38
Fig. 45: St Mary's Church of Ireland church	38
Fig. 46: Railings to St Mary's Church	39
Fig. 47: Medieval Cross at St Mary's Church	39
Fig. 48: Extract from OS map of 1908 showing connection to Ardee House	39
Fig. 49: St Mary's church tower over railings to former Methodist Church	40
Fig. 50: Market Street with Hatch's Castle and three-storey building opposite	40

Fig. 51: Hatch’s Castle, Market Street	40
Fig. 52: Castle Street in extract from Griffith Town Plan, surveyed 1854	41
Fig. 53: Castle Street, west side looking north	41
Fig. 54: Castle Street looking south	42
Fig. 55: Doorway on Castle Street	42
Fig. 56: Bridge Street from OS map of 1908	43
Fig. 57: Bridge Street looking south from Castle Street	43
Fig. 58: Hamill’s public house on the west side of Bridge Street	44
Fig. 59: Bridge seen from site of the former mill building	44
Fig. 60: Rubble stone wall with cut stone gate detailing	45
Fig. 61: Warehouses to rear of Ulster Bank, Market Street	45
Fig. 62: Former dwelling to rear of Market Street	45
Fig. 63: Smaller scale buildings characteristic of secondary streets	46
Fig. 64: Row of cottages in Markethouse Lane	46
Fig. 65: End house of Railway Terrace with sash windows and railings	47
Fig. 66: Former Railway station	47
Fig. 67: Former station good shed	47
Fig. 68: Buildings on Chapel Lane shown on Griffith town plan of 1854	48
Fig. 69: Ruin of the Chantry College with St Mary’s Church	48
Fig. 70: Blocked doorway to rear of Hatch’s Castle site	48
Fig. 71: South elevation of the Railway Bar on Ash Walk	49
Fig. 72: View west towards Castle Street	49
Fig. 73: Building at the corner of Barret’s Lane and The Boat Trench	50
Fig. 74: View west from Bridge Street	50
Fig. 75: Row of cottages at western lane turn	50
Fig. 76: Two-storey dwelling to south side of the street	51

Fig. 77: Patrick Tierney Street looking west to Bridge Street	51
Fig. 78: Rear view of Ardee Castle from Patrick Tierney Street	51
Fig. 79: Finlay’s Funeral home to the south-east end of the street.....	51
Fig. 80: Extract from OS map of 1835 showing expansion south of the Dee	52
Fig. 81: Warehouses on Moorhall with park on former island in the River Dee.	52
Fig. 82: Historic stone bridge in Bridge Street seen from the west	53
Fig. 83: Stone riverside wall and view east to park on former island.....	53
Fig. 84: Trees define the parkside character of the river north of Moor Hall	53
Fig. 85: Extract from 1908 OS map showing realigned Moorhall	54
Fig. 86: Terrace of houses to the south of William Street	54
Fig. 87: De La Salle House	55
Fig. 88: Moorhall Street looking west.....	55
Fig. 89: Gate lodge and trees to the Convent of Mercy	55
Fig. 90: Former St Mary’s Catholic church and adjoining cottages	56
Fig. 91: Convent and shelter belt to the west	56
Fig. 92: Western side of shelter belt east of Ardee House.....	57
Fig. 93: View of the former Ardee House from the south.....	57
Fig. 94: Site of the defensive bastion from the south, said to date to c. 1690	57
Fig. 95: View to Hatch’s Castle from St Mary’s churchyard	58
Fig. 96: View to Chantry College from St Mary’s churchyard.....	58
Fig. 97: Ardee Castle from Bridge Street	59
Fig. 98: Rear view of Hatch’s castle	59
Fig. 99: Rear view of Ardee Castle	59
Fig. 100: View to Hatch Castle from Castle Street	59
Fig. 101: Tiling to shop entrance on Castle Street	61
Fig. 102: Decorative stucco bracket to shopfront on Castle Street	61

Fig. 103: Ionic detail to doorcase on William Street	63
Fig. 104: Traditional stone masonry wall on Dundalk Road.....	64
Fig. 105: Loss of chimneys upsets the proportions of this Georgian house	65
Fig. 106: Typical slate roof detail without overhang at eaves and verge	66
Fig. 107: Decorative bargeboards to convent gate lodge	66
Fig. 108: Down pipe with decorative fixings, Bridge Street	66
Fig. 109: Cut stonework to former Methodist Church.....	67
Fig. 110: Traditional rendered elevation.....	67
Fig. 111: Decorative render detail, Irish Street.....	68
Fig. 112: Exposed brick and rubble stone wall	68
Fig. 113: The non-historic paint scheme obscures the quality of this doorcase	69
Fig. 114: Rear of house on Bridge Street seen from Moorhall	70
Fig. 115: Proliferation of fittings diminishes the character of the ACA	70
Fig. 116: Decorative fanlight on Irish Street	71
Fig. 117: Historic windows are perhaps the single most important element of an historic streetscape	71
Fig. 118: Historic doors, formal and vernacular, add richness to an ACA.....	72
Fig. 119: Archway doors are key character features of the historic town	72
Fig. 120: Ironwork window guard on Castle Street.....	72
Fig. 121: The chantry college is a rare surviving example of its type	73
Fig. 122: Vernacular shop on Irish Street adds to the variety of the streetscape	73
Fig. 123: Elaborate shopfront on Castle Street	74
Fig. 124: Traditional timber shop front on Castle Street.....	74
Fig. 125: Traditional shopfront on Irish Street.....	75
Fig. 126: Both elaborate and simple details add to the character of the town	75
Fig. 127: Inappropriate alterations obscuring a decorative shopfront	76
Fig. 128: Railings and steps on Bridge Street.....	77

Fig. 129: Decorative ironwork on Dundalk Road	78
Fig. 130: New buildings which ignore the established building line and plot sizes damage the character of the street space	78
Fig. 131: Civic space devoted to car park use.....	82
Fig. 132: Open expanse of car parking causing loss of street definition	82
Fig. 133: Loss of rear boundary definition	83
Fig. 134: Loss of front boundary definition	83
Fig. 135: Rear gardens with hedges and mature native and exotic trees contribute significantly to the less public views in the ACA.	84
Fig. 136: Need for replacement trees and protection from vehicles	84
Fig. 137: Obtrusive overhead cables on Irish Street	84

Appendix 8

Guidelines for Works in ACA's

GUIDELINES

FOR WORKS IN ARCHITECTURAL
CONSERVATION AREAS



ACA



REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING BUILDINGS

The reuse of existing buildings is preferable to replacement. Applications for demolition of buildings that contribute to the character of an ACA will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. The onus will be upon the applicant to justify the demolition of the building. The Council will always start from the premise that the structure should be retained.

Where replacement buildings are deemed acceptable in towns or villages, new buildings should take into account existing plots, where possible, in order to retain the existing grain, character and vibrancy of the ACA.

Where buildings have a negative impact on the character of an ACA, demolition of existing and replacement with buildings of more appropriate design may be desirable (the current condition arising from low levels of maintenance including fire damage will not normally be considered as a negative impact). The replacement buildings should respect their setting.

Where permission is sought for demolition on the grounds of structural defects or failure, a report containing photographs and drawing(s) either captioned to clearly identify the location, or cross referenced to plans, and prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced professional regarding the existing condition should be submitted. As part of the justification for any demolition within the ACA on structural grounds, details will be required of repairs/remedial works normally used in similar circumstances and details of why they are not suitable in that instance.

Details of the design including materials proposed for replacement building(s) will be required in any case where demolition is considered, proposals for a replacement building will be assessed as set out below as part of the consideration of an application for demolition.

Corner buildings in towns can provide identity and points of orientation, consideration will be given to allowing for appropriate designs to emphasise these locations, which may not be acceptable in other locations.

REFURBISHMENT OR ALTERATION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS



Retention of the original fabric of the building is preferable to replacement. Where replacement materials must be used they will be in the first instance in keeping with the predominant traditional materials used within the ACA, or alternatively as agreed with the conservation office of Louth County Council.



Where new buildings or alterations at roof level are proposed, consideration should be given to the effect of the proposals on the character of the area with regard to roof shape, pitch, angle and length, height, and eaves details, such that they are in keeping with the character of the area.



The provision of dormers, and roof lights may be acceptable where they are in keeping with tradition of the area and which contribute to the existing character. Roof lights should be located on hidden pitches where possible. Where used on roof slopes which are visible from public areas, roof lights, if permitted, should be conservation grade.



Ventilation of roof spaces should be via eaves vents where possible.



Where breaking through internally between adjacent buildings in an ACA, both fronts are to maintain an active function, the disruption of historic material is to be kept to a minimum such that the character is not negatively impacted upon, this is preferable to demolition of one or both structures.

ROOF-SCAPE AND CHIMNEYS

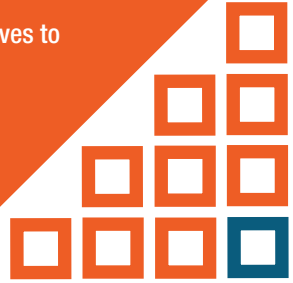
- Roof extensions where deemed to be appropriate should always complement the appearance of the existing and adjacent buildings in keeping with the character as set out in the character appraisal or character statement for the ACA.
- Changes to roof pitch angle, ridge height and span of roof can have a significant impact on character, and would be unacceptable to existing buildings except where the changes involve the reinstatement or enhancement of character.
- Telecommunications equipment, ductwork, lift shafts, or other roof plant require planning permission. These should be sensitively located and must not adversely affect the character of the building or where appropriate the roofscape of the ACA.
- The use of modern roofing or recladding materials will not be acceptable where it impacts upon the character of the ACA.
- Chimney stacks and pots are intrinsic to the character of Irish towns and villages and should be retained.
- Where replacement buildings or substantial changes to roof structures are permitted within town and village ACAs the use of chimney stacks or other vertical elements in the design should be considered to retain existing patterns and to punctuate the roofscape.
- In cases where dormers are deemed to be in keeping with the character of an area and therefore acceptable, traditional forms in keeping with the character of the building and the ACA will be preferred.

FAÇADES

- ◆ Where repairs are to be carried out to traditional renders, the material, its style and detailing should match the original as far as possible. See advice notes or seek advice from the conservation office of the Council for technical details. Sample panels may be requested to assess appropriateness.
- ◆ The stripping of render to expose the underlying stone is normally inappropriate and will be unacceptable within the ACA.
- ◆ Re-pointing of brick buildings require a method statement to be submitted to the council as part of the planning application and may require a sample panel for assessment by the conservation office.
- ◆ Replacement of traditional finishes with modern style materials will not be considered to be in keeping with the character and will therefore not be granted planning permission other than in exceptional cases.

OVERHEAD WIRE-SCAPE AND DISTRIBUTION POLES

- ◆ The Council will facilitate where possible and support any initiatives to underground overhead services in the historic town and village centre ACAs.
- ◆ The removal of redundant services from the façades of buildings will be encouraged.



EXTERNAL LIGHTING OF BUILDINGS AND FEATURES

All external lighting of buildings, trees and other feature illumination should be designed such that it does not contribute to general lighting, result in light pollution and negatively impact on the general rural character of Demesne or village ACAs.

Lighting of certain landmark buildings and structures would be acceptable to the council. The method of lighting i.e. type of fitting, fixing method and type of light would need to be specified by the applicant in seeking permission.

ADVERTISEMENTS AND SIGNAGE

- Advertisements to the exteriors of structures within an ACA require planning permission. An application will provide details of impact on the character of the building to which they are attached, adjacent buildings and to the ACA in general. Details of the fixing method will also be required to ensure minimisation of irreversible impacts on the building in question as part of the planning application.
- Signage fixed flat to the façade of a building is normally preferable to those fixed on brackets perpendicular to the façade.
- Advertising on canopies will not generally be acceptable in an ACA.

OPENINGS

Applications for alteration to existing opening sizes and proportions, or for additional openings in traditional buildings within ACAs will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and where they do not detract from the character of the area.

The replacement of timber windows and doors with modern materials such as PVC or aluminium will not be acceptable within an ACA.

Where original or old glass survives in windows it should be retained and/or incorporated into repaired/replaced windows.

Replacement of PVC and Aluminium window frames and doors with timber will be encouraged and facilitated where possible by the Council.

External roller shutters will not be permitted within the ACA's. Alternative methods of security should be used.

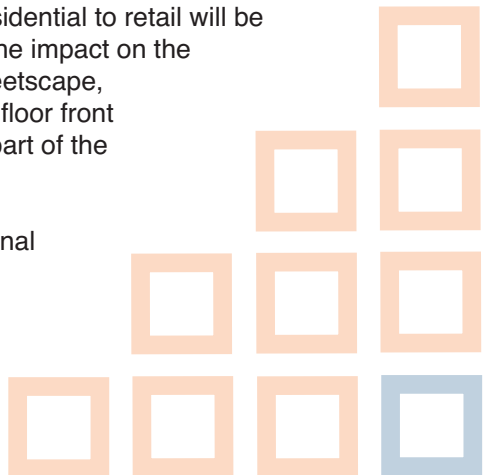
SHOPFRONTS

Detailed guidance notes on shopfront will be available separately

USES:

Applications for change of use from residential to retail will be required to provide an assessment of the impact on the structure and its character, and the streetscape, particularly where breaking out ground floor front wall or the provision of signage forms part of the application.

Alterations such as the removal of original external limestone steps, railings or other external features, and provision of new openings for additional access to upper floors will be considered in relation to its impact on character.



TRAFFIC, STREET FURNITURE, PLANTING

- ◆ Any changes to traffic management and parking within ACAs will take into account its designation as an ACA and will seek to retain or improve the character of the ACA in the design and provision of Pay and Display machines, signage, ramps, renewed surfaces, dished pavements etc.
- ◆ The Council will actively promote the retention of all surviving original kerbing and cobbles in the ACAs.
- ◆ Where agreement is reached with the Council for works to dish footpaths, original kerbs will not be removed, they will be lowered in full and not cut or removed.
- ◆ Post boxes, seats, water pumps and other street furniture where in keeping with the character of the ACA will be retained in-situ.
- ◆ New street furniture when being provided will be of high quality reflecting the area's status as an ACA, of appropriate (preferably local) materials co-ordinated within each ACA.

DEMESNES

Development within Demesne ACAs should take into account the setting of structures within the Demesne, mature trees and the original landscape design intentions which are to be respected.

The location of Car parking facilities in Demesne ACAs should be carefully considered to avoid interruption of elements of the designed landscape such as original avenues or designed vistas, and should be screened with appropriate planting and landscaping.

GUIDELINES

FOR WORKS IN ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION AREAS

If you have further queries regarding ACA designation please contact:

The Planning Section,
County Hall,
Millennium Centre,
Dundalk, Co. Louth

Phone: 042 935 3180
Fax: 042 932 0080
e-mail: planning@louthcoco.ie
website: www.louthcoco.ie

Drogheda Borough Council,
Fair Street,
Drogheda,
Co. Louth

Phone: 041 983 3511
Fax: 041 983 9306
e-mail: info@droghedaboro.ie
website: www.louthcoco.ie

Dundalk Town Council
Crowe street
Dundalk
Co. Louth

Phone: 042 9332276
Fax: 042 9336761
Email: info@dundalktown.ie
website: www.louthcoco.ie

Design: Vision Design & Marketing, Dundalk, Co. Louth. Tel: +353 42 933 0690



Appendix 9

A Guide to ACA's in Louth

A GUIDE TO

Architectural Conservation Areas

“An architectural conservation area is a place, area, group of structures or townscape which is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest in its own rights, or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures.”

LOUTH



ACA



Architectural Conservation Areas are of great importance for the protection and enjoyment of our environment.

Some were originally described as Conservation Areas in earlier development plans, but since the introduction of the legislation on the protection of the Architectural Heritage, on 1st January 2000, these earlier conservation areas have been renamed, their boundaries altered and designated as ACAs. New ACAs have been also been designated.

They vary in their nature and character and can cover areas as diverse as the historic centres in our towns and villages, terraces of early 20th Century houses, mills and their associated weirs, stretches of canal with their locks and lock houses, and the demesnes of country houses.

The special character of these areas does not lie in the buildings alone. The historic layout of roads, paths and boundaries, mix of uses, gardens, parks and greens, trees and street furniture, landmarks and views all contribute to the special sense of place.



Roden Place, Dundalk

How do I know if I live in an Architectural Conservation Area?

The Planning Authority's development plan includes a description of the ACAs in its area and maps which show the exact boundaries. You can see these in your local planning office, and they will also be available on the Local Authority website.

www.louthcoco.ie

How is an ACA designated?

Planning authorities are required by the Planning and Development Act, 2000 to include objectives for the conservation of the character of Architectural Conservation Areas. The designation of an ACA is done during a review of a County or Town Development Plan, or as a variation to the Plan. They are not attached to Local Area plans, but may be referred to. Any changes to the boundaries of an ACA, or changes in objectives, must be done as a variation or subsequent review of the plan.

This is a list of all the Architectural Conservation Areas in Louth:

In Drogheda - there are 17 ACAs

1. Bolton Square / Green Lanes
2. Clinton's Lane
3. The Dale
4. Fair Street
5. Laurence's Street
6. Legavoureen Park
7. Magdalene Street (north)
8. St. Mary's Cottages
9. Millmount
10. North Quay / Back Lanes
11. St Peter's Church of Ireland and Environs
12. Railway Terrace
13. Windmill Road (part)
14. West Street and central shopping core
15. Leyland Place
16. Ship Street
17. Old Abbey Lane

In Dundalk there are seven ACAs

1. St Mary's Road
2. Roden Place
3. The Crescent
4. Clanbrassil Street
5. Jocelyn Street
6. Soldiers Point coastguard houses
7. Demesne/Magnet Road

In the County Council's operational area there are eight ACAs

1. Ardee
2. Carlingford
3. Collon
4. Milltown (Grangebellew)
5. Monasterboice
6. Newtown Monasterboice
7. Salterstown
8. Whitestown



Salterstown

Can I have a say in the matter?

Yes. When the development plan for your area is being reviewed it is advertised in the newspapers and the plan will be on public display. You can send your comments to the relevant Planning Department on all aspects of the plan, including ACAs.



Pump in Collon

How are ACAs protected?

This is done by:

- ◆ Defining the character that merits protection, including the open spaces.
- ◆ The use of planning controls over demolition and alterations within the area.
- ◆ Giving careful consideration to the impact of any new development proposal on the character of the area.

Designating an area as an ACA does not prohibit all new development. However, permission for new development will only be granted if it can be shown that the development will not be detrimental to the character of the area. The design of the new development will be of particular importance and it is preferable to minimise the visual impact. The more unified the character of the area the greater will be the need to retain that uniformity of design. Where there is a mixture of styles, a new building should ideally demonstrate a high standard of contemporary design which would be complementary to the overall pattern of the area. Existing building heights and materials should also be respected unless it can be demonstrated that a particular site deserves an extraordinary treatment.

Are Trees Protected in an ACA?

Trees can make an important contribution to the quality of the area, and while the removal of a single tree might not have much impact, removal of a stand of trees along the roadside or in a green space could make a significant difference.

What needs planning permission?

The protection of an ACA relates to the external appearance. As an ACA includes the rear of buildings and the open spaces most works to the outside of a building or structure in an ACA will need planning permission.

If, for example you proposed to build a small extension, change the roof materials or windows, install a roof light or satellite dish, form a parking space, strip off plaster, or erect signage you will probably need permission.

Planning permission will not be needed for works to the interior unless it involves a change of use. Normal repair and maintenance work will not require permission unless it uses materials or details which are not appropriate to the structure.

If you are in any doubt as to whether or not planning permission is required for any proposed works to a building or structure, please check with the planning authority before you start.

General guidance for works in ACAs is being prepared and will be available on the Local Authority website or from any planning office in County Louth.

Suppose I want to demolish a building within an ACA?

Planning permission will be needed for demolition of any building within an ACA. An application for demolition of any building will need to include reasons for the demolition, a survey of the existing building with photographs and a brief architectural appraisal. In the case of a building which makes a positive contribution to the character of the area it will also be necessary to include a condition survey.

What about archaeology?

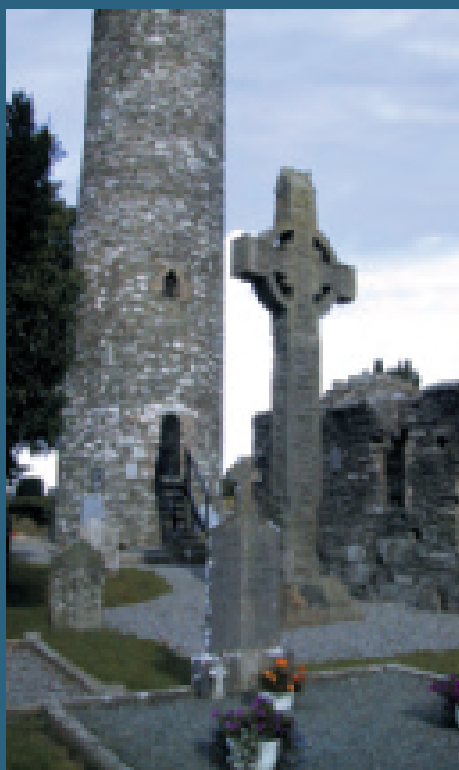
Since ACAs are often in the historic centre of towns and villages, they frequently also include or overlap with areas of archaeological potential. Where excavations are being carried out within the zone of a recorded monument it is necessary to give two months' notice to the National Monuments section of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.



Do I need special materials or architectural advice?

Most buildings in Architectural Conservation Areas are constructed of traditional materials such as stone, plaster, slate and brick, with timber windows and doors. Particular local materials and forms of detailing can be a significant part of the appearance of the area and it is best to use these traditional materials for any alterations to existing buildings.

If you are considering innovative designs you should consult an architect. The Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland keep a register of architects with conservation skills, and can help you find one with particular skills in a style, period or building type. The Irish Georgian Society has a register of traditional skills and trades, and your Local Authority Conservation Officer also maintains a list of consultants and tradespeople with conservation knowledge.



Monasterboice



Dundalk



Carlingford

Checklist

Checklist



Find out if you live in an ACA by contacting the Planning Authority



If you live in a Protected Structure you should have received a notice when the building was first placed on the Record, however, if you are buying an older building you should always check the record of protected structures in the development plan for the area.



If you are thinking of carrying out any work (however minor) check with the planning authority to see if -



Planning permission is required for the works you are considering



Find out if a conservation area appraisal exists that can guide change

It is better to get advice from the planning authority before you begin work than to have the work halted, removed or amended at a later date. This will save you time and money.

*If you have further queries regarding
ACA designation please contact:*

The Planning Section,
County Hall, Millennium Centre,
Dundalk, Co Louth

Phone: 042 935 3180
Fax: 042 932 0080
e-mail: planning@louthcoco.ie
website: www.louthcoco.ie

Architectural Conservation Areas in **LOUTH**



Designed by: Vision Design, Dundalk: 00353 42 933 0690

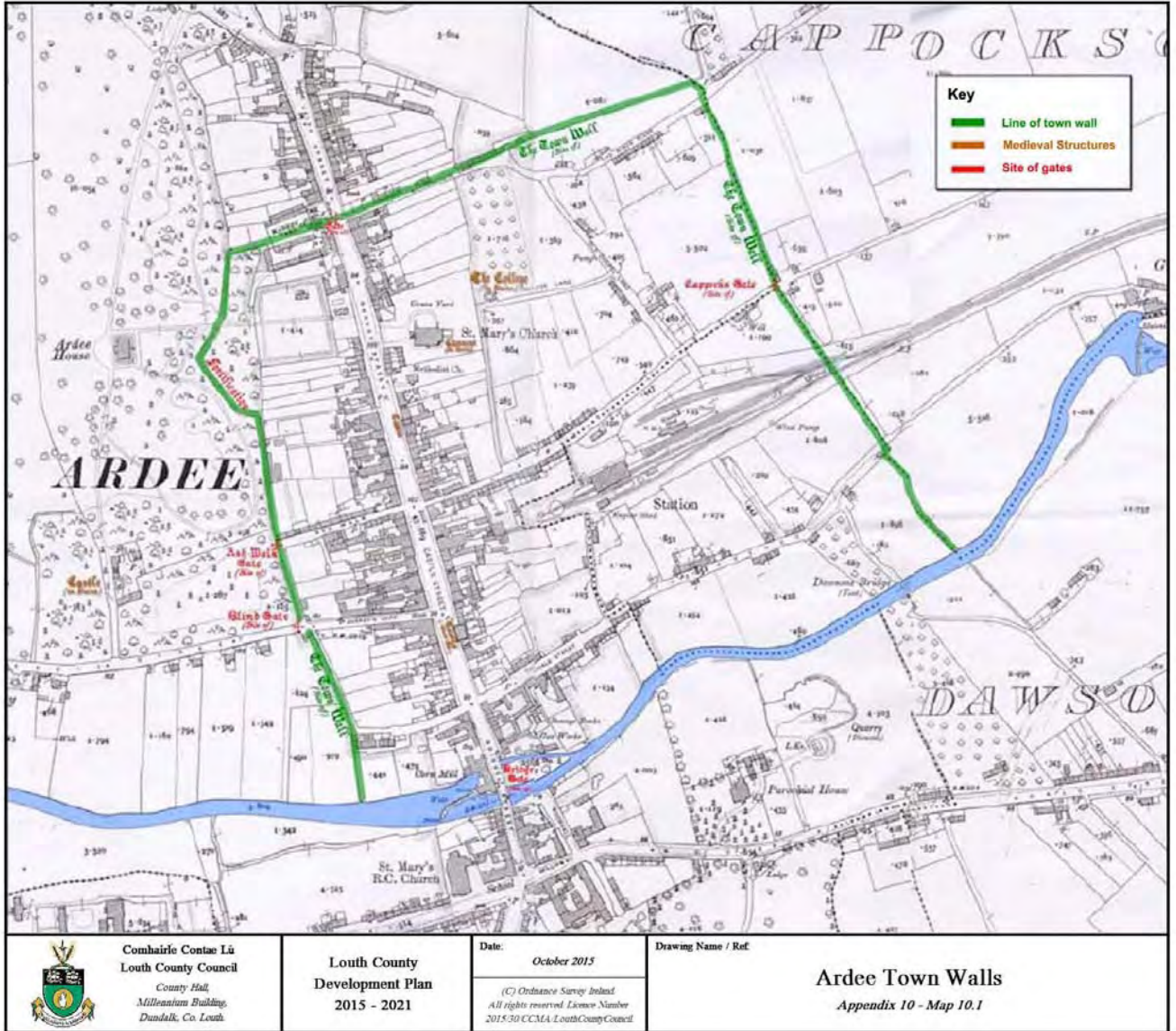


For more information please contact:

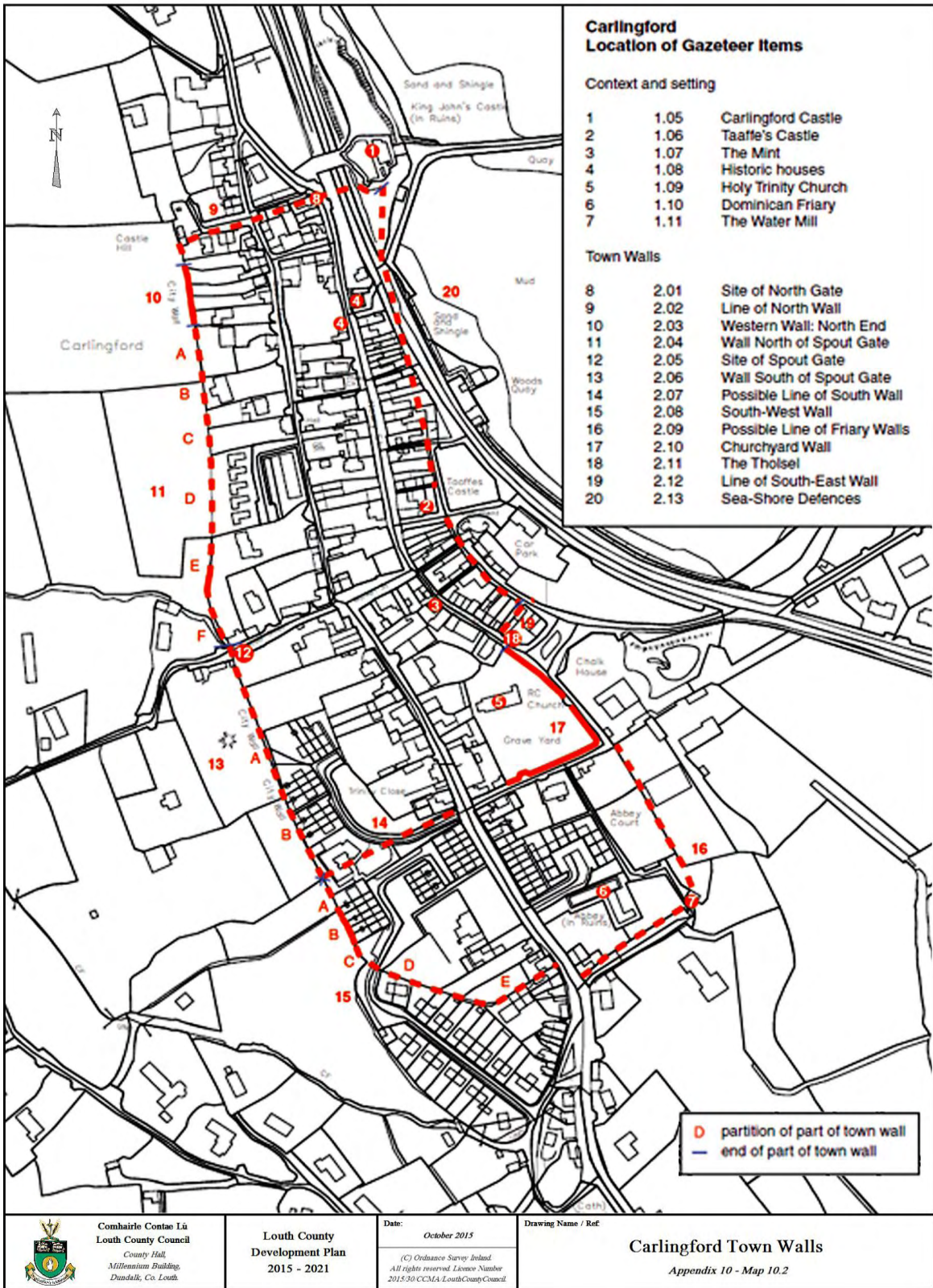
Appendix 10

Walled Towns

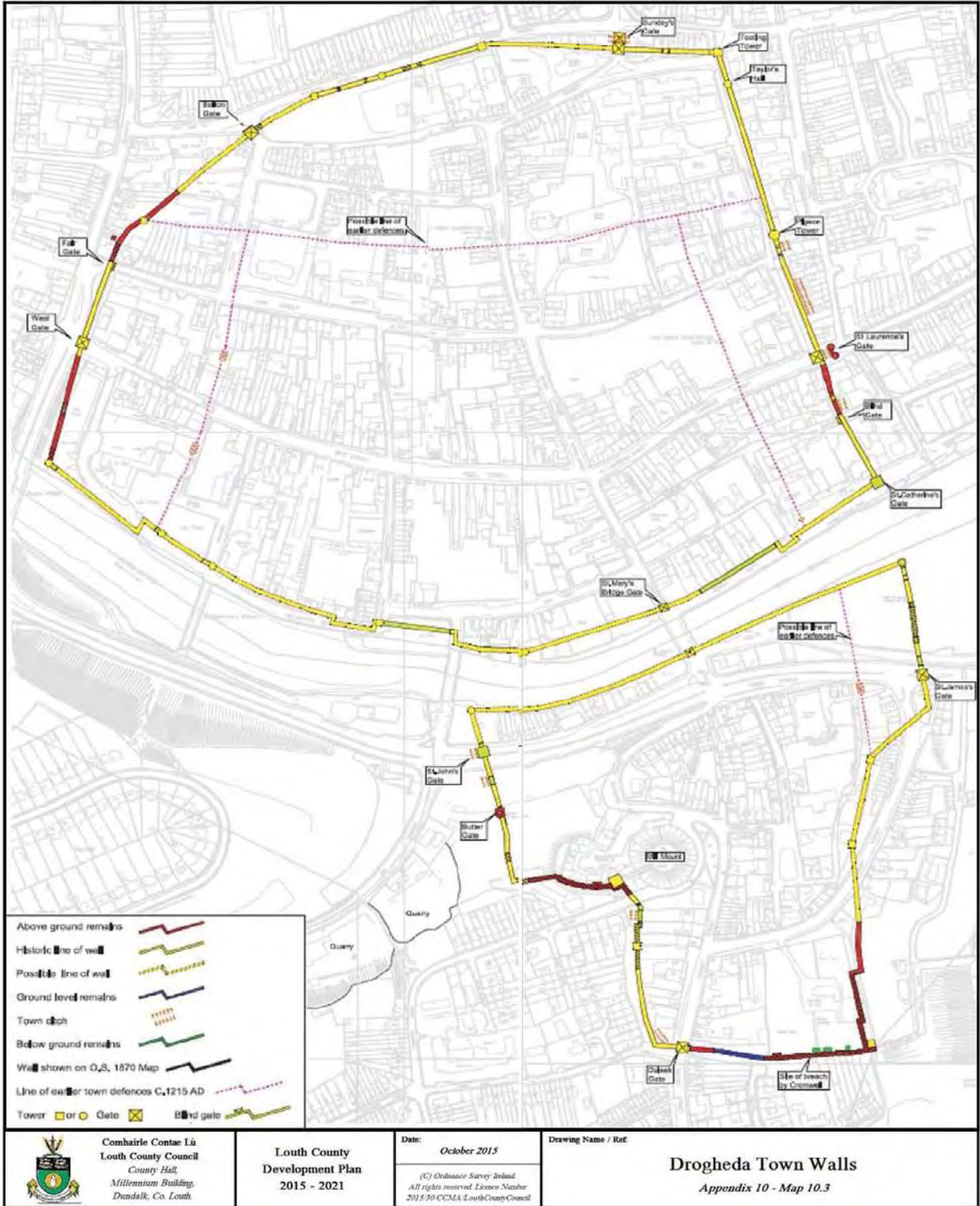
- Ardee Town Walls
- Carlingford Town Walls
- Drogheda Town Walls



Map 10.1 Ardee Town Walls



Map 10.2: Carlingford Town Walls



Map 10.3: Drogheda Town Walls

Appendix 11

Views and Prospects

Table 1 Views and Prospects

Ref:	Location	Direction	Description
VP 1	Drummullagh	Drummullagh; elevated site accessed off a local road onto a country road. View can be accessed to the front of an existing dwelling.	Extensive views east towards Narrow Water, above Omeath village and across Carlingford Lough towards Northern Ireland, including Rostrevour Mountain.
VP 2	Clermontpase Bridge	Clermontpase Bridge; is located along the main road and a lay-by beside the bridge to access views.	Views west uplands towards Clermont Cairn and east towards Northern Ireland. The panoramic views are separated from the foreground by rolling rural landscape.
VP 3	Clermont Cairn RTE mast	Clermont Cairn; The site is accessed from the top of Black Mountain at the RTE Mast and carpark.	Panoramic views to the north, south, east and west of Cooley mountains, Mourne Mountains and beyond. Extensive views south of Dundalk, Dundalk Bay and surrounding countryside.
VP 4	Windy Gap	The site is accessed from a northern pathway at the Long Woman's Grave.	View is available horizontally along the hollow at the gap both north and south at the base of "The Foxes Rock" Mountain.
VP 5	Carlingford Lough	Carlingford Lough; Viewpoint is along a section of the main road on the Greenore road (R173)between Carlingford and Greenore.	Views north of Carlingford in the middle distance and with the setting of Slieve Foye to the rear. In the foreland across Carlingford Lough, views of the Mourne Mountains in Northern Ireland.
VP 6	Slieve Foye	Viewpoint at the highest point of Mountain park outside of the Carlingford Settlement Limit.	View of the settling of Carlingford along the coastline and panoramic views of the Lough towards Northern Ireland.
VP 7	Spelickanee	Viewpoint along section of road where the local road	180 degree views of the mountains and valley within the Cooley peninsula.

Appendix 11
Views & Prospects

		spilts south.	
VP 8	Glenmore – mountains and valley	Slieve halpen; Views access along the main road after forested area between Mutlaghattin and Annaloughan Mountian.	Panaramic Views down through the valley towards Slieve Foye and, Barnavave and to the south Slieve halpon.
VP 9	Barnavave and Carlingford mountain	At Ballygoly townland, views are taken from the bridge along the main road.	Middle distance views to the north east of the back of Slieve Foye and Barnavave and Carlingford Mountain. A dwelling at the crossroads at this site causes a certain amount of obstruction to the south east views.
VP 10	Jenkinstown Hill	Jenkinstown Hill towards Dundalk Bay. Views at the top of the hill from the site of the road across from the carpark into Annaloughan Mountain.	Panoramic views south towards Dundalk Bay and across to Dundalk.
VP 11	Jenkinstown	Jenkinstown at the top of local road and at the base of the Round Mountain.	All panoramic views to the south of the site of Dundalk Bay, Views north of the Black Mountain
VP 12	Ballymakellett	Ballymakellett at the top of the local road road.	Views towards Dundalk bay , panoramic, scenic views
VP 13	Faughart Hill	Faughurt Hill. Views recorded at the top of the Hill at the parking bay adjacent to the graveyard.	Panoramic views across north, south, east and west to include views of the Cooley Mountains and valley with on-off rural housing at the base of the base. Views of Dundalk to the south, low-densities one-off houses located at base of hill towards Dundalk. Views to the east have been disturbed by the erection on a wind turbine adjacent to the view point.
VP 14	Dungooly Crossroads	Site is accessed via a narrow laneway at Dungooly townland	Views from Dungooly crossroads north of Slieve Gullion and east of Forkhill Mountain.
VP 15	Views of Castle Roche	Views of Castle Roche, views recorded at several points along adjoining local road L-7112-0 and	Views of Castle Roche are available along adjoining local roads. Views are dominant along L-7112-0 and L-8112-20 of the elevated Castle site and its

Appendix 11
Views & Prospects

		L-8112-20.	dominant skyline presence.
VP 16	Hackballscross -	Hackballscross- Views recorded at the cross road at Hackballscross.	Views of mountains in the far distance to the north east of the site. In the short term the views contain mature trees and hedges and it is more the skyline which is of importance at the site.
VP 17	Killin Golf Course -	Views recorded at junction past Killen Golf course towards Dundalk.	Uninterrupted panoramic views of Cooley Mountains in the foreground separated from the road by rolling rural landscape.
VP 18	Dromiskin -	sea views across to Dundalk, Cooley and Mourne Mountains	Views of sea across to Cooley and Mourne Mountains and including Dundalk Bay.
VP 19	North of Annagassan	Anagassan Village, beach strip between Annagassan Pier and lands to the north of the Saltings,	Coastal beach strip, approximately 250m long, providing uninterrupted sea view looking north across Dundalk Bay towards the Cooley Mountains and the Mourne Mountains.
VP 20	Salterstown	Salterstown, along Scenic Route No. 18 northernmost end of local secondary road L6220.	Coastal beach strip, providing uninterrupted sea view looking north across Dundalk Bay towards the Cooley Mountains and the Mourne Mountains.
VP 21	Corstown	Draghanstown, northernmost end of local secondary road L6220.	Uninterrupted sea view looking north across Dundalk Bay towards the Cooley Mountains and the Mourne Mountains.
VP 22	Lurganboy -	Lurganboy, beach strip along Scenic Route No. 18, adjacent to public carpark.	Coastal beach strip, providing uninterrupted panoramic sea view. View to north along coast towards Dunany Point. View to the south-east towards Clogherhead Village, Almondstown, Clogher Head and Clogherhead Harbour.
VP 23	Callystown to Clogherhead	Garrolagh, 300 metres north of T-junction of L2278 with L6279	Extensive panorama towards the coast across large working landscape. Dunany point visible to the north-east, Lurganboy coastline in the middle distance and Clogherhead Village and Clogher Head to the south-east. Some modern housing and agricultural

Appendix 11
Views & Prospects

			buildings visible in the middle distance.
VP 24	Dardisrath	towards coast and Clogherhead Dardisrath along L6281, 800m north of Barnhill Crossroads	Partial coastline view across working landscape, interrupted by some modern housing and agricultural buildings. Ganderstown and Port Oriel partially visible to the south-east.
VP 25	Brownstown	Southern side of L6286, opposite Fieldstown/Brownstown	southwards over AHSQ towards Drogheda Long distance view to south-east towards Drogheda Town, Tom Roes Point and Premiere Periclase. Open grazing fields and hedgelines in foreground and middle-distance. Limited modern housing visible in the left foreground.
VP 26	Newtown Monasterboice	Newtown Monasterboice along L6293 on highground 260m north of Monasterboice Round Tower	View south-west across open working field toward Monasterboice Round Tower. Upper portion of Tower visible behind copse of mature deciduous native trees.
VP 27	Townley Hall Nature Walk	Townley Hall Nature Walk, 200m east from Townley Hall entrance along Nature Walking Trail.	Elevated view south east towards Battle of the Boyne Site. Boyne River visible in foreground, partial view of Battle of the Boyne Visitor Centre Boyne and Oldbridge house behind copse of mature deciduous native trees.
VP 28	Drybridge Escarpment	Drybridge Escarpment	180 degree View from the N51 at the rocky outcrop where the former Obelisk stood. Panoramic view over the Battle of the Boyne site. King William approached from the north & King James approached from the south at Donore hill.
VP 29	Waterunder Plateau	View from M1 Retail Pk, M1, Motorway bridge	View south from N51 between Mell Roundabout and Motorway Roundabout Junction 10. Drybridge Escarpment. View of Ravine which was

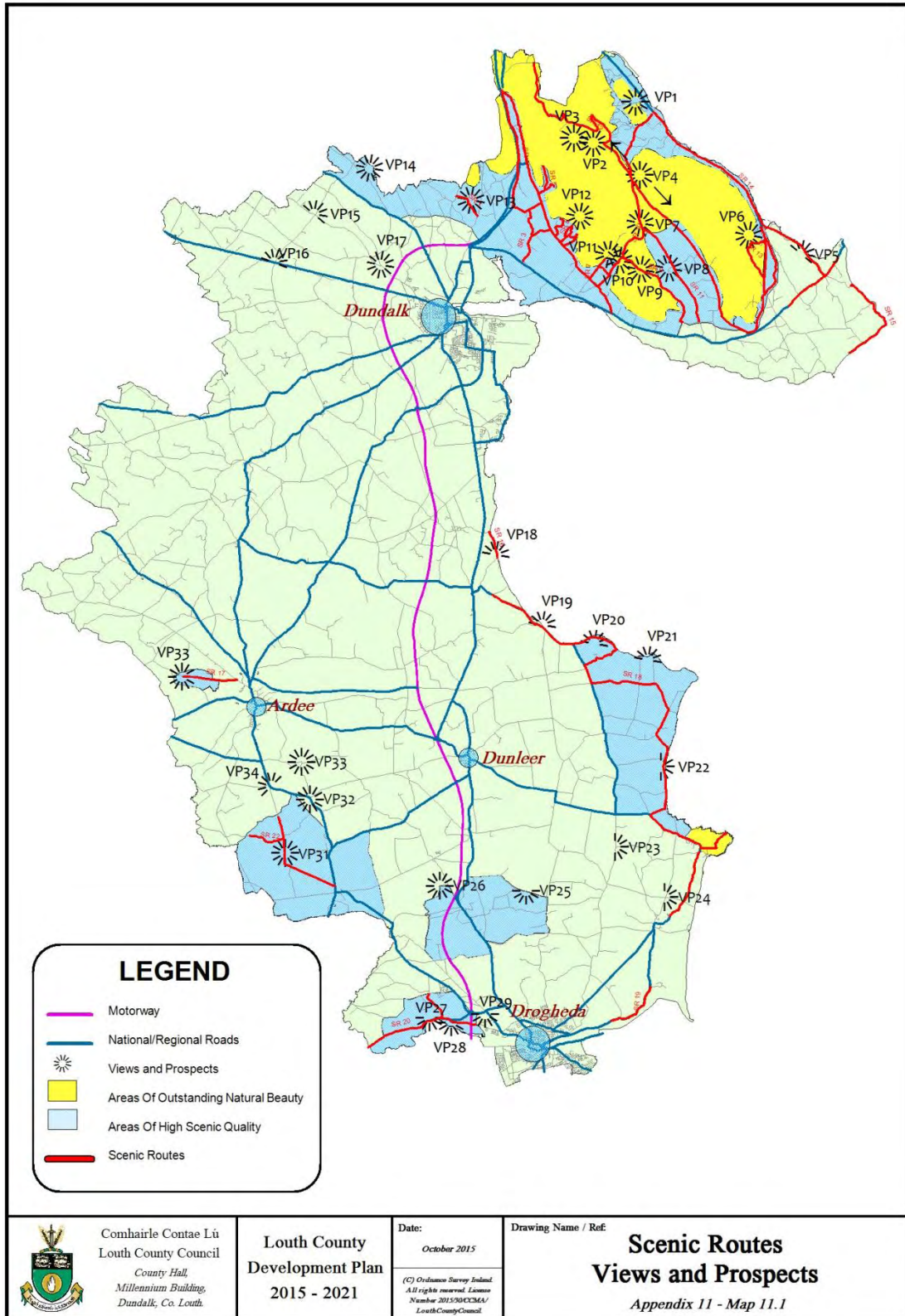
Appendix 11
Views & Prospects

			the route of the Williamite army from their camp at Tullyallen Hill to cross the Boyne river.
VP 30	Mount Oriel	Belpatrick townland along L5286, 600m west of Mount Oriel.	Uninterrupted view to the north east towards Mullacapple. Valley view incorporating open working fields, native hedgerows, wooded areas in middle distance and tree-topped drumlins in right middle-distance. Mount Oriel to right foreground. Absence of any visual residential or agricultural structures.
VP 31	N2 Funshog	Junction of N2 with L2253	View eastwards from N2 junction with L2253 of tree-lined avenue of mature deciduous trees. Avenue is largely interrupted and extends to 600 metres.
VP 32	Millockstown	Millockstown at junction of L5257 with L5258	180 degree panoramic view southwards across Millockstown towards Roestown, Funshog and Mount Oriel. Landscape contains large open fields, native hedgerow, some modern housing and agricultural buildings visible in the middle distance. 3no. Wind turbines visible in the distance to the south-west.
VP 33	Townparks	Townparks at westernmost end of Scenic Route No.17	View to North flat open field, infill site between two bungalows. New two-storey house in middle background. View to South. Flat open field with backdrop of mature deciduous trees. View of Ardee Bog.
VP 34	Funshog	Funshog, 1.5km west of VP32 along the N2	Open landscape view north-west across towards Hunterstown and Ardee Town. Landscape contains large open fields, native hedgerow, limited modern housing and agricultural buildings visible in the middle distance. 3-phase Pylon visible in right foreground.

Table 2 Views and Prospects within Level 3 Settlements

Settlement	Ref:	Location	Description
Carlingford	VPC 1	King Johns Castle	Views east, south and west those of Carlingford Lough, towards Carlingford and Slieve Foye.
	VPC2	Taaffees Castle	Views north east across Carlingford Lough and towards Northern Ireland and the Mourne Mountains from Taaffees Castle.
	VPC3	Holy Trinity Heritage Centre Church	Views north and east Views towards the Bay and Carlingford Lough.
	VPC4	Dominican Friary	View protected into the Dominican Friary with regard to those lands zoned adjacent for town centre use.
	VPC5	The Coast and Harbour	Views South towards Carlingford Village and Slieve Foye
Clogherhead	VPCL 1	Clogherhead Harbour	Uninterrupted sea view looking north-west along the coast towards Dunany Point. Distant views to the north towards the Cooley Mountains and the Mourne Mountains.
Tullyallen	VPT 1	In front of Tullyallen Graveyard, Old Church Lane	Landscape view to the south over Boyne Valley Area. Open field and stone wall in immediate foreground, copse of mature deciduous trees in right foreground and right middle distance, uninterrupted view south towards Platin. Distant view to the south-east of Drogheda Town and the coast. Irish Cement Works (Platin) visible in middle background, Boyne Cable-stayed bridge visible in middle distance.
	VPT 2	Between two houses along the east of the Old Church Lane	Landscape view to the south over Boyne Valley Area. Open field and stone wall in immediate foreground, copse of mature deciduous trees in right foreground and right middle distance, uninterrupted view south towards Platin. Distant view to the south-east of Drogheda Town and the coast. Irish Cement Works (Platin) visible in middle background, Boyne Cable-stayed bridge visible in middle distance.

Appendix 11
Views & Prospects



Appendix 12

Louth Retail Strategy

1.0	Introduction	1
1.1	Purpose of the Retail Strategy	1
1.2	Evidence Based Approach	2
1.3	Preparation of Retail Strategy	2
1.4	Structure of the Report	3
2.0	Planning Policy Analysis	4
2.1	National level	4
2.1.1	National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS)	4
2.1.2	Sustainable Development : A Strategy for Ireland (1997)	4
2.1.3	Retail Planning : Guidelines for Planning Authorities (RPG's)	5
2.1.4	Retail Design Manual	6
2.1.5	Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2007)	6
2.1.6	Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future – A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020	7
2.2	Regional Level	7
2.2.1	The Border Regional Authority Planning Guidelines	7
2.2.2	Dundalk/Newry 2006 A New Perspective on the Development Of the Region	8
2.2.3	Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area 2007	8
2.3	Local Level	9
2.3.1	Louth Retail Strategy	9
2.3.2	Louth County Development Plan (LCDC) 2009-2015	10
2.3.3	Variation No. 3 of the Louth County Development Plan 2009-2015 Settlement Plans	10
2.3.4	Dundalk & Environs Development Plan 2009-2015	11
2.3.5	Variation No 1 of the Dundalk & Environs Development Plan 2009-2015 Core Strategy	11
2.3.6	Drogheda Borough Council Development Plan 2011-2017	11
2.3.7	Drogheda & Northern Environs Core Strategy; Variation No 1 of the Drogheda Borough Council Development Plan 2011-2017 and variation No 1 of the Louth County Development Plan 2009-2015	11

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

2.3.8	Meath County Development Plan 2013-2018	12
2.3.9	Meath Retail Strategy 2013-2019	12
2.3.10	North Drogheda Environs Local Area Plan, 2004	12
2.3.11	Dundalk South West Local Area Plan , 2006	13
2.3.12	Drogheda Docklands Local Area Plan 2007	13
2.3.13	Ardee Local Area Plan 2010-2016	13
2.3.14	Dunleer Local Area Plan 2010-2016	13
3.0	Economic Context & Retail Trends	14
3.1	Introduction	14
3.2	National Context	14
3.3	Regional & Local Context	15
3.3.1	Population	15
3.3.2	Age Profile	16
3.3.3	Social Class	18
3.3.4	Educational Attainment	19
3.3.5	Retail Trends	20
3.3.6	Convenience	20
3.4	Comparison	21
3.5	Outlet Centres	22
3.5.1	Online Shopping	22
3.5.2	Pop Up Shops	23
3.5.3	Retail Warehousing	23
3.6	Retail Trends in Relation to Northern Ireland	23
3.7	Conclusion	24
4.0	Survey Approach and Analysis	25
4.1	Introduction	25
4.2	Floor Space Survey	25
4.3	Classification	26
4.3.1	Types of Retail Goods	26
4.4	Land Use Survey	27
4.5	Household Survey	27
4.5.1	Identifying the Survey Areas and Participants	28
4.5.2	Results of Householder Survey	28

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

4.5.3	Convenience Shopping : destination for the Main Food and Grocery Shop	28
4.5.4	Convenience Shopping : Frequency and Mode of Transport for The main food and Grocery shop	30
4.5.5	Convenience Shopping Topping Up Shopping	31
4.5.6	Convenience Shopping Summary	32
4.6	Comparison Shopping	32
4.6.1	Comparison Shopping : Choice of Destination	32
4.6.2	Comparison Shopping :Frequency and Satisfaction	33
4.6.3	Comparison Shopping : Summary	34
4.7	Bulky Goods	35
4.7.1	Bulky Goods Shopping : Choice of Destination	35
4.7.2	Bulky Goods Shopping : Satisfaction	36
4.7.3	Bulky Goods Shopping : Summary	36
4.8	Competing Centres	36
4.8.1	Competing Centres : Dublin City Centre	37
4.8.2	Competing Centres : Newry	38
4.8.3	Competing Centres : Blanchardstown Shopping Centre	38
4.8.4	Competing Centres : Swords	39
4.8.5	Competing Centres : Summary	40
4.9	Online Shopping	40
4.10	Shoppers Survey	41
4.10.1	Age and Gender of Survey Respondents	41
4.10.2	Origin of Survey Participants and purpose for coming to the Surveyed Town	42
4.10.3	Frequency and Mode of Transport Used by Survey Participants	44
4.10.4	Reasons for Visiting the Surveyed Town	45
4.11	Dundalk	47
4.12	Drogheda	49
4.13	Ardee	50
4.14	Householder and Shopper Survey Conclusions	52
5.0	Health Check Qualitative Analysis	53
5.1	Introduction	53
5.2	Dundalk	54

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

5.2.1	SWOT Analysis	54
5.2.2	Definition of Core Retail Area	56
5.3	Attractions	58
5.4	Accessibility	58
5.5	Environmental Quality & Amenity	59
5.6	Diversity of Uses	60
5.7	Multiple Representation	60
5.8	Rates of Vacancy	61
5.9	Significant Changes in the Retail Environment Since 2009	63
5.10	Retail Opportunity Sites	63
5.10.1	Opportunity Site 1 (OS1) Former Toymaster Building	65
5.10.2	Opportunity Site 2 (OS2) Longwalk Shopping Centre	65
5.10.3	Opportunity Sites 3a & b (OS 3a & OS 3b) Surface Car Parking to east of the Longwalk	65
5.10.4	Opportunity Site 4 (OS 4) : Row of Buildings to South Of Market Street	65
5.10.5	Opportunity Site 5 (OS5) : Vacant Retail Unit on Earl Street	66
5.10.6	Opportunity Site 6 (OS6) : Williamsons Mall	66
5.10.7	Opportunity Site 7 (OS7) ; Former Dunnes Stores and Associated Car parking to the East	66
5.11	Key Actions and Recommendations arising from this Health Check are as follows :	67
5.12	Conclusions	67
5.13	Drogheda	68
5.14	SWOT Analysis	68
5.15	Definition of Core Retail Area	69
5.16	Attractions	70
5.17	Environment Quality/Amenity	71
5.18	Accessibility	71
5.19	Diversity of Uses	72
5.20	Convenience	73

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

5.21	Comparison	73
	5.21.1 Comparison Bulky	73
5.22	Other	73
5.23	Multiple Representation	73
5.24	Rates of Vacancy	73
5.25	Significant Changes in the Retail Environment Since 2009	75
5.26	Retail Opportunity Sites	75
	5.26.1 Opportunity Site 1 (OS1) : Site to the North of Narrow West St	76
	5.26.2 Opportunity Site 2 (OS2) : Narrow West St/ Scholes St/ Fair St	76
	5.26.3 Opportunity Site 3 (OS3) : Former Easons Building on West St	76
5.27	Key Actions and Recommendations	77
5.28	Conclusions	77
5.29	Ardee	77
5.30	SWOT Analysis	78
5.31	Definition of the Core Shopping Area	79
5.32	Attractions	81
5.33	Accessibility	81
5.34	Environmental Quality/Amenity	82
5.35	Diversity of Uses	82
5.36	Multiple Representation	83
5.37	Rates of Vacancy	83
5.38	Significant Changes to the Retail Environment	85
5.39	Retail Opportunity Sites	85
	5.39.1 Opportunity Site 1 to the North East of the Town Centre	87
	5.39.2 Opportunity Site 2 Junction of Market St /Market House Lane	87
	5.39.3 Opportunity Site 3 (OS3) Former Ardee Bakery	87
	5.39.4 Opportunity Site 4 (OS4) Supervalu and Building fronting onto Market Street	88
5.40	Key Actions & Recommendations	88

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

5.41	Conclusions	88
6.0	Assessment of Competing Centres	88
6.1	Introduction	88
6.2	Dublin City Centre	89
6.2.1	Introduction	89
6.2.2	Accessibility	89
6.2.3	Retail Facilities	89
6.2.4	Conclusion	89
6.3	Newry	90
6.3.1	Introduction	90
6.3.2	Accessibility	90
6.3.3	Retail Facilities	90
6.3.4	Conclusion	90
6.4	Blanchardstown Shopping Centre	90
6.4.1	Introduction	90
6.4.2	Accessibility	90
6.4.3	Retail Facilities	90
6.4.4	Conclusion	91
6.5	Swords	91
6.5.1	Introduction	91
6.5.2	Accessibility	91
6.5.3	Retail Facilities	91
6.5.4	Conclusion	91
6.6	Summary	92
7.0	Quantitative Analysis & Capacity Assessment	92
7.1	Introduction	92
7.2	The Approach	92
7.3	Definition of the Study Area	93
7.4	Population of the Study Area	93
7.5	Expenditure per Capita	94
7.6	Total Available Expenditure	96
7.7	Adjustments to Available Expenditure	97

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

7.8	Existing Retail Floorspace in County Louth	99
7.9	Turnover Ratio of Existing Floorspace in County Louth	99
7.10	Floorspace Capacity	100
7.11	Vacant Floorspace	101
7.12	Extant Planning Permissions	104
8.0	Policies and Actions	104
8.1	Introduction	104
8.2	Retail Hierarchy	104
8.3	Distribution of Floorspace Requirements	106
8.4	Conclusion	107
8.5	Specific Policies for County Louth	107
8.5.1	Policies	107
8.5.2	General Measures to Promote Town Centres	108
8.5.2.1	Provide a variety of different uses within the Town Centre Including Retail	108
8.5.2.2	Tourism & Town Centre	109
8.5.2.3	Leisure & Cultural Activities	109
8.5.2.4	Improvements to the Public Realm	109
8.5.2.5	Revitalisation of Vacant Properties & Shops	109
8.5.2.6	Evening & Night Time Economy	110
8.5.2.7	Improve Accessibility to the Town Centres	110
8.5.2.8	Litter Management	110
8.5.2.9	Festival, Events & Street Markets	110
8.5.2.10	Living Over the Shop	111
8.6	Key Objectives in relation to Dundalk, Drogheda & Ardee	111
8.6.1	Dundalk	111
8.6.2	Drogheda	111
8.6.3	Ardee	111
9.0	Criteria for Assessing Future Retail Development	112
9.1	Introduction	112
9.2	Criteria for Assessing Future Retail Development	112
9.3	Sequential Test	112
9.3.1	Policy Principles of Sequential Approach	112

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

9.3.2	Application of Sequential Approach	112
9.4	Other criteria that should be considered in the assessment of Significant applications include:	113
9.5	Criteria for Assessing Particular Types of Development	
9.5.1	Large Convenience Stores	114
9.5.2	Retail Parks & Retail Warehouses	114
9.5.2.1	Types of Goods Sold	114
9.5.2.2	Size of Units	115
9.5.3	Factory Shops	115
9.5.4	Outlet Centres	115
9.5.5	Retailing in Small Town & Villages	115
9.5.6	Local Retail Units	115
9.5.7	Retailing in Rural Areas	115
9.5.8	Casual Trading	116
9.5.9	Retailing & Motor Fuel Stations	116

List of Tables:

Table 1	Retail Floorspace available within the County	9
Table 2	Actual and Target populations for County Louth, the Border Region and State	16
Table 3	Actual & Target Populations for Dundalk & Drogheda	16
Table 4	Population by Age in County Louth & State , 2011	17
Table 5	Persons in State and County Louth classified by Social Class 2011	18
Table 6	Persons aged 15 years and over classified by highest level of education completed	19
Table 7	Existing Floorspace within County Louth	27
Table 8	Main Food & Grocery Shopping Outlets	28
Table 9	Respondents reasoning for choosing a specific town as the location for their main food and grocery shopping	29
Table 10	Respondents level of satisfaction with destination town they choose for their main food and grocery shopping	29
Table 11	Frequency with which survey respondents carry out their main food and grocery shopping	30
Table 12	Mode of transport chosen by respondents when undertaking their main food grocery shopping	30
Table 13	Type of retailer chosen for undertaking top-up shopping	31
Table 14	Frequency of top-up shopping	31
Table 15	Mode of transport used when undertaking top up shopping	32

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

Table 16	Main comparison shopping destinations	33
Table 17	Respondents reasoning for choosing a specific town as the destination for their main comparison shopping	33
Table 18	Frequency with which survey respondents undertake comparison shopping	34
Table 19	Respondents general satisfaction rating with the town which they chose to do their main comparison goods shopping	34
Table 20	Main bulky goods shopping destinations	35
Table 21	Respondents reasoning for choosing specific town as the location for their bulky goods shopping	35
Table 22	Respondents general satisfaction rating with the town which they choose to do their bulky goods shopping	36
Table 23	Outline of the proportion respondents who visited the listed competing centres for the purposes of shopping	37
Table 24	Frequency with which respondents chose to shop in Dublin City Centre	37
Table 25	Type of shopping which respondents undertake in Dublin City Centre	38
Table 26	Frequency with which respondents choose to shop in Newry	38
Table 27	Type of shopping which respondents undertake in Newry	38
Table 28	Frequency with which respondents choose to shop in the Blanchardstown Shopping Centre	39
Table 29	Type of shopping which respondents undertake in Blanchardstown Shopping Centre	39
Table 30	Frequency with which respondents choose to shop in Swords	39
Table 31	Type of shopping which respondents undertake in Swords	40
Table 32	Type of shopping which respondents undertake online	40
Table 33	Proportion of online shopping within the surveyed settlements of County Louth	41
Table 34	Frequency with which respondents choose to shop on-line	41
Table 35	Gender breakdown of survey participants	42
Table 36	Age profile of survey participants	42
Table 37	Origin of survey participants	42
Table 38	Primary purpose for visiting town	42
Table 39	Breakdown of retail spend inflow by retail category into County Louth	43
Table 40	Breakdown of retail spend inflow to the individual towns within County Louth	43
Table 41	Mode of transport used for coming to the surveyed town	44
Table 42	Frequency of visiting the surveyed town	45
Table 43	Respondents primary reason for shopping in the surveyed town	45
Table 44	Additional reasons for respondents choosing to shop in the surveyed town	46
Table 45	The main streets and areas of Dundalk visited by survey participants	47
Table 46	The main attractions of Dundalk according to the survey participants	47
Table 47	Survey respondents' suggestions for enhancement which would encourage them to shop within Dundalk more frequently	48
Table 48	The main streets and areas of Drogheda which the survey participants Visited	49

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

Table 49	The main attractions of Drogheda according to the survey participants	49
Table 50	Survey respondents' suggestions for enhancement which would encourage them to shop within Drogheda more frequently	50
Table 51	The main streets of Ardee which the survey participants visited	50
Table 52	The main attractions of Ardee according to survey participants	51
Table 53	Survey respondents' suggestions for enhancement which would encourage them to shop within Ardee more frequently	51
Table 54	Comparative Inflow & Outflow Figures	52
Table 55	County Louth Population Projections	93
Table 56	Adjustments to Expenditure per capita	94
Table 57	Projected Expenditure per capita for convenience and comparison goods 2013- 2024	95
Table 58	Projected Expenditure per capita between comparison and bulky goods 2013-2024	96
Table 59	Total available expenditure for Convenience, Comparison and Bulky household goods	96
Table 60	Total available expenditure in County Louth adjusted to account for Inflow & Outflow levels of Expenditure	97
Table 61	Existing Floorspace within County Louth 2013	99
Table 62	Turnover ratio of Existing Floorspace	99
Table 63	Available expenditure for Additional Retail Floorspace in County Louth	100
Table 64	Floorspace Potential	101
Table 65	Vacant Floorspace	101
Table 66	Floorspace Potential in Dundalk, Drogheda & Ardee having regard to existing Vacant Floorspace	102
Table 67	Indicative Convenience Floorspace Potential	102
Table 68	Indicative Comparison Floorspace Potential	102
Table 69	Indicative Bulky Household Goods Floorspace Potential	103
Table 70	Extant Planning Permissions	104
Table 71	Retail Hierarchy for County Louth	106

List of Maps

Map 12.1	Dundalk Core Shopping Area	57
Map 12.2	Dundalk Vacant Properties	62
Map 12.3	Dundalk Opportunity Sites	64
Map 12.4	Drogheda Core Shopping Area	70
Map 12.5	Drogheda Vacant Properties	74
Map 12.6	Drogheda Opportunity Sites	75
Map 12.7	Ardee Core Shopping Areas	80
Map 12.8	Ardee Vacant properties	84
Map 12.9	Ardee Opportunity Sites	86

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

1.0 Introduction

The Retail Planning: Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2012 Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG), require Local Authorities to prepare retail strategies and policies for their areas which are to be incorporated into respective Development Plans.

In preparing the Louth County Development Plan for the period 2015-2021 it was considered an opportune time to review the current and prepare a new retail strategy in tandem with the preparation of the new County Development Plan. The County Development Plan 2015- 2021 and indeed any future local area plans for Dundalk and Environs, Drogheda and Environs, Ardee and Dunleer shall incorporate policies and objectives contained within this Retail Strategy.

In formulating this Retail Strategy Louth County Council worked in conjunction with Future Analytics Consulting Limited.

1.1 Purpose of the Retail Strategy

The purpose of the Retail Strategy is to implement the objectives of the *Retail Planning Guidelines (RPGs)* and accordingly the following shall be provided:

- Details of the retail settlement hierarchy within County Louth,
- Level and form of retailing activity appropriate to the components of the settlement hierarchy,
- Boundaries of the Core Shopping Areas of Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee and also location of any district centres,
- Broad assessment for the requirement of additional retail floorspace,
- Strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development,
- Identification of opportunity sites which can accommodate the needs of modern retail formats in a way that maintains the essential character of the shopping area,
- Objectives to support action initiatives in town centres,
- Identify relevant development management criteria for assessment of retail developments in accordance with these guidelines.

1.2 Evidence Based Approach

The Retail Planning Guidelines 2012 require that all policies and objectives contained within the Retail Strategy be evidence based. The background research for the preparation of the Louth Retail Strategy includes:

- Planning history analysis,
- Retail trends and assessment of same in relation to County Louth,
- Review of existing published national, regional and local documentation,
- Shopper survey,
- Household survey,
- Land use survey including vacancies,
- Town centre health check.

1.3 Preparation of Retail Strategy

In order to estimate the anticipated need for additional floorspace over the Plan period 2015-2021 it was necessary to undertake a quantitative analysis and capacity assessment for the County which involved:

- Estimating the population at base and design year;
- Estimating the expenditure per capita on convenience, comparison and bulky household goods at both base and design year, derived using figures from a number of CSO resources including the *National Services Inquiry (2013)*, the *County Incomes and Regional GDP (2013)* and the *Retail Sales Index (2013)*,
- Incorporating projections on inflows and outflows of expenditure to the catchment area based on the results of the shoppers and household surveys,
- Estimating the total available expenditure in the base year and in the design year for residents within County Louth,
- Estimating the likely increase in expenditure available for provision of additional floorspace,
- Estimating the likely average turnover of new floorspace in convenience and comparison goods,
- Estimating the capacity for additional floorspace in County Louth,
- Estimating existing vacant convenience, comparison and bulky good floorspace,
- Allocating the required floorspace between the Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee.

Note: With reference to the Core Shopping Areas as identified for Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee as contained in this Retail Strategy, these are diagrammatic only at strategic level. These will be subject to refinement and review for adoption at Local Area Plan stage.

1.4 Structure of the Report

The structure of the remainder of the Report is as follows:

- Chapter 2 Planning Policy Analysis**
- Chapter 3 Economic Content and Current Retail Trends**
- Chapter 4 Survey Approach and Analysis**
- Chapter 5 Health Check Qualitative Analysis**
- Chapter 6 Assessment of Competing Centres**
- Chapter 7 Quantitative Analysis and Capacity Assessment**
- Chapter 8 Policies and Actions**
- Chapter 9 Criteria for Assessing Future Retail Development**

2.0 Planning Policy Analysis

There are a number of national, regional and local policy documents which must be taken into consideration when formulating any retail strategy. The purpose of this chapter is to highlight the relevant documents and summarise the elements relevant to retail planning.

2.1 National Level

- *National Spatial Strategy (2002-2020)*,
- *Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland (1997)*,
- *Retail Planning: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012)*,
- *Retail Design Manual (2012)*,
- *Development Plan Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2007)*,
- *Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future- A New Transport Policy for Ireland (2009 – 2020)*.

2.1.1 National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 (NSS)

The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) is a twenty year national planning framework whose key objective is to achieve balanced regional development through a better balance of social, economic physical and population growth. Therein it identifies Louth as being located within the Border Region with Dundalk as a Gateway town and Drogheda as a Primary Development Centre with a population greater than 5000. Ardee is identified as having a population of between 1500 – 5000.

The **NSS** advocates the strengthening of the Belfast – Dublin economic corridor and recognises the potential of urban centres located therein including both Dundalk and Drogheda. It states that Dundalk has capacity to develop as a gateway along this corridor utilising its strategic location and acknowledges that Drogheda is influenced by its proximity to Dublin in terms of close functional and physical links.

2.1.2 Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland (1997)

The principle aim of the document is to provide a “comprehensive analysis and framework which will allow sustainable development to be taken forward more systematically in Ireland”.

It recognises the need for good spatial planning and the inclusion of sustainability in urban and environmental policies. It recognises that the pattern and density of urban development has a major influence on travel patterns and encourages high movement activities to locations in areas of maximum accessibility to public transport. Retail development can contribute to the drive for more sustainable development through the appropriate development of new retail services at a scale and location which will reduce the need to travel, fulfil social requirements and represent efficient land use.

2.1.3 Retail Planning: Guidelines for Planning Authorities (RPG's) (2012)

The Five Key Policy objectives contained within the RPGs are to:

- Ensure retail development is plan led and follows the settlement hierarchy,
- Promote town centre vitality through a sequential approach to development,
- Secure competitiveness in the retail sector by actively enabling good quality development proposals to come forward in suitable locations,
- Facilitate a shift towards increased access to retailing by public transport, cycling and walking in accordance with the Smarter Travel Strategy,
- Deliver quality urban design.

The Guidelines also provide specific guidance for the content and role of development plans. It is stated, *inter alia*, that:

- Development Plans must set out clear evidence based policies and objectives in relation to retailing in a discrete section of the Plan titled Retail Development,
- Joint or multi-authority retail strategies where required, will guide the preparation of retail policies and objectives in the relevant Development Plans,
- The need for any additional retail warehousing should be carefully assessed in view of the significant levels of recent provision and potential impacts on vitality and viability of city and town centres.

At a minimum, City and County Development Plans must:

- State the elements of their settlement hierarchy in line with the relevant regional planning guidelines and their core strategy,
- Outline the level and form of retailing activity appropriate to the various components of the settlement hierarchy in that core strategy,
- Define, by way of a map, the boundaries of the core shopping areas of city and town centres and also location of any district centres,
- Include a broad assessment (square metres) of the requirement for additional retail floorspace only for those plans in the areas covered by a joint or multi-authority retail strategy,
- Set out strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development to support the settlement hierarchy, including where appropriate identifying opportunity sites which are suitable and available and which match the future retailing needs of the area,
- Identify sites which can accommodate the needs of modern retail formats in a way that maintains the essential character of the shopping area,
- Include objectives to support action initiatives in city and town centres; such as
- Mobility management measures - urban environment and vibrant street life

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

- Public realm interventions,
- Identify relevant development management criteria for the assessment of retail developments in accordance with these guidelines.

Other key guidance set out in the Retail Planning Guidelines relevant to County Louth include:

- Dundalk is identified as a Border Regional Gateway and a location where the BID scheme is in operation,
- Drogheda is identified as a large town,
- 3,000sq.m. net cap on convenience retail floorspace,
- 6,000sq.m. gross cap on retail warehouse floorspace,
- The need for any additional retail warehousing should be carefully assessed in view of the significant levels of recent provision and potential impacts on vitality and viability of city and town centre.

2.1.4 Retail Design Manual (2012)

The Manual sets out key principles of urban design which may form the framework for policies to promote quality design in development plans and local area plans. These include but are not limited to:

- Design,
- Context and Character,
- Access and Connectivity,
- Density and Mixed Use.

2.1.5 Development Plan Guidelines For Planning Authorities (2007)

These Guidelines were adopted under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), and their aim is to:

- Improve the quality and consistency of development plans, and thereby improve the quality and consistency of decisions on planning applications,
- Strengthen the strategic content of development plans, in the context of the hierarchy of plans envisaged under the 2000 Act,
- Encourage consensus-building in the preparation, implementation and review of development plans.

In accordance with the Development Plan Guidelines (Section 3.13) the following retail policies should be included in the development plan.

- Confirmation of the retail hierarchy including the role of urban centres of differing sizes, and the size of the main town centres,
- Definition in the development plan of the boundaries of the core shopping areas of cities and towns,
- A broad assessment of the requirement for additional retail floorspace,

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

- Strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development,
- Preparation of policies and action initiatives to encourage the improvement of town centres,
- Identification of criteria for the assessment of retail developments.

2.1.6 Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future – A New Transport Policy For Ireland 2009 – 2020

In January 2009 the Minister for Transport published “Smarter Travel- A Sustainable Transport Future”, outlining a new transport policy for Ireland 2009-2020. It sets ambitious targets for modal shift, a reduction in transport emissions, easing congestion and outlines a range of measures designed to:

- Encourage smarter travel,
- Deliver alternative ways of travelling,
- Improve the efficiency of motorised transport,
- Ensure integrated policy delivery.

The document advocates better integration between land use planning and transport policies. It encourages that population and employment growth take place in sustainable compact forms reducing the need to travel for employment and services. The document contains a presumption against the development of out of town retail centres except in exceptional circumstances.

2.2 Regional Level

- The Border Regional Authority Regional Planning Guidelines (2010-2022)
- Dundalk/ Newry 2006- A New Perspective on the Development of a Region
- Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area 2007

2.2.1 The Border Regional Authority Regional Planning Guidelines (2010-2022)

With regard to retailing, the **Border Regional Authority Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 (BRARPG's)** acknowledge that between 1998 and 2008 the Region experienced exceptional levels of growth in the wholesale and retailing sectors. They recognise the vulnerability of these sectors as a result of the down turn in the economy, and in terms of cross border exchange rate fluctuations and subsequent price differentials. The **BRARPG's** acknowledge the importance tourism can make to the retail sector and advocate the development of a diverse range of retail functions in key centres in order to create more sustainable jobs. They also promote the development of a Regional Retail Strategy which takes into account, amongst other considerations, the impact of the Northern Ireland Retail Planning Policy. These actions are reflected in the following policies:

Border Region Authority Policies

- ESP 14** Direct new retail floorspace into Gateways and Hubs and those centres selected for additional population growth. Future provision of significant retail developments within the Border region should be consistent with the policies and recommendations of the DECLG Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities
- ESP15** Develop a Regional Retail Planning Strategy in accordance with National Retail Planning Guidelines.

2.2.2 Dundalk /Newry 2006- A New Perspective on The Development Of The Region

The Dundalk/Newry 2006 – A New Perspective on the Development of the Region Report was commissioned to evaluate the strategic case for the creation of a 'Twin City' urban cluster in a non statutory planning framework. With regard to retailing the Report notes that Dundalk and Newry “*have focused heavily on developing their respective retail profile in recent years. Whilst the retail offer is important to the development of both as destinations, other, higher value career sectors are needed to sustain growth and create wealth*”.

2.2.3 Planning Strategy for The Greater Drogheda Area 2007

The Planning Strategy for the Greater Drogheda Area 2007 acknowledges that there has been strong provision of new retail development in Drogheda Town Centre and the outlying areas. Scotch Hall, Phase One is operational and the Laurence Town Centre opened in 2006. Beyond the town centre, there are two new retail parks, one proximate to the Donore Road Interchange in County Meath and the other in the vicinity of the Mell Interchange on the north side of the town. The aforementioned developments represent a significant extension to the town's retail offer and will redress the previous retail 'leakage'.

It was estimated that the overall retail requirements of the study area in terms of comparison goods were well catered for in the short to medium term and that ongoing monitoring of retail performance would be required via the statutory development plan process.

2.3 Local Level

- *Louth Retail Strategy (2009),*
- *Louth County Council Development Plan 2009-2015,*
- *Variation No.3 to the Louth County Development Plan 2009-2015- Settlement Plans,*
- *Dundalk and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015,*
- *Variation No. 1 Dundalk and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015: Core Strategy,*
- *Drogheda Borough Council Development Plan 2011-2017,*
- *Drogheda and Northern Environs Core Strategy Variation No.1 to the Drogheda Borough Council Development Plan 2011-2017 and Variation No.1 to the Louth County, Council Development Plan 2009-2015,*
- *Meath County Council Development Plan 2013-2019,*
- *Meath County Retail Strategy 2013-2019,*
- *Local Area Plan for North Drogheda Environs 2004,*
- *Dundalk South West Local Area Plan 2006,*
- *Ardee Local Area Plan 2010-2016,*
- *Dunleer Local Area Plan 2010-2016,*
- *Drogheda Docklands Local Area Plan 2007.*

2.3.1 Louth Retail Strategy 2009

The purpose of the *Louth Retail Strategy 2009* is to:

- Promote a healthy, vibrant and competitive retail environment within County Louth,
- Identify the core shopping areas in Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee,
- Formulate policies to protect the vitality and viability of existing town and village centres,
- Ensure provision of appropriate scaled convenience retail outlets in new residential areas,
- Establish a county retail hierarchy,
- Define criteria for the assessment of future significant developments.

The 2009 retail strategy confirmed that there had been a 127% increase in available retail floorspace within the County since 2002 with an increase of 170% in Drogheda, 108% in Dundalk and 48% in Ardee. The Strategy established a county hierarchy for retail centres:

Table 1: Retail Floorspace Available Within the County

Level	Settlement
1	Dundalk, Drogheda
2	Ardee
3	Blackrock, Dunleer, Collon and Carlingford
4	Other small towns and villages

Therein Dundalk and Drogheda were identified as the leading retail centres in the County and with sufficient convenience retail spare capacity to satisfy requirements up to the year 2012. Thereafter additional retail floor space is dependent on demand driven by population growth. In terms of retail warehousing and retail parks the strategy suggests that it is unlikely that there will be any additional demand over the period of the Plan. It concludes that Ardee should continue to develop its convenience retail offer in tandem with population growth. For other small towns and settlements convenience retail offer should be commensurate with existing population.

2.3.2 Louth County Development Plan (LCDP) 2009-2015

The retail policies contained in the LCDP adhere to the findings and recommendations of the Louth Retail Strategy. The key points are outlined below:

- Promote a healthy competitive environment,
- Maintain vitality and viability of town and village centres,
- Applications for retail development should comply with ***Retail Planning Guidelines 2005 & the Louth Retail Strategy 2009***,
- Support the development of Dundalk and Drogheda as regional shopping centres,
- Maintain the role of Ardee as a sub county retail centre,
- Ensure the retail function of all other settlements is commensurate with locally generated needs,
- Large scale out of town shopping centres should be subject to the sequential test,
- Promote provision of local centres serving small, localised catchment populations in new residential areas,
- Discourage change of use to non retail uses at ground floor level.

2.3.3 Variation No.3 The Louth County Development Plan 2009-2015- Settlement Plans

Settlement Plans were prepared for all category level 4 settlements identified in the Louth County Development Plan. Retail provision for these settlements is to cater for basic convenience and comparison requirements for existing populations and locally generated needs.

2.3.4 Dundalk and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015

The retail policies contained in the ***Dundalk and Environs Development Plan (DEDP) 2009-2015*** encapsulates the policies contained in the Louth Retail Strategy, as applicable. The key points are outlined below:

- Implementation of the policies contained in the Louth Retail Strategy in so far as they relate to Dundalk and its environs,
- Identification of a Core Retail Area for Dundalk,
- Identification of a retail hierarchy for Dundalk and its environs,
- Protection of the retail function of the town centre through the requirement for sequential test approach to any out of town retail development,
- Provide retail services to meet local based need,
- Confine retail warehousing development to lands zoned for that purpose in the Plan,
- Promote Dundalk as a regional shopping destination.

2.3.5 Variation No. 1 Dundalk and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015: Core Strategy

The purpose of the ***Dundalk and Environs Core Strategy*** is to prioritise lands for future residential development and provide a phasing strategy. Evaluation of land took into consideration the social and physical infrastructure, including retail.

2.3.6 Drogheda Borough Council Development Plan (Dbcdp) 2011-2017

The DBCDP acknowledges Drogheda's designation as a Primary Development Centre in the National Spatial Strategy. In terms of retailing the key points are outlined below:

- Encourage the sensitive renewal and enhancement of Drogheda's town centre thereby creating a vibrant and attractive urban entity,
- Revitalisation of the town as a catalyst for further development of Drogheda,
- Core shopping area to be strengthened by restricting change of use from comparison shopping,
- The sequential approach to be applied to retail development outside the town centre,
- Encourage cultural and entertainment uses to locate to the town centre which would increase the vitality of the town centre particularly at night time and improve the overall economy of the town.

2.3.7 Drogheda and Northern Environs Core Strategy Variation No.1 To The Drogheda Borough Council Development Plan 2011-2017 And Variation No.1 To The Louth County Council Development Plan 2009-2015

The purpose of the Drogheda and Northern Environs Core Strategy is to prioritise lands for future residential development within the Plan area and provide a phasing strategy for the promotion of brown field and infill development. The phasing strategy took into consideration the social and physical infrastructure, including retail.

2.3.8 Meath County Development Plan 2013-2018

The Meath County Development Plan 2013-2018 places emphasis on concentrating population growth at locations where it is possible to integrate employment, supporting community facilities, retail and public transport stating that adequate lands should be provided to cater for such uses and that they should be developed in a sequential and co-ordinated manner. Definitions of different retail outlets and their net floor space have been provided. It is an objective of the Meath County Development Plan to implement the *Meath County Retail Strategy 2013-2019*.

2.3.9 Meath County Retail Strategy 2013-2019

The Meath County Retail Strategy confirms the retail hierarchy, which is consistent with the *Retail Planning Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016*. It recognises that there are significant levels of comparison leakage to the east and south east and acknowledges that there is scope for enhancement of higher order comparison shopping within Navan and other towns and /or district centres and sub county town centres.

Core retail areas are identified for towns and /or district centres and sub county town centres in addition to various small towns and villages. The Meath Retail Strategy advocates that new retail development should be located within or as close to these core areas as possible.

It provides broad guidance on the amount and type of additional floor space that will be required to accommodate additional expenditure over the lifetime of the strategy and recognises that enhancing the range and quality of comparison floorspace within the County is essential to ensure that Meath claws back some of the expenditure. Key points are listed below:

- Navan in particular should be promoted and developed as a centre for high order goods,
- In terms of convenience provision Trim, Dunboyne, Kells and Dunshaughlin are under provided in terms of retail offer,
- In smaller towns any additional retail offer should be commensurate with population growth. The county is well served in terms of retail warehouse development,
- The strategy identifies a number of general policies which are intended to shape and guide retailing in the County over the County Plan period.

2.3.10 North Drogheda Environs Local Area Plan, 2004

The *North Drogheda Environs Local Area Plan 2004 (NDELAP)* applies to an area of 254 hectares located approximately 2 km north of Drogheda Town Centre. In terms of retail and commercial development, the North Drogheda Environs LAP provides for three neighbourhood shopping centres and a retail park with a maximum floor area of 15,000 square metres.

2.3.11 Dundalk South West Local Area Plan, 2006

The Dundalk South West Local Area Plan 2006 (DSWLAP) pertains to an area lying to the southwest of Dundalk and comprises 600 hectares. The Plan provides for three civic and commercial centres which can be anchored by a convenience store not exceeding 1,600 square metres gross floorspace. Other uses listed as being permissible at each of the three centres includes a convenience or comparison unit not exceeding 250 square metres gross floorspace.

2.3.12 Drogheda Docklands Local Area Plan, 2007

The Drogheda Docklands Local Area Plan 2007 states that an appropriate mix and intensity of uses will be a key factor in the success of the area as a vibrant new town advocating a broad mix of compatible uses with a presumption in favour of active commercial, retail, cultural or leisure activities at ground level, with a varying mix of residential and commercial uses overhead. It states that small and medium size retail units will be required at ground floor level along the waterfront and on the main frontages.

2.3.13 Ardee Local Area Plan, 2010-2016

Ardee is placed to continue to develop as a medium sized town for urban strengthening to serve the needs of the local community and drive development within the locality. The **Louth County Retail Strategy 2009** stated that an additional retail store of up to 2,500sq.m was required for Ardee. (An extant planning permission exists for a retail outlet and food store of 1,080 sq.m.)

The Ardee Local Area Plan 2010-2016 advocates the introduction of new and retention of existing business uses in the town which are essential for maintaining the vitality and viability of the town centre.

2.3.14 Dunleer Local Area Plan 2010-2016

Dunleer is placed as Level 3 in the County Retail Strategy. The priority is to cater sufficiently for basic convenience and lower order comparison requirements commensurate with the size of the settlement.

Retail policies contained within the LAP pertain to the following:

- Preservation of Dunleer as a principle retail and commercial centre,
- Restricting change of use in the town centre to non retail uses,
- Enhancing the appearance of the town centre,
- Ensuring that any applications comply with the provisions of the Retail Planning Guidelines 2005 and the Louth Retail Strategy 2009.

3.0 Economic Context and Retail Trends

3.1 Introduction

The current performance of the economy and future growth forecasts impact on consumer expenditure levels and as such contribute to estimating the quantum of retail development required to meet future demand. This section of the strategy therefore outlines the national, regional and local economic context as well as summarising current retailing trends.

3.2 National Context

Between 1997 and 2007 Ireland experienced average growth rates of 7.2% in *Gross Domestic Product (GDP)* and annual average growth rates of 6.3% in *Gross National Product (GNP)*. The collapse of the construction and banking sectors in conjunction with global difficulties in the financial market meant that the Irish economy entered a very deep recession in 2008 (with GDP and GNP declining by -3.0% and - 2.8% respectively over 2008).¹

Between 2008 and 2011 GDP declined by 5.4 per cent, while GNP declined by 10.1 per cent. As a consequence of the recession which began in 2008, combined with significant levels of public money injected into the Irish banking system between 2009 and 2011, the level of public debt soared.²

The latest ESRI Quarterly Economic Commentary (Autumn 2013) states that many of the key indicators such as GDP that would normally be relied upon as an indicator of economic welfare have been affected by special factors such as, an exceptional fall in the profitability of the pharmaceutical sector. For that reason GNP is used as a measure of economic welfare.

ESRI Quarterly Economic Commentary (Autumn 2013) states that the clearest signal of what is happening in the economy in 2013 is the growth in employment. Beginning with the last quarter of 2012, there have been three consecutive quarters where employment grew, quarter-on-quarter, by around 0.5 per cent, so that it seems likely that employment growth for the year overall could be close to 2 per cent.

These statistics, and a detailed examination of what lies behind all the other indicators, underpin the ESRI's forecast of 2 per cent growth in GNP this year. The majority of this growth will come from the tradable sector of the economy which will aid ongoing recovery. Because of exceptional accounting issues, the ESRI envisages that measured growth in GDP in 2013 will be approximately 0.5 per cent.³

The Department of Finance Monthly Economic Bulletin of October 2013 states that GDP (seasonally adjusted) increased by 0.4% over the quarter, following three consecutive quarters of decline. The aforementioned report also states that exports increased by 1.0% in the quarter,

¹ The Border Regional Authority Regional Planning Guidelines (2010-2022), Chapter 4, page 62, para 4.1

² http://www.esri.ie/irish_economy/

³ ERSI Quarterly Economic Commentary – Autumn 2013

with a 3.6% increase in services exports compensating for a decline of 1.7% in goods exports. Overall there has been modest growth in the Irish Economy in the first three quarters of 2013.

The Central Bank of Ireland in their quarterly Economic Bulletin (Q4 October 2013) is broadly reflective of the ESRI Quarterly commentary in so far as an increase in the volume of GDP of 0.5 per cent is projected for this year reflecting a broadly stable outlook for domestic demand and a modest positive contribution from net exports. The aforementioned report also states that labour market conditions continue to improve with recent data pointing to sustained employment growth, declining unemployment and increased labour force participation.

Notwithstanding the above, the Retail Sales Index reveals that between October 2012 and October 2013, excluding the motor trade, there has been a 1.6% decrease in the retail sales volume. The retail sales volume of electrical equipment has experienced a sharp decline of 13.9% between October 2012 and October 2013. In the same period the retail sales volume of clothes, footwear and textiles also declined by 4.6%.

3.3 Regional and Local Context

3.3.1 Population

According to the 2006 Census, results show that County Louth had a population of 111, 267 persons which according to the 2011 Census has increased by 9.5% to 122, 897. **The Border Regional Planning Guidelines (2010-2012)** provide population targets for County Louth. The population targets for 2016 and 2022 are 132,648 and 142,800, respectively.

Table 2 shows the population of the State in 2006 and 2011 as well as, population targets for 2016 and 2022. County Louth's population is set to rise by 14% between 2011 and 2022. This is broadly in line with the percentage increase (14.7%) in the population of the State over the same period.

Table 2: Actual and Target Populations For County Louth, The Border Region And State

	Actual Population		Population Targets		% increase 2011 - 2022
	2006	2011	2016	2022	
County Louth	111, 267	122, 897	132,648	142,800	14
The Border Region	466,375	511,000	552,700	595,000	15
State	4,239,848	4,584,900	4,997,200	5,375,200	14.7

Table 3 below shows the actual and target population for Dundalk and Drogheda. It also provides the percentage increase projected between 2011 and 2022. The percentage population growth for Dundalk over the period 2011-2022 is higher than forecast for Drogheda.

Table 3: Actual and Target Populations for Dundalk And Drogheda

	Actual Population		Population Targets		% increase 2011 - 2022
	2006	2011	2016	2022	
Dundalk	35,085	37,816	42,300	47,200	19.8
Drogheda *	30,303	32,595	35,373	38,415	15.1

**Population & population targets pertain to Drogheda Borough Council area and the Drogheda Northern Environs within County Louth*

3.3.2 Age Profile

The aggregate percentage of those in the 0-19 age bracket for Louth is 29.5% as compared to the State which is 27%, indicating that Louth has a slightly younger than average population. The percentage of people within the 65-85 and over age bracket in Louth and the State is 11% and 11.7%, respectively. It is apparent from Table 4 below that there is only a slight difference in the percentile of people in each category in County Louth as comparable to the State.

Table 4: Population by Age In County Louth And State, 2011

Category	Louth		State	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
0 - 4 years	10,411	8.5	356,329	7.7
5 - 9 years	9,507	7.7	320,770	7
10 - 14 years	8,744	7.1	302,491	6.6
15 - 19 years	7,581	6.1	283,019	6.2
20 - 24 years	7,862	6.3	297,231	6.5
25 - 29 years	9,030	7.3	361,122	7.8
30 - 34 years	9,986	8.1	393,945	8.6
35 - 39 years	9,943	8	364,261	7.9
40 - 44 years	9,323	7.6	330,812	7.2
45 - 49 years	8,248	6.7	305,185	6.7
50 - 54 years	7,044	5.7	274,386	6
55 - 59 years	6,220	5	244,522	5.3
60 - 64 years	5,521	4.5	218,786	4.8
65 - 69 years	4,488	3.7	173,638	3.8

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

70 - 74 years	3,364	2.7	131,190	2.9
75 - 79 years	2,471	2	102,036	2.2
80 - 84 years	1,702	1.4	70,113	1.5
85 years and over	1,452	1.2	58,416	1.3
Total	122897	100	4588252	100

3.3.3 Social Class

The occupations included in each of these groups (Professional Workers, Managerial and Technical, Non-Manual, Skilled Manual, Semi Skilled, Unskilled and other gainfully Occupied and Unknown) have been selected in such a manner as to bring together, as far as possible, those with similar levels of occupational skill. Table 5 below indicates that at State and County the category pertaining to Managerial and Technical, accounted for the largest percentile of people at 27.2% and 25.1% respectively. The table also reveals that the percentile of people in the category pertaining to Professional Workers and Managerial and Technical posts combined is greater in the State than County Louth whilst conversely the percentage of unskilled workers in Louth exceeds that of the State average.

Table 5: Persons in State and County Louth Classified By Social Class 2011

Category	Louth		State	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Professional Workers	7,262	5.9	336,620	7.3
Managerial and Technical	30,939	25.1	1,251,671	27.2
Non-Manual	22,237	18	801,304	17.46
Skilled Manual	20,831	18.9	707,369	15.41
Semi-Skilled	14,764	12	487,449	10.62

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

Unskilled	5,054	4.1	170,014	3.7
All Others Gainfully Occupied and Unknown	21,810	18.56	833,825	18.2
Total	122,897		4,588,252	

3.3.4 Educational Attainment

Table 6 below reveals that 21.8% of the population in County Louth have completed education to upper secondary level which is considerably lower than that of the State as a whole, which is 28.4%. Likewise the percentage of people in Louth with a 3rd level degree (12.7%) is considerably lower than that of the State (16%).

Table 6: Persons aged 15 Years and Over Classified by Highest Level of Education Completed

Category	Louth		State	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Primary (including no formal education /training)	14,157	11	456,896	9.9
Lower secondary	15,312	12.5	499,489	10.9
Upper secondary	26,812	21.8	1,302,120	28.4
Third Level (non Degree)	3677	2.9	135,122	2.9
Third Level (degree or	15,657	12.7	739,992	16

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

higher)				
Not stated	3324	2.7	139,871	3
Total whose education has not ceased.	15,295	12.4	605,172	13.1
Total	122,897		4,588,252	

3.3.5 Retail Trends

The market influences present and future retail trends. The economic climate undoubtedly plays a crucial part in the householder expenditure levels and as such directly impacts upon consumer spending patterns. In order to remain competitive retailers must respond accordingly. Advancements in technology will play a crucial role as consumers seek out experiences that save them both time and money. For the purposes of this Strategy retail trends have been dealt with under the following categories: Convenience, Comparison, Factory Outlets Centres, Pop up Shops, Retail Warehousing and Trends in relation to Northern Ireland.

3.3.6 Convenience

Food sales peaked in 2008 when values rose 24% above the 2005 level⁴. However, despite a two year decline, at the end of 2010 the value of food sales was still 13% above 2005 levels. The overall volume of food sales has grown between 2005- 2012⁵. Food has been the driver of growth during the recession. It is an essential and regular purchase and despite price competition, inflation has resulted in householders spending more for the same quantity. In addition, more people are dining at home rather than dining out and consequently supermarkets are picking up spend that would have otherwise gone to restaurants and bars.

There has been a trend for major convenience retailers to develop larger stores in recent years. The Forfas Report ⁶ undertook an analysis of the retail sector which indicated that the average size of supermarkets in 2009 was 1,701 square metres; an increase of 3.7% since 2004.

In line with an increase in the average size of supermarkets, has been the sale of non-food items in supermarket operators' one-stop stores. It is now common place for supermarkets to have a homeware department selling small scale household electrical wares and soft furnishings in addition to clothing, shoes, books and CD's. Furthermore food retailers have also diversified into new businesses such as retail financial services.

⁴ Review of the Economic Impact of the Retail Cap April 2011

⁵ <http://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/Statire/SelectVarVal/saveselections.asp>

⁶ Review of the Economic Impact of the Retail Cap. Forfas April 2011

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

Customers are managing their household budget more effectively by reducing the number of trips to large supermarkets and instead visiting local stores more frequently for 'top up' shopping. Thus a new model is emerging whereby large flagship style stores located in the best retail locations in terms of customer numbers, footfall and profitability are complimented by smaller satellite stores in other locations. Examples of this shopping format include Tesco Metro, Marks and Spencer's Simply Food Store and Supervalu (previous Superquinn Select). These stores compete with local convenience shops by providing opportunities for 'top up' shopping. With the high cost of transport and an ageing population the trend of providing smaller stores in local, neighbourhood locations is likely to continue.

The RPG's 2012 confirm that the retail market for convenience goods is dominated by a small number of companies. Tesco has the largest share of the Irish Retail Market followed by Dunnes and Supervalu. The aforementioned retailers account for 70% of the Irish Retail Market.

The RPG's 2012 state that the retail sector has grown markedly in recent years with the emergence of a new sector known as discount stores, of which there are 8 in County Louth. An increase in living expenses and decrease in disposable income has resulted in changing consumer spending habits and a resultant growth in discounters. Whilst the 2005 Retail Planning Guidelines distinguished between discount stores and supermarkets this distinction has been omitted from the RPG's 2012. Thus they shall now be assessed using the same criteria as supermarkets.

Whilst ASDA and Sainsbury's do not have a physical presence within the State, the RPG's 2012 confirm that they have a combined share of 1.7% of the Irish market, which is reflective of cross border shopping trade.

Forecourt retailing remains prevalent in Ireland through the continued development of linkages between petrol companies and the branding of the forecourt shops, e.g., Texaco/SPAR, Shell Select, Mace/Maxol and Tedcastle/Londis.

As consumers become both more conscious of where products are locally sourced and more health conscious the popularity of the farmers markets and ethnic shops has increased dramatically in the State.

3.4 Comparison

The economic downturn has adversely impacted on the amount of disposable income enjoyed by each household. Given the collapse in the construction and property market, unsurprisingly household equipment (which includes electrical goods, hardware, furniture and furnishings) has witnessed a significant decline in retail sales value, falling 24.2% below 2005 levels by 2010 year end. This sector is also dependent on consumers moving but the housing market is unlikely to recover in the short term and as such it is doubtful if expenditure on household goods will

increase significantly over the coming years. However, although much of the growth in the Housing Sector has been experienced in the Dublin area, it is considered that Louth's location in such close proximity to Dublin will benefit from these changes and capitalise on this growth.

The value of sales in the textiles, clothing and footwear sub-sector peaked in 2007, but has since fallen 18% below the value of 2005 levels⁷ which is reflective of an overall decrease in available household disposable income.

Similar to convenience stores the size of comparison stores has increased. Over the past decade, a number of International and European multiples have entered the Irish market including Pull and Bear, H&M and Zara. These stores generally require a larger floor plate and as such tend to locate within purpose built centres. This has adversely impacted upon town centres where smaller store formats and independents predominate and stores with large floor plates tend to displace rather than create new demand. In terms of comparison shopping there is a widening gap created between the larger shopping centres and the remaining smaller shopping centres. A challenge exists to reconfigure and expand the floor plate of units within existing town centres to attract more premium occupiers.

3.5 Outlet Centres

The emergence of outlet centres in the Republic of Ireland e.g. Kildare Village and in Northern Ireland e.g. The Outlet (Banbridge) and Junction One (Antrim), have attracted customers from a wide ranging base. A difficulty arises when goods on sale within outlet centres are indistinguishable from those sold in conventional 'high street' locations. The RPG's 2012 state that: *"Because of the specific niche that outlet centres operate within, applicants must demonstrate, and planning authorities must ensure that the products sold will not be in competition with those currently on sale in typical city/town centre locations"*. The RPG's 2012 also state that *"Applications for the development of outlet centres should be considered having regard to the provisions of the development plan/relevant retail strategy and assessed in accordance with the sequential test set out in Chapter 4"*. In Northern Ireland **Draft Planning Policy Statement 5 Retailing, Town Centres and Commercial Leisure Developments**, now subjects outlets to the same tests as other proposals for major retail developments.

3.5.1 Online Shopping

Technology has been a major driver in how people shop. The **RPG's 2012** state the proportion of sales made on the internet and mobile phones is increasing with most major supermarkets and clothing shops offering online shopping facilities. The internet has become more accessible with the advent of smartphones, tablets and iPads. Consumers are also able to utilise the internet to compare prices prior to making a purchase, resulting in an even more competitive environment which has impacted on the high street retailers.

⁷ <http://www.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/Statire/SelectVarVal/saveselections.asp>

3.5.2 Pop up Shops

Economic pressures have forced a significant rise in the number of empty retail and office units in towns and cities. A recent trend has emerged for the provision of so called 'pop up' shops whereby tenants temporarily occupy units taking care of bills such as business rates, utilities and maintenance. This temporary use of vacant buildings until they can be brought back into commercial use again, makes practical and beneficial use of 'pauses' in property processes and can significantly contribute to quality of life and vitality of surroundings.

3.5.3 Retail Warehousing

There has been a trend to concentrate warehouse units within retail parks and an expectation exists that most of the goods purchased therein, have to be transported off site using the private car or utilising any delivery service provided.

Over the past decade there is a general consensus that retail parks have tended to stray away from their 'bulky goods' function. The *RPG's 2012* acknowledge that broadening of the range of merchandise sold in retail parks to include some non bulky durables could potentially threaten the vitality and viability of existing town centres: *"Due to the fact that the range of goods being sold from retail warehouse parks often include non bulky durables, there is potential for a detrimental impact on city/ town centres as indicated by the increasing number of vacant units in urban centres where retail parks exist on the periphery"*.

The *RPG's 2012* have responded to this issue by including an amended definition of 'bulky goods' which now includes household appliances, catalogue shops as well as tools and equipment for house and garden. The Guidelines emphasise that bulky goods are indeed truly bulky or are goods generally sold in bulk which are not portable by customers travelling by foot, cycle or bus.

3.6 Retail Trends In Relation To Northern Ireland

Within the Border Region the retail sector grew significantly between 1988 and 2008. The *Border Regional Authority Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-22* state that in 2008, 14% of those employed in the Border Region were employed in the wholesale and retail trade. The downturn in the economy and subsequent reduction in spending has implications for the number of persons employed in this sector.

Between June 2012 and April 2013 the sterling – euro exchange rates varied by 77% and 87%. The highly competitive retail industry is very vulnerable to currency fluctuations. International price differences lead to opportunities for consumers who are willing to cross the border to purchase goods from retail stores which are selling goods at lower prices. For larger international retailers this is not as big an issue. However, for the majority of small and medium size retailers, this creates a distortion that can influence the survival or demise of a shop which ultimately impacts upon employment levels. Cyclical variations in the exchange rate can be of benefit and disadvantage to retailers operating in County Louth particularly those located to the

north of the County. This leakage to the Northern Ireland economy can have a significant effect on the local economy in the Border Region.

The spending power of tourists whether visiting or staying in an area is recognised. Shopping is part of the tourist experience and potential exists to target tourist spend within the County and to develop a retail base accordingly. The BRARPG 2010-22 state that the *“Development of the tourism product in the Border Region is seen as a key factor to economic success and essential to the retention to the Hotel and Hospitality and Retail Sectors”*.

3.7 Conclusion

The overall size of floor plate for both convenience and comparison stores has increased. With regards to convenience retailing this is partly due to supermarkets now stocking a range of non food items. A counter trend to increase the floor plate size of convenience stores is the emergence of local neighbourhood shops utilised for ‘top up’ shopping.

Since the economic downturn there has been a significant slowdown in retail sector growth particularly with regard to the comparison sector. The economic downturn, leakage of non bulky comparison goods to retail parks, increased popularity of internet shopping combined with the overall demand for larger floor plates has decreased footfall within town centres and led to a rise in the number of vacant properties. Subsequently town centres have suffered a decline in vitality and viability.

It is acknowledged that town centres should retain dominance in terms of retailing. However a number of measures could be undertaken to re-invent town centres including:

- Utilisation of Town Centre Management Scheme,
- Development of the heritage and tourism product to attract additional visitors,
- Integration of retail and leisure land uses where appropriate.

With regard to Louth’s location along the Northern Ireland border there is an acknowledgement that shopping patterns are subject to currency fluctuations.

4.0 Survey Approach and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

In order to establish the baseline data for the Retail Study, it was necessary to undertake a number of qualitative and quantitative surveys. These include:

- Floor Space Survey (comparison, convenience and bulky goods),
- Land Use Survey including vacant properties ,
- Household Survey,
- Shoppers Survey.

A brief description of each of the surveys carried out, identification of the methodology utilised in undertaking the surveys and the key survey results are set out below.

4.2 Floor Space Survey

The 2009 Louth Retail Strategy provides a breakdown of the amount of convenience, comparison and retail warehousing in Dundalk, Drogheda (including the Southern Environs within Meath County Councils administrative boundary) and Ardee. Louth County Council has undertaken a complete review of the figures contained in the 2009 Retail Strategy.

It should be noted that the floorspace survey does not include retailers within the Southern Environs of Drogheda as this is outside the remit of the 2014 Retail Strategy. Furthermore, the floorspace survey associated within the Retail Strategy 2014 pertains to the entire retail floorspace within Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee, thus incorporating areas which were not previously surveyed. The overall quantum of floor space surveyed in 2014 is considerably more than surveyed in 2009.

It should be noted that for the purpose of this study, the floor area relates to the net retail floor area. Net retail floorspace is defined in the Retail Planning Guidelines (2012) as:

“the area within the shop or store which is visible to the public and to which the public has access including fitting rooms, checkouts, the area in front of checkouts, serving counters and the area behind used by serving staff, areas occupied by retail concessionaires, customer service areas, and internal lobbies in which goods are displayed, but excluding storage areas, circulation space to which the public does not have access to, cafes, and customer toilets”.

Therefore any ancillary spaces such as offices, store rooms etc. are excluded from the net floorspace figure. Where register information detailed the gross floor area of a development, the net floor area of the development was estimated based on the nature of the retail floorspace proposed.

There are also a number of extant planning permissions for retail development within the County which have not yet commenced/completed. A comprehensive list of the aforementioned permissions within Dundalk, Drogheda, Ardee has been collated.

4.3 Classification

Annex 1 of the **Retail Planning Guidelines (RPG's) 2012** provides clear guidance on how to classify convenience, comparison and bulky goods. The floorspace survey categorised the different types of retail units in accordance with the goods sold therein. The classification provided in Annex 1 is as follows:

4.3.1 Types of Retail Goods

Although there is a trend for “scrambled merchandising” whereby some retail businesses sell both convenience goods and comparison goods, greater definitional clarity is obtained by adopting a goods-based retail classification. Retail goods categories can be divided into convenience goods and comparison goods as follows:

Convenience Goods

- Food,
- Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages,
- Tobacco,
- Non-durable household goods.

Comparison Goods:

- Clothing and footwear,
- Furniture, furnishings and household equipment (excluding non-durable household goods),
- Medical and pharmaceutical products, therapeutic appliances and equipment,
- Educational and recreation equipment and accessories,
- Books, newspapers and magazines,
- Goods for personal care,
- Goods not elsewhere classified,
- Bulky goods,

Goods generally sold from retail warehouses --where DIY goods or goods such as flatpack furniture are of such size that they would normally be taken away by car and not be portable by customers travelling by foot, cycle or bus, or that large floorspace would be required to display them e.g.

- Repair and maintenance materials,
- Furniture and furnishings,
- Carpets and other floor coverings,
- Household appliances,
- Tools and equipment for the house and garden,

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

- Bulky nursery furniture and equipment including perambulators,
- Bulky pet products such as kennels and aquariums,
- Audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment,
- Catalogue shops and other bulky durables for recreation and leisure.

The list is not exhaustive – bulky goods not mentioned in the list should be dealt with on their merits in the context of the definition of bulky goods. A summary of the existing floorspace for the County is provided in Table 7.

Table 7: Existing Floorspace within County Louth

Settlement	Convenience (sq.m)	Comparison (sq.m)	Bulky Comparison (sq.m)
Dundalk	21,593	43,393	24,445
Drogheda	17,614	35,565	22,060
Ardee	4686 (inc.lidl)	3,018	
Total	43,893	81,976	46,505

4.4 Land Use Survey

A Land Use survey was undertaken for Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee town centres the purpose of which was to ascertain the diversity of uses present and also the type of convenience, comparison and bulky comparison retailers present. The results from the land use survey fed into the Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee town centre health checks and were used to ascertain vacancy rates.

4.5 Household Survey

The purpose of the household survey was to identify shopping patterns in the County and in particular to ascertain outflow and retention of expenditure levels.

The householder survey involved conducting 500 phone based surveys, with each survey consisting of 20 individual questions exploring respondents preferences and perceptions on a variety of retail categories including their main convenience shopping (the regular high volume

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

shop), top-up shopping (everyday items such as bread and milk), comparison shopping (such as clothing and footwear) and bulky goods shopping (such as household appliances).

4.5.1 Identifying the Survey Areas and Participants.

In order to ensure that an adequate geographic representation was achieved, the identification of survey participants was undertaken based upon demographic analysis and population distribution within County Louth. The County was divided into 5 specific zones, with the main population centres within each zone being the focus for the surveys which were conducted. Survey participants were generated at random based upon their location within each of the five zones of the County. This approach to identifying survey participants from throughout County Louth ensured that there was a representative geographic spread that extracts an accurate and demographically balanced illustration of the dominant shopping trends and household perceptions which exist within the County regarding its retail offer.

4.5.2 Results of Householder Survey

The following sections outline the information, trends and perceptions gathered from survey respondents as a result of the householder surveys.

4.5.3 Convenience Shopping: Destination for The Main Food And Grocery Shop

The first question which was asked of respondents related to the location they choose for their main food and grocery shopping. The key results of this question indicate that both Dundalk and Drogheda are the primary locations that the residents of County Louth choose for their main food and grocery shopping. Ardee was the next most popular choice for respondents, while only 2.20% of all respondents said that they travelled to Newry to undertake their main food and grocery shopping. The full details of all responses are detailed in Table 8 below. One key result which emerged is that 97.00%⁸ of the people surveyed choose to undertake their main food and grocery shopping in towns within County Louth.

Table 8: Main Food and Grocery Shopping Locations

Where do you carry out your main food and grocery shopping?											
Zone Town	North Louth	Greater	Mid-Louth North		Mid-Louth South			Greater Drogheda			Grand Total
	Carlingford	Dundalk Dundalk	Castlebellingham	Dromiskin	Ardee	Clogherhead	Dunleer	Drogheda	Termonteekin	Tullyallen	
Dundalk	100.00%	95.19%	66.67%	100.00%	18.52%	-	30.00%	0.47%	-	-	44.60%
Drogheda	-	-	16.67%	-	3.70%	90.91%	50.00%	95.26%	100.00%	100.00%	46.60%
Ardee	-	1.44%	16.67%	-	74.07%	-	20.00%	1.42%	-	-	5.80%
Dublin Surrounding Areas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.42%	-	-	0.60%
Newry	-	3.37%	-	-	3.70%	9.09%	-	0.95%	-	-	2.20%
n/a	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.47%	-	-	0.20%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Following on from the location where they undertake their main food and grocery shopping, survey respondents were asked what was the principle reason for choosing to do their main food and grocery shopping in the town which was chosen. The vast majority of respondents listed

⁸ 0.20% of survey respondents claimed not to undertake a main shop, relying instead on daily shopping visits to meet their convenience shopping needs.

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

proximity as being the reason for their preference, while 8.00% listed value for money and 6.60% referenced a desire to support local businesses as being the main factors that influenced their choice. (See Table 9 below)

Table 9: Respondents Reasoning For Choosing A Specific Town As The Location For Their Main Food And Grocery Shopping

What is the main reason for choosing to do your main food and grocery shopping within this destination?											
Zone Town	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid-Louth North		Mid-Louth South			Greater Drogheda			Grand Total
	Carlingford	Dundalk	Castlebellingham	Dromiskin	Ardee	Clogherhead	Dunleer	Drogheda	Termonfeckin	Tullyallen	
Close to Home	50.00%	78.37%	50.00%	100.00%	51.85%	63.64%	70.00%	86.73%	100.00%	85.71%	80.00%
Good value for money	33.33%	11.06%	-	-	14.81%	-	-	4.74%	-	14.29%	8.00%
Support local business	-	8.17%	16.67%	-	22.22%	-	-	4.27%	-	-	6.60%
Wide choice of goods	-	0.96%	16.67%	-	7.41%	9.09%	-	2.37%	-	-	2.20%
Ease of parking	16.67%	-	16.67%	-	3.70%	27.27%	20.00%	0.47%	-	-	1.80%
Cheap/free parking	-	0.48%	-	-	-	-	-	0.47%	-	-	0.40%
Close to other shops	-	0.48%	-	-	-	-	-	0.47%	-	-	0.40%
n/a	-	0.48%	-	-	-	-	-	0.47%	-	-	0.40%
Quality of goods available	-	-	-	-	-	-	10.00%	0.00%	-	-	0.20%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

In response to a question on the level of satisfaction which survey respondents had for the destination which they choose to undertake their main food and grocery shopping, 90.37% stated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their chosen destination, while 8.03% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Table 10: Respondents Level of Satisfaction with Destination Town They Choose For Their Main Food And Grocery Shopping

How satisfied are you with the destination where you undertake your main food and grocery shopping?							
Town	Dundalk	Drogheda	Ardee	Dublin Surrounding Areas	Newry	Grand Total	
Very satisfied	39.64%	14.16%	24.14%	-	36.36%	26.51%	
Satisfied	49.55%	75.97%	75.86%	100.00%	54.55%	63.86%	
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9.01%	8.58%	-	-	-	8.03%	
Dissatisfied	0.90%	1.29%	-	-	-	1.00%	
Very dissatisfied	0.90%	-	-	-	9.09%	0.60%	
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	

4.5.4 Convenience Shopping: Frequency and Mode of Transport for the Main Food and Grocery Shop

In response to the question regarding the frequency with which they carry out their main food and grocery shopping, a substantial majority (68.80%) undertake their main shopping on a weekly basis, while just less than one in five respondents undertake their main food and grocery shopping more frequently than once a week.

Table 11: Frequency with Which Survey Respondents Carry out Their Main Food and Grocery Shopping

How often do you undertake your main food and grocery shopping?											
Zone	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid-Louth North		Mid-Louth South			Greater Drogheda			Grand Total
Town	Carlingford	Dundalk	Castlebellingham	Dromiskin	Ardee	Clogherhead	Dunleer	Drogheda	Termonfeckin	Tullyallen	
More than four times a month	-	25.48%	-	16.67%	7.41%	-	10.00%	18.48%	-	28.57%	19.60%
Four times a month	83.33%	64.42%	83.33%	83.33%	88.89%	72.73%	80.00%	68.25%	75.00%	71.43%	68.80%
Three times a month	-	2.88%	16.67%	-	-	-	-	4.74%	-	-	3.40%
Twice a month	16.67%	3.37%	-	-	3.70%	27.27%	10.00%	5.69%	12.50%	-	5.20%
Once a month	-	0.96%	-	-	-	-	-	2.84%	12.50%	-	1.80%
n/a	-	2.88%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.20%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

The majority of people stated that they use private cars when doing their main food and grocery shopping. Of those who use alternative modes, 10.00% choose to walk, while 1.80% choose to use the bus. The proportion of people who choose to walk shows significant variation between the main urban centres of County Louth, with 18.53% of respondents in Ardee stating that they would walk to and from the supermarket when doing their main food and grocery shopping, compared to 7.58% of respondents in Drogheda. Within the smaller urban centres the proportion of car use was much higher, with only Dunleer and Dromiskin demonstrating less than 100.00% car usage for undertaking the main food and grocery shopping.

Table 12: Mode of Transport Chosen by Respondents when Undertaking their Main Food and Grocery Shopping

What mode of transport do you use when undertaking your main food and grocery shopping?											
Zone	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid-Louth North		Mid-Louth South			Greater Drogheda			Grand Total
Town	Carlingford	Dundalk	Castlebellingham	Dromiskin	Ardee	Clogherhead	Dunleer	Drogheda	Termonfeckin	Tullyallen	
Car	100.00%	83.17%	100.00%	83.33%	77.78%	100.00%	90.00%	86.73%	100.00%	100.00%	85.80%
Walk	-	13.94%	-	-	18.52%	-	-	7.58%	-	-	10.00%
Bus	-	1.92%	-	16.67%	-	-	10.00%	1.42%	-	-	1.80%
Cycle	-	0.96%	-	-	3.70%	-	-	0.47%	-	-	0.80%
Other mode of public transport	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.84%	-	-	1.20%
n/a	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.95%	-	-	0.40%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

4.5.5 Convenience Shopping: Top-Up Shopping

Analysis of the trends in top-up shopping indicates that local independent retailers are the main service providers, accounting for 50.60% of all top-up shopping activities. Although 8.00% of all respondents undertake no top-up shopping at all, the remaining 92% of respondents choose to use retailers within the County to do their top-up shopping. This indicates that there is potentially none, or very little top-up retail leakage beyond County Louth.

Table 13: Type of Retailer Chosen for Undertaking Top-Up Shopping

Where do you carry out your main "top-up" shopping?											
Zone	North Louth		Mid-Louth North		Mid-Louth South			Greater Drogheda			Grand Total
	Town	Carlingford	Greater Dundalk	Dundalk	Castlebellingham	Dromiskin	Ardee	Clogherhead	Dunleer	Drogheda	
Independent retailer within your locality	66.67%	52.40%	100.00%	100.00%	40.74%	90.91%	30.00%	45.97%	62.50%	28.57%	50.60%
Multiple retailer within a large urban centre in County	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6.64%	12.50%	-	3.00%
Independent retailer in a large urban centre in County	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.47%	-	14.29%	0.40%
Multiple retailer within your locality	33.33%	39.90%	-	-	59.26%	9.09%	70.00%	35.55%	25.00%	57.14%	38.00%
n/a	-	7.69%	-	-	-	-	-	11.37%	-	-	8.00%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

When asked how often they would carry out a top-up shop, the majority of respondents (54.60%) indicated that it would be no more than twice a week, while 10.40% would do a top-up shop on a daily basis.

Table 14: Frequency of Top-Up Shopping

How often do you undertake "top-up" shopping?											
Zone	North Louth		Mid-Louth North		Mid-Louth South			Greater Drogheda			Grand Total
	Town	Carlingford	Greater Dundalk	Dundalk	Castlebellingham	Dromiskin	Ardee	Clogherhead	Dunleer	Drogheda	
Once a week	-	28.37%	-	16.67%	22.22%	36.36%	20.00%	23.70%	25.00%	14.29%	25.00%
Twice a week	66.67%	22.12%	33.33%	16.67%	37.04%	27.27%	20.00%	35.55%	25.00%	42.86%	29.60%
Three times a week	16.67%	8.65%	33.33%	50.00%	25.93%	18.18%	30.00%	16.11%	37.50%	-	14.60%
Four times a week	-	7.21%	16.67%	-	3.70%	-	20.00%	3.79%	-	14.29%	5.60%
Five times a week	-	3.85%	-	-	-	-	-	3.32%	-	-	3.00%
Six times a week	-	2.88%	-	-	-	-	-	3.32%	-	-	2.60%
Every day	16.67%	15.87%	16.67%	16.67%	11.11%	18.18%	10.00%	3.32%	12.50%	28.57%	10.40%
n/a	-	11.06%	-	-	-	-	-	10.90%	-	-	9.20%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

The mode of transport used for top-up shopping varied significantly between the various urban centres within the County. The car remained the dominant mode overall, with 55.00% of all respondents within the County indicating that they use their cars when undertaking top-up shopping, while 35.20% of all respondents walked to and from the local shop when doing a top-up shop.

Table 15: Mode of Transport Used When Undertaking Top-Up Shopping

What mode of transport do you use when undertaking "top-up" shopping?											
Zone Town	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid-Louth North		Mid-Louth South			Greater Drogheda			Grand Total
	Carlingford	Dundalk	Castlebellingham	Dromiskin	Ardee	Clogherhead	Dunleer	Drogheda	Termonfeckin	Tullyallen	
Car	50.00%	57.69%	83.33%	100.00%	48.15%	81.82%	100.00%	47.39%	50.00%	71.43%	55.00%
Walk	50.00%	31.25%	16.67%	-	48.15%	18.18%	-	40.76%	50.00%	28.57%	35.20%
Bus	-	0.96%	-	-	-	-	-	0.47%	-	-	0.60%
Cycle	-	0.96%	-	-	3.70%	-	-	0.47%	-	-	0.80%
Other mode of public transport	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.47%	-	-	0.20%
n/a	-	9.13%	-	-	-	-	-	10.43%	-	-	8.20%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

4.5.6 Convenience Shopping: Summary

When questioned on their convenience shopping habits (encompassing both the main food and grocery shop and more frequent top-up shopping), the vast majority of respondents indicated that they would undertake a main food and grocery shop once a week in one of the large multiple retail outlets located in Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee. In addition, this main weekly shop would be supplemented by a top-up within a local independent retailer, no more than twice a week. Overall, the results indicate that the vast majority of the convenience spend which is available within County Louth is retained. In general people are satisfied with the convenience shopping offer of the towns within the County.

4.6 Comparison Shopping

This section looks to explore trends and perceptions regarding comparison shopping within County Louth. Survey respondents were asked a number of questions on their choice of destination for undertaking comparison shopping. These questions were designed to establish the main locations which were chosen, the reasoning behind this choice, the level of satisfaction with the specific town, and the frequency with which comparison shopping was undertaken.

4.6.1 Comparison Shopping: Choice of Destination

When asked to specify the location where comparison shopping was most frequently undertaken, the majority of respondents indicated that they choose to spend their money within the local large urban centre. As a result of this preference 80.20% of respondents indicated that they choose to undertake their primary comparison shopping within the two main urban centres of Dundalk and Drogheda. Of the urban centres outside of County Louth which were specified, Dublin and surrounding areas were the primary location chosen by 7.80% of the county population. With a higher proportion of those who choose to shop in Dublin and surrounding areas living within the southern part of the County (the zones of Mid-Louth South and Greater Drogheda), it is clear that accessibility and geographical location plays a role in enhancing the appeal of the capital as a destination for comparison shopping.

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

Table 16: Main Comparison Shopping Destinations

What destination do you normally choose to undertake your main comparison goods shopping?											
Zone	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid-Louth North		Mid-Louth South			Greater Drogheda			Grand Total
Town	Carlingford	Dundalk	Castlebellingham	Dromiskin	Ardee	Clogherhead	Dunleer	Drogheda	Termonfeckin	Tullyallen	
Dundalk	83.33%	81.25%	100.00%	50.00%	25.93%	-	50.00%	2.37%	-	14.29%	40.20%
Drogheda	-	1.44%	-	16.67%	14.81%	81.82%	40.00%	78.67%	87.50%	85.71%	40.00%
Ardee	-	0.96%	-	-	37.04%	-	-	0.47%	-	-	2.60%
Dublin Surrounding Areas	-	5.77%	-	16.67%	11.11%	18.18%	-	9.48%	12.50%	-	7.80%
Newry	16.67%	3.85%	-	16.67%	7.41%	-	10.00%	-	-	-	2.60%
Carrickmacross	-	0.96%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.40%
Navan	-	-	-	-	3.70%	-	-	-	-	-	0.20%
n/a	-	5.77%	-	-	-	-	-	9.00%	-	-	6.20%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

When asked to specify the reason for choosing the urban centre which they had stated as being the primary location for undertaking their comparison shopping, the majority (56.80%) of respondents indicated that proximity was the main influence. A further 8.60% of respondents stated that this motivation was to support local businesses. Choice of shops or goods available was indicated as being the primary reason for 21.20% of respondents, while value for money was the given reason for 4.80% of people in response to this question.

Table 17: Respondents Reasoning For Choosing A Specific Town As The Destination For Their Main Comparison Shopping

What is the main reason for choosing to do your main comparison goods shopping at this destination?											
Zone	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid-Louth North		Mid-Louth South			Greater Drogheda			Grand Total
Town	Carlingford	Dundalk	Castlebellingham	Dromiskin	Ardee	Clogherhead	Dunleer	Drogheda	Termonfeckin	Tullyallen	
Close to home	33.33%	56.73%	50.00%	66.67%	40.74%	45.45%	60.00%	60.19%	62.50%	42.86%	56.80%
Wide choice of goods	16.67%	9.13%	16.67%	16.67%	33.33%	36.36%	-	9.95%	0.00%	-	11.20%
Range of shops available	-	11.54%	16.67%	16.67%	3.70%	9.09%	10.00%	8.53%	-	42.86%	10.00%
Support local business	33.33%	7.69%	16.67%	-	3.70%	9.09%	10.00%	8.53%	25.00%	14.29%	8.60%
Good value for money	-	6.25%	-	-	18.52%	-	20.00%	1.42%	12.50%	-	4.80%
Quality of goods available	16.67%	2.40%	-	-	-	-	-	0.95%	-	-	1.60%
Ease of parking	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.47%	-	-	0.20%
Cheap/free parking	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.47%	-	-	0.20%
n/a	-	6.25%	-	-	-	-	-	9.48%	-	-	6.60%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

4.6.2 Comparison Shopping: Frequency and Satisfaction

When asked about the frequency of comparison shopping, 41.60% indicated a minimum of once a month, while 42.80% of respondents stated once every three to six months.

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

Table 18: Frequency with Which Survey Respondents Undertake Comparison Shopping

How often do you undertake shopping for comparison goods?											
Zone	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid-Louth North		Mid-Louth South			Greater Drogheda			Grand Total
Town	Carlingford	Dundalk	Castlebellingham	Dromiskin	Ardee	Clogherhead	Dunleer	Drogheda	Termonfeckin	Tullyallen	
Once every six months	-	15.87%	16.67%	-	25.93%	-	20.00%	6.16%	-	-	11.20%
Once every three months	50.00%	28.85%	16.67%	66.67%	29.63%	36.36%	20.00%	33.18%	37.50%	42.86%	31.60%
Once a month	50.00%	19.71%	50.00%	16.67%	40.74%	54.55%	60.00%	35.55%	62.50%	42.86%	30.80%
Twice a month	-	6.25%	-	16.67%	3.70%	9.09%	-	6.16%	-	14.29%	6.00%
Three times a month	-	0.00%	-	-	-	-	-	2.37%	-	-	1.00%
Four times a month	-	4.33%	16.67%	-	-	-	-	1.90%	-	-	2.80%
More than four times a month	-	0.48%	-	-	-	-	-	1.90%	-	-	1.00%
n/a	-	24.52%	-	-	-	-	-	12.80%	-	-	15.60%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Respondents were asked to indicate levels of satisfaction with the urban centre that they primarily choose for their comparison shopping requirements. Of the respondents who stated that they primarily do their comparison shopping within County Louth, 85.81% said that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the town that they had specified.

Table 19: Respondents General Satisfaction Rating with the Town Which They Chose To Do Their Main Comparison Goods Shopping

How satisfied are you with the destination where you undertake your main comparison goods shopping?									
Town	Dundalk	Drogheda	Ardee	Dublin Surrounding Areas	Newry	Navan	Carrickmacross	Grand Total	
Very satisfied	34.67%	16.16%	30.77%	46.15%	38.46%	-	-	27.53%	
Satisfied	47.24%	68.69%	69.23%	53.85%	61.54%	100.00%	100.00%	58.28%	
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	13.07%	9.60%	-	-	-	-	-	9.68%	
Dissatisfied	4.52%	4.55%	-	-	-	-	-	3.87%	
Very dissatisfied	0.50%	1.01%	-	-	-	-	-	0.65%	
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	

4.6.3 Comparison Shopping: Summary

In response to questions regarding the preferences for comparison shopping, the majority of respondents indicated that they primarily choose to buy the goods they needed from retailers within County Louth. Dundalk and Drogheda were the main locations chosen although there is evidence of some retail spend leakage, primarily to Dublin and the surrounding areas. Overall, respondents appear to be satisfied with the ability of the towns within County Louth to meet their comparison shopping needs.

4.7 Bulky Goods Shopping

The next stage of the survey examined respondents preferences when shopping for bulky goods, focusing primarily on the locations chosen to undertake bulky goods shopping, reason for choosing this location and levels of satisfaction with the location.

4.7.1 Bulky Goods Shopping: Choice of Destination

In keeping with the trends demonstrated in relation to comparison goods, the majority of respondents confirmed that they choose to do their main bulky goods shopping in County Louth. 40.80% of all respondents stated that Drogheda was their first choice of location when looking to buy bulky goods, while Dundalk was the primary location for an additional 38.20%.

Table 20: Main Bulky Goods Shopping Destinations

What destination do you normally choose to undertake your main bulky goods shopping?											
Zone	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid-Louth North		Mid-Louth South			Greater Drogheda			Grand Total
Town	Carlingford	Dundalk	Castlebellingham	Dromiskin	Ardee	Clogherhead	Dunleer	Drogheda	Termonfeckin	Tullyallen	
n/a	-	12.98%	-	-	-	-	-	14.69%	-	-	11.60%
Ardee	-	0.48%	-	-	55.56%	-	-	0.95%	-	-	3.60%
Carrickmacross	-	0.48%	-	16.67%	-	-	-	0.00%	-	-	0.40%
Drogheda	-	0.96%	16.67%	33.33%	11.11%	100.00%	60.00%	78.67%	87.50%	85.71%	40.80%
Dublin Surrounding Areas	-	0.96%	-	-	3.70%	-	-	4.27%	12.50%	-	2.60%
Dundalk	100.00%	79.81%	83.33%	50.00%	22.22%	-	30.00%	0.95%	-	-	38.20%
Navan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.47%	-	14.29%	0.40%
Newry	-	4.33%	-	-	7.41%	-	10.00%	0.00%	-	-	2.40%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

When asked of their reason for choosing the location specified, 50.80% of respondents stated that proximity was the primary influence on where they did their bulky goods shopping. Choice and quality of goods was listed as the main reason for 8.20% of respondents, while value for money was the main reason for 6.20%. Of those questioned 8.20% stated that they choose the location specified in order to support local businesses.

Table 21: Respondents Reasoning For Choosing a Specific Town as The Location For Their Bulky Goods Shopping

What is the main reason for choosing to do your main bulky goods shopping at this destination?											
Zone	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid-Louth North		Mid-Louth South			Greater Drogheda			Grand Total
Town	Carlingford	Dundalk	Castlebellingham	Dromiskin	Ardee	Clogherhead	Dunleer	Drogheda	Termonfeckin	Tullyallen	
Close to home	-	47.12%	33.33%	33.33%	44.44%	54.55%	50.00%	56.87%	62.50%	57.14%	50.80%
Support local business	66.67%	23.08%	33.33%	16.67%	22.22%	18.18%	20.00%	10.90%	25.00%	14.29%	18.20%
Wide choice of goods	16.67%	2.88%	16.67%	-	14.81%	9.09%	20.00%	6.64%	12.50%	14.29%	6.20%
Good value for money	-	7.21%	16.67%	16.67%	7.41%	9.09%	10.00%	4.74%	-	-	6.20%
Range of shops available	-	3.85%	-	16.67%	3.70%	-	-	4.27%	-	-	3.80%
Quality of goods available	16.67%	0.96%	-	16.67%	7.41%	-	-	1.42%	-	14.29%	2.00%
Ease of parking	-	0.96%	-	-	-	-	-	0.47%	-	-	0.60%
Cheap/free parking	-	0.00%	-	-	-	9.09%	-	-	-	-	0.20%
n/a	-	13.94%	-	-	-	-	-	14.69%	-	-	12.00%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

4.7.2 Bulky Goods Shopping: Satisfaction

When questioned on their level of satisfaction with the location that they had specified for their bulky goods shopping, 93.30% of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied. Of those who stated that they choose to do their bulky goods shopping within County Louth, just 0.92% said that they were dissatisfied.

Table 22: Respondents General Satisfaction Rating with the Town Which They Choose To Do Their Bulky Goods Shopping

How satisfied are you with the destination where you undertake your main bulky goods shopping?								
Town	Dundalk	Drogheda	Ardee	Dublin Surrounding Areas	Newry	Navan	Carrickmacross	Grand Total
Very satisfied	45.16%	18.81%	38.89%	16.67%	63.64%	-	50.00%	32.10%
Satisfied	46.77%	74.26%	61.11%	83.33%	36.36%	100.00%	50.00%	61.20%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	6.99%	5.94%	-	-	-	-	-	5.77%
Dissatisfied	1.08%	0.99%	-	-	-	-	-	0.92%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

4.7.3 Bulky Goods Shopping: Summary

A sizeable majority of respondents who were questioned on their preferences regarding bulky goods shopping choose to do so within County Louth and were satisfied or very satisfied with the preferred location. Proximity appears to be the most important influence and was the most prevalent answer provided by respondents when questioned on their reasons for choosing to shop within a particular urban centre. A sizeable proportion of respondents outlined a preference for supporting local businesses.

4.8 Competing Centres

Following the exploration of respondents shopping preferences, the survey moved on to examine the influence of a number of the most prominent competing centres located within the surrounding regions. In assessing the influence of the listed competing centres, it is important to note that, as seen in the preceding sections, the majority of respondents did not choose these competing centres as the primary location for any of their shopping requirements. This will be further emphasised when examining the frequency by which respondents may visit these centres.

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

Table 23: Outline of The Proportion Respondents Who Visit The Listed Competing Centres For The Purposes Of Shopping

Do you choose to shop in any of these competing centres?						
Zone	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid Louth (North)	Mid Louth (South)	Greater Drogheda	Grand Total
Dublin City Centre	50.00%	33.65%	75.00%	41.67%	42.04%	39.40%
Newry	50.00%	34.62%	66.67%	27.08%	18.58%	27.60%
Blanchardstown SC	-	5.77%	58.33%	27.08%	16.81%	14.00%
Other Towns in Northern Ireland	-	7.69%	-	12.50%	6.64%	7.40%
Liffey Valley SC	-	2.88%	-	4.17%	7.52%	5.00%
Swords	-	1.44%	66.67%	14.58%	18.14%	11.80%
Navan	-	-	-	14.58%	5.31%	3.80%
Ashbourne	-	0.48%	-	2.08%	4.87%	2.60%

Respondents were asked to specify if they ever travelled to any of the eight named centres listed within Table 23 above, for any type of shopping. The results indicate that Dublin City Centre is the most significant competing centre to the retail offering of County Louth, with 39.40% of all respondents stating that they have shopped in Dublin. Newry along with Blanchardstown and Swords were the next most significant competing centres. The four most prominent competing centres will be discussed in more detail below.

4.8.1 Competing Centres: Dublin City Centre

Dublin City Centre has the largest quantum of retail floorspace and retail offer within the country, a fact which reflects its position at the top of the national retail hierarchy, as specified within the Retail Planning Guidelines 2012.

39.40% of all respondents to the Louth household retail survey stated that they travel to Dublin City Centre for some form of shopping. A subsequent question examined the frequency with which they visit, with the results indicating that the vast majority of those who do go to the city to shop, do so no more than once or twice per year.

Table 24: Frequency with Which Respondents Choose To Shop in Dublin City Centre

Participants who responded that they choose to shop Dublin City Centre were asked how frequently they visited?						
Zone	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid Louth (North)	Mid Louth (South)	Greater Drogheda	Grand Total
Once a week	-	2.86%	-	-	1.05%	1.52%
Once a fortnight	-	-	-	-	2.11%	1.02%
Once a month	-	15.71%	33.33%	20.00%	12.63%	15.23%
Once or twice a year	100.00%	81.43%	66.67%	80.00%	84.21%	82.23%

When asked specifically about the type of shopping which brought them to Dublin City Centre, 97.35% stated that it was primarily for comparison goods.

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

Table 25: Type of Shopping Which Respondents Undertake in Dublin City Centre

Participants who responded that they choose to shop in Dublin City Centre were asked what type of shopping they choose to do there?						
Zone	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid Louth (North)	Mid Louth (South)	Greater Drogheda	Grand Total
Convenience shopping	-	1.47%	-	-	1.11%	1.06%
Comparison shopping	100.00%	95.59%	100.00%	100.00%	97.78%	97.35%
Bulky goods shopping	-	2.94%	-	-	1.11%	1.59%

4.8.2 Competing Centres: Newry

Newry, located just a short distance across the border in Northern Ireland, has at various times been a significant draw of economic activity due to differentials in taxation policy and currency values. However, the information produced as part of the householder surveys indicates that only a relatively small proportion of the people of County Louth shop in Newry on a regular basis. The majority of those who do go to Newry on a regular basis are those who are located closest to it, within the areas of North Louth and Greater Dundalk.

Table 26: Frequency with Which Respondents Choose To Shop In Newry

Participants who responded that they choose to shop Newry were asked how frequently they visited?						
Zone	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid Louth (North)	Mid Louth (South)	Greater Drogheda	Grand Total
Once a week	-	5.63%	12.50%	7.69%	7.32%	6.52%
Once a fortnight	20.00%	8.45%	-	7.69%	-	5.80%
Once a month	40.00%	40.85%	37.50%	7.69%	12.20%	28.99%
Once or twice a year	40.00%	45.07%	50.00%	76.92%	80.49%	58.70%

Unlike many of the other competing centres, the proportion of respondents who go to Newry for convenience goods is quite high, with 13.33% of all those surveyed saying that they had gone to Newry for food and grocery shopping. However, for the majority of respondents, comparison shopping was the main reason for going to Newry.

Table 27: Type of Shopping Which Respondents Undertake In Newry

Participants who responded that they choose to shop in Newry were asked what type of shopping they choose to do there?						
Zone	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid Louth (North)	Mid Louth (South)	Greater Drogheda	Grand Total
Convenience shopping	-	17.39%	-	16.67%	9.76%	13.33%
Comparison shopping	100.00%	75.36%	100.00%	75.00%	87.80%	81.48%
Bulky goods shopping	-	7.25%	-	8.33%	2.44%	5.19%

4.8.3 Competing Centres: Blanchardstown Shopping Centre

The Blanchardstown Shopping Centre, which is one of the largest shopping centres within Dublin, is easily accessible from County Louth, being located just a short distance from the M50 along the M3. 14.00% of all of the respondents stated that they have visited the shopping centre, it is clearly an important competitor to the retail offering of the County. However, only 8.22% of

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

those respondents visit once a month, while the remaining 91.78% only do so on a couple of occasions per year.

Table 28: Frequency with Which Respondents Choose To Shop In The Blanchardstown Shopping Centre

Participants who responded that they choose to shop in the Blanchardstown Shopping Centre were asked how frequently they visited?						
Zone	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid Louth (North)	Mid Louth (South)	Greater Drogheda	Grand Total
Once a month	-	-	-	7.14%	12.50%	8.22%
Once or twice a year	-	100.00%	100.00%	92.86%	87.50%	91.78%

In response to questioning on the type of shopping which respondents undertake in the Blanchardstown Shopping Centre, all respondents stated that they choose the location only for comparison shopping.

Table 29: Type of Shopping Which Respondents Undertake In The Blanchardstown Shopping Centre

Participants who responded that they choose to shop in the Blanchardstown Shopping Centre were asked what type of shopping they do						
Zone	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid Louth (North)	Mid Louth (South)	Greater Drogheda	Grand Total
Comparison shopping	0.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

4.8.4 Competing Centres: Swords

The location of Swords, on the primary route between the main urban centres of County Louth and Dublin, is an important consideration in assessing its influence as a competitor to the retail offer of the County. 11.80% of all respondents to the survey stated that they had chosen to shop within Swords, with more than two thirds of these doing so only once or twice per year.

Table 30: Frequency With Which Respondents Choose To Shop In Swords

Participants who responded that they choose to shop in Swords were asked how frequently they visited?						
Zone	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid Louth (North)	Mid Louth (South)	Greater Drogheda	Grand Total
Once a week	-	-	12.50%	-	-	1.79%
Once a fortnight	-	-	-	-	2.56%	1.79%
Once a month	-	-	12.50%	50.00%	30.77%	28.57%
Once or twice a year	-	100.00%	75.00%	50.00%	66.67%	67.86%

Although there were a small proportion of respondents who travel to Swords for convenience shopping, the vast majority choose to do comparison shopping here.

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

Table 31: Type of Shopping Which Respondents Undertake In Swords

Participants who responded that they choose to shop in Swords were asked what type of shopping they choose to do there?						
Zone	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid Louth (North)	Mid Louth (South)	Greater Drogheda	Grand Total
Convenience shopping	-	-	12.50%	-	2.44%	3.51%
Comparison shopping	-	100.00%	87.50%	100.00%	97.56%	96.49%

4.8.5 Competing Centres: Summary

In assessing the results of the Louth householder survey, it would appear from the above sections that although a high proportion (64.20%) of respondents did choose to shop in the competing centres named above, the majority did so no more than once or twice per year, and therefore the retail outflow which results from this is defined as being negligible. For most respondents, they choose to travel to these competing centres to undertake comparison shopping, with the comparative rates for convenience and bulky goods shopping being much lower. These results should be considered in conjunction with the results of the question relating specifically to comparison shopping, which indicate that proximity is a primary influence on where the people of the County choose to undertake their comparison shopping.

4.9 Online Shopping

Online shopping is a key growth area with many retailers, both Irish and internationally based, looking to expand their online presence and capitalise on the trend. Analysis of the proportion of respondents to the Louth householder survey who undertake online shopping indicates that shopping for comparison goods is the main type of online shopping which occurs within the County, with 35.40% of all respondents stating that they had bought comparison goods online.

Table 32: Type of Shopping Which Respondents Undertake Online

Do you undertake online shopping for the following categories of retail goods?						
Zone	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid Louth (North)	Mid Louth (South)	Greater Drogheda	Grand Total
Convenience Goods	-	3.37%	-	12.50%	11.50%	7.80%
Comparison Goods	16.67%	27.88%	50.00%	35.42%	42.04%	35.40%
Bulky Goods	-	7.69%	8.33%	4.17%	4.42%	5.80%

Analysis of the geographic distribution of online shopping demonstrates that the rate of online shopping which occurs throughout the County varies significantly, with all surveyed areas featuring some proportion of online shopping for comparison goods.

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

Table 33: Proportion of Online Shopping Within The Surveyed Settlements Of County Louth

Do you undertake any online shopping for the following categories of goods?			
	Convenience	Comparison	Bulky Goods
Ardee	11.11%	37.04%	-
Carlingford	-	16.67%	-
Castlebellingham	-	33.33%	16.67%
Clogherhead	18.18%	18.18%	9.09%
Drogheda	10.90%	42.18%	4.74%
Dromiskin	-	66.67%	-
Dundalk	3.37%	27.88%	7.69%
Dunleer	10.00%	50.00%	10.00%
Termonfeckin	37.50%	50.00%	-
Tullyallen	-	28.57%	-
Grand Total	7.80%	35.40%	5.80%

In analysing the frequency with which respondents state that they had undertaken online shopping, the majority only did so no more than once or twice per year. However, 53.16% of all respondents who did undertake online shopping, did so once per month or more frequently.

Table 34: Frequency with Which Respondents Choose To Shop Online

How often do you choose to shop online?						
Zone	North Louth	Greater Dundalk	Mid Louth (North)	Mid Louth (South)	Greater Drogheda	Grand Total
Once a week	-	6.67%	-	-	0.95%	2.63%
Once a fortnight	-	6.67%	-	5.56%	16.19%	11.58%
Once a month	-	48.33%	50.00%	44.44%	32.38%	38.95%
Once or twice a year	100.00%	38.33%	50.00%	50.00%	50.48%	46.84%

4.10 Shoppers Survey

The shoppers survey was undertaken in Dundalk on the 19th and the 20th November, in Drogheda on the 29th and 30th November and in Ardee on the 5th and 7th of December. The shopper survey comprised of street interviews with 500 respondents, 200 in Dundalk and Drogheda and 100 in Ardee. Surveys in each settlement were undertaken during the week and on Saturday, during both AM and PM.

4.10.1 Age and Gender of Survey Respondents

On average, 64.80% of respondents were female, while the representation across the various age categories was quite uniform.

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

Table 35: Gender Breakdown of Survey Participants

What gender are you?				
Town	Dundalk	Drogheda	Ardee	Grand Total
Female	58.50%	70.00%	67.00%	64.80%
Male	41.50%	30.00%	33.00%	35.20%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Table 36: Age Profile of Survey Participants

Within which age bracket do you belong?				
Town	Dundalk	Drogheda	Ardee	Grand Total
18-24	14.00%	11.00%	10.00%	12.00%
25-34	15.50%	20.00%	19.00%	18.00%
35-44	18.50%	21.50%	22.00%	20.40%
45-54	19.00%	15.50%	17.00%	17.20%
55-64	18.50%	19.00%	18.00%	18.60%
65-74	10.50%	10.00%	9.00%	10.00%
75+	3.50%	1.00%	5.00%	2.80%
Unknown	0.50%	2.00%	0.00%	1.00%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

4.10.2 Origin of Survey Participants and Purpose For Coming To The Surveyed Town

Table 37: Origin Of Survey Participants

Where do you come from?				
Area	Dundalk	Drogheda	Ardee	Grand Total
Louth	85.50%	75.00%	81.00%	80.40%
Meath	8.00%	15.50%	0.50%	8.00%
Northern Ireland	5.50%	0.50%	3.00%	3.00%
Cavan/Monaghan	2.50%	1.50%	6.00%	2.80%
Dublin	1.00%	3.50%	1.50%	2.20%
Other Leinster	0.50%	2.50%	-	1.20%
Rest of the World	2.00%	0.50%	-	1.00%
Munster	1.00%	0.50%	1.00%	0.80%
Connaught	0.50%	0.50%	-	0.40%
UK	0.50%	-	-	0.20%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Table 37 above outlines the various origins of participants who were surveyed as part of the on street shopper surveys. The majority of those who participated in the survey (80.40%) were residents of County Louth. A comparatively large proportion of those who participated in the survey were from the counties of Meath and Dublin. 10.20% of the all survey respondents were residents of either Dublin or Meath, while 4.20% came from outside of the state.

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

Table 38: Primary Purpose for Visiting Town

What is the main purpose of coming into town today?				
Town	Dundalk	Drogheda	Ardee	Grand Total
Comparison	34.00%	38.00%	19.00%	32.60%
Convenience	19.00%	23.50%	37.00%	24.40%
Work	15.50%	10.50%	12.00%	12.80%
Culture/recreation	13.50%	8.50%	14.00%	11.60%
Administrative services	11.50%	5.50%	7.00%	8.20%
Convenience/comparison	1.50%	10.00%	4.00%	5.40%
Health	4.50%	3.00%	6.00%	4.20%
Education	0.50%	0.50%	-	0.40%
Passing through	-	-	1.00%	0.20%
Bulky goods	-	0.50%	-	0.20%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

With regard to the main purpose of coming to town today, the majority of respondents 62.60% had visited the surveyed towns to undertake some form of retail activity. Of those who were there for another purpose, 12.80% were for work purposes, while 11.60% were there for recreational purposes.

Table 39 below, outlines the retail spend inflow, as discerned from the analysis of the origin of survey participants and their main reason for being within the town in which they were surveyed. Of those surveyed who originated outside of County Louth, 11.00% were in the surveyed town for some form of retail activity, which therefore correlates to a retail spend inflow of 11.00%.

Table 39: Breakdown of Retail Spend Inflow by retail Category into County Louth as a whole

Percentage of retail spend inflow into County Louth										
	Cavan/ Monaghan	Connaught	Dublin	Meath	Munster	Northern Ireland	Other Leinster	Rest of the World	UK	Grand Total
Comparison	0.60%	-	0.80%	3.00%	0.40%	0.80%	0.80%	0.20%	0.20%	6.80%
Convenience	0.20%	0.20%	0.40%	1.40%	0.20%	0.40%	-	0.20%	-	3.00%
Convenience/comparison	-	-	0.20%	0.80%	-	-	-	-	-	1.00%
Bulky goods	-	0.20%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.20%
Grand Total	0.80%	0.40%	1.40%	5.20%	0.60%	1.20%	0.80%	0.40%	0.20%	11.00%

When determining the inflow and outflow figures for the county, survey participants were provided with the four options (outlined in Table 39) above, to define the purpose for their visit. This included the “Convenience/Comparison” option, indicating that the respondent was within the surveyed town for the purposes of both convenience and comparison shopping. In analysing the data from the surveys, it is necessary to include the percentage (1%) of people who indicated that they were in the surveyed towns for both convenience and comparison purposes within the individual calculations for convenience and comparison goods. Therefore the true inflow figures for convenience and comparison includes those

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

who indicated that they were in the surveyed town for both convenience shopping and comparison shopping, giving a total convenience inflow of 3.80% and total comparison inflow of 7.80%.

Drogheda appears to attract the most retail spend inflow. 18.00% of the survey participants interviewed in Drogheda indicated that they were there for some form of retail activity and originated from outside of County Louth. Further analysis of these figures, as illustrated within Table 4.34 below, indicates that, at a County wide level, 7.2% of all 500 participants in the shopper survey originated outside of County Louth and were surveyed in Drogheda while undertaking some form of retail activity.

Table 40: Breakdown of Retail Spend Inflow To The Individual Towns Within County Louth

Percentage of retail spend inflow into the main towns of County Louth					
	Bulky Goods	Comparison	Convenience	Convenience/Comparison	Grand Total
Ardee	-	0.40%	0.60%	0.20%	1.20%
Drogheda	0.20%	4.80%	1.20%	1.00%	7.20%
Dundalk	-	1.60%	1.00%	-	2.60%
Grand Total	0.20%	6.80%	2.80%	1.20%	11.00%

Table 41: Mode of Transport Used For Coming To The Surveyed Town

What mode of transport did you use to get to town?				
Town	Dundalk	Drogheda	Ardee	Grand Total
Car	62.50%	61.50%	67.00%	63.00%
Walk	25.00%	29.00%	26.00%	26.80%
Bus	7.00%	8.00%	4.00%	6.80%
Car - passenger	2.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.40%
Taxi	2.00%	-	-	0.80%
Bicycle	1.00%	-	1.00%	0.60%
Train	0.50%	0.50%	-	0.40%
Van	-	-	1.00%	0.20%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

4.10.3 Frequency and Mode Of Transport Used By Survey Participants

The information which is outlined within Table 41 was provided in response to Question 5, which asked *What mode of transport did you use to get to town?* In response, the majority of those surveyed (64.60%) drove or were passengers of private cars or vans. Only 1.40% of all survey participants indicated that they travel to the surveyed town as a passenger in a car, which indicates a very high proportion of single occupant car journeys in the County. A further 8.00% used some form of public transport, with 27.40% choosing to walk or cycle.

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

Walking was a popular choice amongst those surveyed, with 26.80% of all survey participants indicating that they would generally walk to and from the surveyed town with many saying they do so as part of their daily exercise routine.

Table 42: Frequency Of Visiting The Surveyed Town

How often do you visit the town?				
Town	Dundalk	Drogheda	Ardee	Grand Total
More than 3 times a week	59.50%	41.50%	52.00%	50.80%
Twice a week	15.00%	17.00%	18.00%	16.40%
Once a week	11.50%	24.50%	20.00%	18.40%
Once a month	3.50%	6.00%	2.00%	4.20%
2-3 times a month	3.50%	4.00%	2.00%	3.40%
Once every two months	1.00%	2.00%	1.00%	1.40%
Less often	6.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.40%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

When asked *How often do you visit the town*, the results illustrated within Table 42 demonstrate how 85.60% of all respondents visited the surveyed town on at least one occasion in the week. In addition 50.80% came to the surveyed town more than three times per week. This indicates that the town is an important part in the everyday lives of the survey participants, who would visit it on an ongoing basis throughout their weekly activities. This also gives an indication of the scale of local support for the economy of the town and the role which the local population plays in sustaining many of the businesses located within the three surveyed towns.

4.10.4 Reasons For Visiting The Surveyed Town

Table 43: Respondents Primary Reason for Shopping In The Surveyed Town⁹

What is your main reason for shopping in the town?				
Town	Dundalk	Drogheda	Ardee	Grand Total
Convenience	42.00%	37.00%	63.00%	44.20%
Convenience/comparison	21.00%	30.50%	21.00%	24.80%
Comparison	24.00%	25.00%	8.00%	21.20%
Culture/Recreation	4.50%	2.00%	2.00%	3.00%
Work	2.50%	0.50%	3.00%	1.80%
Proximity	2.50%	1.00%	1.00%	1.60%
Support local economy	1.50%	2.50%	-	1.60%
Administrative services	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Health	0.50%	-	1.00%	0.40%
Bulky goods	-	0.50%	-	0.20%
Education	0.50%	-	-	0.20%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

⁹ Due to the extent of variation which was provided in response to Question 7, and in the interests of clarity, a number of categories were determined within which some answers were grouped. The activities listed as being within the culture/recreation category include cafes, bars, restaurants, nightlife, leisure activities, socialising, exercise, library visits, hairdresser visits, arts and cultural activities, historical activities, bookie visits, kids classes and activities, cinema visits, and vets. The activities which have been defined as being within the administrative services category include banking activities, visits to the post office, credit union or solicitors.

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

When asked Question 7, *What is your main reason for shopping in the town*, 44.20% of respondents stated that they came to the town primarily for their convenience shopping requirements. There were variations within the three towns, with a lower proportion of respondents in Drogheda stating convenience shopping as their primary reason for coming to the town to shop when compared with both Dundalk and Ardee.

Overall the vast majority of respondents (90.20%) primarily came to the surveyed towns for the purposes of convenience or comparison shopping.

In addition to the information provided in response to Question 7, survey participants were also asked *Do you visit the town for any other reason?* In response, 30.20% of those surveyed stated that they also came to use the administrative services which were available within the town (such as banks, credit unions, post office etc..) while a further 34.80% of people came to the town for recreational purposes.

Table 44: Additional Reasons for Respondents Choosing To Shop In The Surveyed Town¹⁰

Do you visit the town for any other reason?				
Row Labels	Dundalk	Drogheda	Ardee	Grand Total
Culture/recreation	36.50%	42.50%	16.00%	34.80%
Administrative Services	28.00%	25.00%	45.00%	30.20%
No other reason	13.00%	14.00%	13.00%	13.40%
Work	6.50%	6.00%	7.00%	6.40%
Health	2.50%	5.00%	13.00%	5.60%
Comparison	7.50%	5.50%	1.00%	5.40%
Convenience	2.50%	0.50%	1.00%	1.40%
Convenience/Comparison	2.50%	0.50%	1.00%	1.40%
Education	1.00%	1.00%	2.00%	1.20%
Vet	-	-	1.00%	0.20%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

The variety of responses provided as answers to this question gives an indication of the level of supporting activities which are available within each of the surveyed towns, including the provision of employment, important health and administrative services, and educational services. In addition, the importance of bars, restaurants and other forms of night time entertainment is also revealed, with many respondents indicating these as being prominent reasons for visiting the surveyed town on a regular basis.

¹⁰ Due to the extent of variation which was provided in response to Question 8, and in the interests of clarity, a number of categories were determined within which some answers were grouped. The activities listed as being within the culture/recreation category include cafes, bars, restaurants, nightlife, leisure activities, socialising, exercise, library visits, hairdresser visits, arts and cultural activities, historical activities, bookie visits, kids classes and activities, cinema visits, and vets. The activities which have been defined as being within the administrative services category include banking activities, visits to the post office, credit union or solicitors.

4.11 Dundalk

Table 45: The Main Streets and Areas of Dundalk Visited By Survey Participants

What streets/areas/shopping centres do you normally visit on your trip into Dundalk?	
Marshes	39.00%
Clanbrassill Street	36.00%
Longwalk	13.50%
Park Street	6.00%
Earl Street	3.00%
Town Centre	1.00%
Main Street	0.50%
Bridge Street	0.50%
n/a	0.50%
Grand Total	100.00%

In response to Question 9, *What streets/areas/shopping centres do you normally visit on your trip into town*, the respondents who were surveyed in Dundalk provided the responses detailed in Table 45 above. The information provided by respondents indicates that the Marshes Shopping Centre and Clanbrassill Street are the primary focus of their visits to Dundalk. Clanbrassill Street is the main shopping street within the town centre, and is the focal point of the town core, with many of the other streets named by respondents being located close to or adjoining it. The Marshes is a large shopping centre, located to the south east of the town core, offering a wide range of comparison shops, and which benefits from a large car park. As can be seen from the findings of the shopper survey, this shopping centre and the amenities which it offers have become an important attraction for people to come to Dundalk.

Table 46: The Main Attractions of Dundalk According To The Survey Participants¹¹

What do you think are the main attractions in Dundalk?	
Range of shopping	53.50%
Culture/recreation	18.50%
Proximity	5.00%
Street aesthetics & architectural design	3.50%
Compact urban core	2.00%
Administrative Services	1.50%
Friendly atmosphere/people	1.50%
Parking - free	0.50%
Work	0.50%
n/a	13.50%
Grand Total	100.00%

¹¹ Due to the extent of variation which was provided in response to Question 10, and in the interests of clarity, a number of categories were determined within which some answers were grouped. The activities listed as being within the culture/recreation category include cafes, bars, restaurants, nightlife, leisure activities, socialising, exercise, library visits, hairdresser visits, arts and cultural activities, historical activities, bookie visits, kids classes and activities, cinema visits, and vets. The activities which have been defined as being within the administrative services category include banking activities, visits to the post office, credit union or solicitors.

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

In response to Question 10, *what do you think are the main attractions in the town*, the respondents who were surveyed in Dundalk provided the responses detailed in Table 46 above. Although many respondents make reference to shopping, and in particular the range of shops available, as being the main attractions of Dundalk, a high proportion of respondents specified a number of other attractions. In particular, the wide variety of cultural and recreational activities (such as bars and restaurants which are important elements of the supporting infrastructure) which are available within the town were identified as being an important reason to come to Dundalk. 18.50% of all respondents surveyed in Dundalk made reference to some form of cultural or recreational resource that is offered within the town, with many noting the variety of bars, restaurants and other activities which bring people and life to the town in the evenings.

Table 47: Survey Respondents Suggestions for Enhancement Which Would Encourage Them To Shop Within Dundalk More Frequently

In your opinion, what improvements could be made to encourage you to shop in Dundalk more frequently?	
Improved range of shopping	25.50%
Parking - free	24.00%
Enhanced public realm	17.00%
Urban regeneration (derelict/closed down properties)	10.50%
Broader range of cultural attractions	3.00%
Parking - more	2.50%
Parking - cheaper	2.00%
Reduced traffic congestion	1.00%
Better transport	0.50%
Reduced rates (commercial)	0.50%
n/a	13.50%
Grand Total	100.00%

In response to Question 11, *In your opinion, what improvements could be made to encourage you to shop in the town more frequently*, the respondents who were surveyed in Dundalk provided the responses detailed in Table 47 above. Although respondents made reference to a wide range of issues which they feel need to be addressed, parking appears to be the top priority for many. In all 30% of respondents made reference to the need to address some parking issues. Other issues of note include public realm and built urban form enhancements and regeneration as well as a clear desire for an improved range of shops.

4.12 Drogheda

Table 48: The Main Streets And Areas Of Drogheda Which The Survey Participants Visited

What streets/areas/shopping centres do you normally visit on your trip into Drogheda	
Scotch Hall	46.00%
West Street	38.50%
St. Laurence Street	11.00%
Town Centre	2.50%
Dyer Street	0.50%
North Quay	0.50%
Stockwell Street	0.50%
Town Core	0.50%
Grand Total	100.00%

In response to Question 9, *What streets/areas/shopping centres do you normally visit on your trip into town*, the respondents who were surveyed in Drogheda provided the responses detailed in Table 48 above. The information indicates that the Scotch Hall Shopping Centre and West Street are the areas which people primarily choose to visit when in Drogheda. West Street would be considered the primary commercial street within the established town core of Drogheda, and features a mixture of convenience and comparison retailers as well as a range of restaurants, bars and other service providers. West Street continues to attract a high proportion of shoppers, in spite of stiff competition from two shopping centres located in close proximity. By comparison, the Scotch Hall Shopping Centre, which is located a short distance from the town centre, has become a very significant attraction to people visiting Drogheda. The majority of the other streets which are listed also occur close to, or within the established core of Drogheda.

Table 49: The Main Attractions of Drogheda According To The Survey Participants¹²

What do you think are the main attractions in Drogheda	
Range of shopping	43.50%
Culture/recreation	14.00%
Friendly atmosphere/people	9.00%
Proximity	7.50%
Compact urban core	7.00%
Street aesthetics & architectural design	6.50%
Parking - more	1.00%
n/a	11.50%
Grand Total	100.00%

In response to Question 10, *what do you think are the main attractions in the town*, the respondents who were surveyed in Drogheda provided the responses detailed in Table 49 above. As with Dundalk, shopping and the range of shops which are available within Drogheda are specified as being the main

¹² Due to the extent of variation which was provided in response to Question 10, and in the interests of clarity, a number of categories were determined within which some answers were grouped. The activities listed as being within the culture/recreation category include cafes, bars, restaurants, nightlife, leisure activities, socialising, exercise, library visits, hairdresser visits, arts and cultural activities, historical activities, bookie visits, kids classes and activities, cinema visits, and vets.

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

attractions for people who visit the town. In addition to shopping, reference is also made to the variety and quality of the cultural and recreational activities which Drogheda has to offer (restaurants, bars and nightlife etc.). Other respondents also make reference to the historic urban fabric of the town, which includes such buildings as St Peter's Church. 14.00% of respondents made reference to the range of recreational facilities available including bars, restaurants and cafes, as well as a further 9.00% making reference to the friendly atmosphere which exists within the town.

Table 50: Survey Respondents Suggestions For Enhancement Which Would Encourage Them To Shop Within Drogheda More Frequently

In your opinion, what improvements could be made to encourage you to shop in Drogheda more frequently?	
Parking - cheaper	22.00%
Improved range of shopping	16.00%
Parking - free	12.00%
Parking - more	10.50%
Broader range of cultural attractions	8.50%
Enhanced public realm	7.50%
Urban regeneration (derelict/closed down properties)	7.00%
Reduced traffic congestion	4.00%
Reduced rates (commercial)	1.50%
Enhanced safety (at night)	1.00%
n/a	10.00%
Grand Total	100.00%

In response to Question 11, *in your opinion, what improvements could be made to encourage you to shop in the town more frequently*, the respondents who were surveyed in Drogheda provided the responses detailed in Table 50 above. Parking appears to be an important issue for the people who participated in the shopper survey, with 45.50% of all respondents indicating that some form of improvement to parking arrangements within the town is required. Traffic congestion, an issue which is no doubt linked with the provision of parking, is also mentioned as an area in need of improvement. The need for urban regeneration and an enhanced public realm also seems to be an important issue for respondents.

4.13 Ardee

Table 51: The Main Streets Of Ardee Which The Survey Participants Visited

What streets/areas/shopping centres do you normally visit on your trip Ardee	
Main Street	45.00%
Market and Castle Street	39.00%
Town Centre	8.00%
Castle Street	4.00%
Ash Walk	3.00%
n/a	1.00%
Grand Total	100.00%

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

In response to Question 9, *What streets/areas/shopping centres do you normally visit on your trip into town*, the respondents who were surveyed in Ardee provided the responses detailed in Table 51 above. The information indicates that the streets of the town centre, primarily Market Street and Castle Street, are the areas of Ardee which are the focus of most visits for people who use the town. This is representative of the compact nature of the town core of Ardee, with most parts of the town being easily accessible from the town centre.

Table 52: The Main Attractions of Ardee According To The Survey Participants¹³

What do you think are the main attractions in Ardee	
Range of shopping	35.00%
Culture/recreation	29.00%
Friendly atmosphere/people	18.00%
Proximity	11.00%
Enhanced street aesthetics & architectural design	1.00%
Street aesthetics & architectural design	1.00%
n/a	5.00%
Grand Total	100.00%

In response to Question 10, *what do you think are the main attractions in the town*, the respondents who were surveyed in Ardee provided the responses detailed in Table 52 above. The range of shops which are available in Ardee was identified as being a key attraction for survey respondents. In addition, the variety of cultural and recreational facilities, such as the castle, parks and children's play facilities, bars and restaurants were also identified as being important attractions. Ardee was identified by respondents as having a friendly atmosphere, 18% of people stating that this was one of the primary reasons why they visited the town, outperforming both Dundalk and Drogheda in this respect.

Table 53: Survey Respondents Suggestions For Enhancement Which Would Encourage Them To Shop Within Ardee More Frequently

In your opinion, what improvements could be made to encourage you to shop in Ardee more frequently?	
Parking - free	35.00%
Improved range of shopping	33.00%
Reduced traffic congestion	6.00%
Enhanced public realm (aesthetics, better environment)	5.00%
Urban regeneration (derelict/closed down properties)	4.00%
Better transport	2.00%
n/a	15.00%
Grand Total	100.00%

In response to Question 11, *In your opinion, what improvements could be made to encourage you to shop in the town more frequently*, the respondents who were surveyed in Ardee provided the responses detailed in Table 53 above. As with Drogheda, parking, and in particular the desire for free parking is identified as being an important issue for respondents. Traffic congestion is also highlighted as being a

¹³ Due to the extent of variation which was provided in response to Question 10, and in the interests of clarity, a number of categories were determined within which some answers were grouped. The activities listed as being within the culture/recreation category include cafes, bars, restaurants, nightlife, leisure activities, socialising, exercise, library visits, hairdresser visits, arts and cultural activities, historical activities, bookie visits, kids classes and activities, cinema visits, and vets.

problem, which is no doubt a reflection of the presence of both a national primary and a national secondary route running through the heart of the town centre. Finally, 33.00% of respondents would like to see an improved range of shops within Ardee.

4.14 Householder and Shopper Survey Conclusions:

- Inflow figures for County Louth as a whole indicate a retail spend inflow of 11.00% for all retail categories, with shopping for comparison goods being an important draw for people outside of County Louth. Much of this identified retail inflow is coming from the adjacent parts of Counties Meath and Dublin. Drogheda appears to attract the most retail spend inflow, accounting for 7.20% of the total 11.00% inflow identified,
- The majority of survey respondents throughout County Louth choose to meet most of their retail needs from retailers within the County. Only 2.80% of those surveyed choose to do their main food and grocery shopping outside of the County, with no respondents stating that they undertake “top-up” shopping outside the County,
- Only 7.00% of those surveyed undertake their primary comparison shopping activities in towns, cities or shopping centres located outside of County Louth,
- There appears to be significantly more retail spend leakage to Dublin and the surrounding areas than there is to Newry and other towns within Northern Ireland. 39.40% of all respondents choose to go to Dublin to do some form of shopping, compared to just 27.60% of respondents who said that they went to Newry to shop,
- The comparative inflow and outflow figures, including those published in the Louth County Retail Strategy 2009-2015 are illustrated in the Table 54 below.¹⁴

Table 54: Comparative Inflow & Outflow Figures

	Convenience		Comparison	
	2009	2014	2009	2014
Retail spend Inflow	7.00%	3.80%	26.00%	8.00%
Retail spend outflow	11.00%	2.80%	20.00%	7.00%

- Comparison of the retail inflow figures illustrated above and those published within the Louth County Retail Strategy 2009-2015 indicates that there has been a 5.5% decline in retail spend inflow rates over the intervening period,
- This indicates a substantial reduction in the quantum of retail spend outflow from that which is evident from the results of the previous strategy,

¹⁴ It should be noted that for calculating retail inflow in 2014, the individual inflows for convenience and comparison are composites of a number of categories, and therefore the total inflow remains 11.00%.

- The prevalence of online shopping for comparison goods is much higher than for convenience goods or bulky goods,
- The private car is the dominant mode of transport that people use when undertaking any type of shopping within the County. This corresponds with information provided within the shopper survey which indicates that parking (both cost and availability) is a significant issue for survey respondents.

5.0 Health Check Qualitative Analysis

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this Chapter is to carry out a health check analysis for the towns of Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee, which is an important role in the assessment of the vitality and viability of urban centres. In accordance with the Annex 2 of the Retailing Planning Guidelines 2012, healthy town centres which are both vital and viable balances a number of qualities including:

Attractions - these underpin a town and comprise the range and diversity of shopping and other activities which draw customers and visitors.

Accessibility - successful centres need to be both accessible to the surrounding catchment via a good road network and public transport facilities, and to encompass good local linkages between car parks, public transport stops and the various attractions within the centre.

Amenity - A healthy town centre should be a pleasant place to be in. It should be attractive in terms of environmental quality and urban design it should be safe and have a distinctive identity and image.

Action - to function effectively as a viable commercial centre, things need to happen. Development and improvement projects should be implemented efficiently; there should be regular and effective cleaning and maintenance and there should be co-ordinated town centre management initiatives to promote the continued improvement of the centre.

In order to determine the vitality and viability of Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee town centres a number of indicators were utilised:

- Attractions,
- Accessibility,
- Environmental Quality/ Amenity,
- Diversity of Uses,
- Multiple Representation,
- Levels of Vacancy.

This information was collated on the basis of a land use survey, local knowledge and the qualitative information gathered from the shopper survey. The health check analysis for Dundalk, Drogheda and

Ardee was utilised to define the core shopping area for each settlement and identify opportunity sites for retail development. The health check assessment also included an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) and the identification of key actions and recommendations to improve the vitality and viability of the respective town centres. It should be noted that additional retail opportunity sites may come forward over the lifetime of this retail strategy and these shall be assessed on their own merits and in accordance with the proper planning and development of the area.

5.2 Dundalk

Dundalk is strategically located along the 'M1 Economic Corridor' which links Dublin and Belfast and is situated equidistance between the two settlements. Dundalk is served by an excellent rail network and is very advantageously located in relation to Belfast and Dublin Airports. The town's highly accessible location has undoubtedly made it an attractive place for investment. It is also considered to be the administrative capital of the north east and a centre of academic excellence with the *Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT)* located on its southern approaches.

The *Louth County Council Development Plan 2009 – 2015* and the *Dundalk and Environs Development Plan 2009 -2015* designates Dundalk at Level 1 in the Settlement Hierarchy. This is reflective of its status as a 'gateway' in the National Spatial Strategy 2002 and its role as a regional centre.

5.2.1 SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Dundalk is located along the M1 motorway, is easily accessible by car and provides good public transport provision including frequent bus and train services. Bus and train stations are within walking distance of the town centre,
- Business Improvement District (BID's) is in operation in Dundalk, under which a town centre commercial manager is to be appointed (TCCM). So far BIDS has built a viable town through core events and activities in addition to promoting and marketing the town,
- There are a number of appealing shopping streets including Clanbrassil Street which offers a good range of high end independent clothing stores,
- Wide range of national and international retailers available in the Marshes shopping centre,
- Market Square has been regenerated and now offers an attractive public space with events and festivals. It is an important and well utilised civic space,
- Dundalk has an attractive, historical townscape incorporating the Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA's) of Clanbrassil, Crowe and Francis Street,
- Ample supply of prime redevelopment sites within the town centre,

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

- Dundalk Institute of Technology which is a progressive third level institute and an education base of the local community and also attracts students from throughout Ireland,
- The All weather racetrack on the Newry Road is a major attraction to the town,
- Retail facilities are supported by other services including pubs, restaurants etc.

Weaknesses

- Parking management systems and pricing mechanisms are not operating effectively,
- Lack of evening economy for all age groups has impacted upon Dundalk's vitality and vibrancy,
- Vacant buildings have adversely impacted upon the streetscape and ambience of the town centre,
- Some streets are dominated by private cars and car-parking,
- Poor connectivity and legibility between principle shopping streets, shopping centres and public transport nodes,
- Poor public realm in some areas e.g. Long Walk and Bridge Street,
- Dundalk would benefit from a greater quantum and type of comparison and convenience national and international multiples.

Opportunities

- Capitalise on the existing network of stakeholders operating within the town including the TCCM,
- Establish an evening economy and encourage retailers to open at off peak times including Sundays and in conjunction with events,
- Promote & improve legibility between Clanbrassil Street, the Long Walk & Marshes Shopping Centres through public realm and environmental improvements,
- Ongoing promotion of pedestrian circulation over vehicular traffic in the town centre and the development of comprehensive cycle network,
- Ensure that prime retail sites of varying size are available to retailers. Encourage re-development and revitalisation of opportunity sites within the town centre,
- Investigate the possibility of developing Council owned land to the west of Clanbrassil Street,
- Ensure high quality design for all new retail developments and extensions to existing retail developments,
- Implement a parking management strategy thereby ensuring that an integrated approach is taken with regard to location, duration and pricing mechanisms. Provide parking information through VMS signage and APP for phones and tablets,
- Consider policies restricting the type of non retail uses along Clanbrassil Street,
- Enhance the vitality and improve the security of the town centre by encouraging living over the shop,

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

- Engage students with the town centre through the provision of display space for exhibitions, student's promotions and provision of shuttle bus to and from DKIT campus,
- Encourage a department store to locate within the core shopping area.

Threats

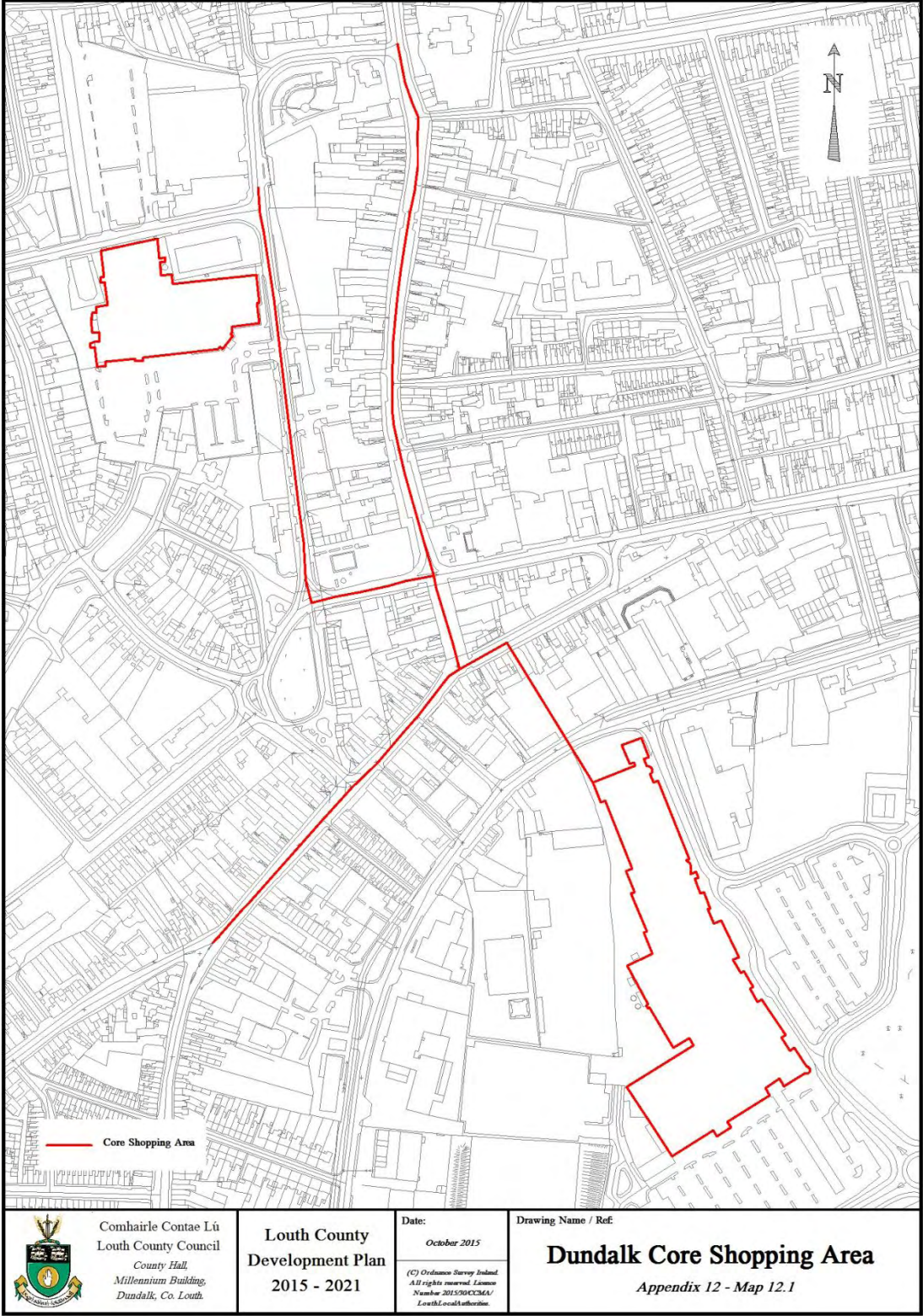
- Proliferation of low order retailers in the core shopping area will adversely impact upon its ambience,
- Out-of-town shopping centres and retail parks have the potential to draw further customers away from the centre especially those travelling by car,
- Increase in number of vacant properties will adversely impact on vitality and viability of the town centre.

5.2.2 Definition of Core Retail Area

Dundalk's Core Shopping Area extends the entire length of Clanbrassil and Earl Street incorporating Market Square. It also includes the Longwalk as far as the former Toymaster building and part of Park Street. To the south the Core Shopping area extends through Williamsons Mall encompassing the Marshes Shopping Centre. Whilst Clanbrassil, Earl and Park Streets are considered to be Dundalk's traditional shopping streets the opening of the Marshes Shopping Centre, combined with the pedestrianisation of Earl Street and the redevelopment of modern units thereon, has resulted in the core shopping area shifting in a southerly direction. With regard to the shopper survey the information provided by respondents in relation to Dundalk indicates that Clanbrassill Street and the Marshes Shopping Centre are the primary focus of their visits. Map 12.1 identifies Dundalk's Core Shopping Area.

(With reference to the Core Shopping Areas as identified for Dundalk, as contained in this Retail Strategy, these are diagrammatic only at strategic level. These will be subject to refinement and review for adoption at Local Area Plan.)

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy



Map 12.1: Dundalk Core Shopping Area

5.3 Attractions

In terms of convenience retailing there are four international multiples operating in Dundalk namely Tesco's, Dunnes, Aldi and Lidl with multiples anchoring both the Long Walk and Dundalk Town Shopping Centres. Larger convenience stores are complimented by smaller convenience stores. There are also a significant number of independent traders scattered throughout the town including fruit and vegetable shops, butchers, and florists.

Dundalk's traditional shopping streets are Clanbrassil, Earl and Park Street wherein there are a significant number of independent retailers in operation offering a good range of middle to high order drapery shops. The Clanbrassil Shopping Centre is located in the heart of the town and is operating successfully with no vacant units.

The Longwalk which runs parallel with Clanbrassill Street, is a partially tree lined avenue and home to the Long Walk Shopping Centre. With the exception of Tesco's the units within the Longwalk Shopping Centre are mainly occupied by independent traders.

The Marshes which is located on the southern edge of the town represents Dundalk's most modern shopping centre. It is anchored by Dunnes and Penney's which are located at either end. The large format retail units are home to a number of international multiples retailers including many high street names such as River Island, Lifestyle Sports and New Look. The opening of the Marshes shopping centre has enabled Dundalk to compete successfully with nearby towns such as Drogheda and Newry.

In response to Question 10 of the shopper survey, what do you think are the main attractions, 53.5% of the respondents stated that the range of shopping was a draw.

5.4 Accessibility

Dundalk is highly accessible by a range of transportation modes. It is easily accessed by the national road network due to its strategic location along the M1 motorway which links Dublin and Belfast. Travel time from Belfast and Dublin is approximately one hour.

Dundalk benefits from a comprehensive network of local bus services and acts as a gateway for regional bus services. Public bus services are provided by the national bus operator Bus Éireann. There are numerous intra and inter county bus routes as well as hourly services from Dublin via Drogheda and the Airport. There is a regular town bus service from Belfast as well as other settlements in the North including Newry, Downpatrick, and Newcastle. A number of private bus companies also operate from Dundalk. The Bus Station is located at the Longwalk which is accessible to Dundalk's Core Shopping Area.

Dundalk's Clarke Train Station is located on the Carrick Road. It is served by the Dublin-Belfast Enterprise express trains as well as local commuter services to and from Dublin.

There are a range of public and private car parks as well as pay and display facilities. A parking management strategy should be implemented to ensure that all car parks are operating at capacity. Parking information, in the form of VMS signage and an APP for i- phones and tablets would be beneficial.

Dundalk is both accessible and attractive to cyclists with its flat terrain and numerous cycle lanes. The development of comprehensive cycle network including dedicated off and on road cycle lanes, introduction of speed limits, crossing points and bicycle parking facilities would encourage more people to avail of this mode of transport.

Earl Street is presently the only pedestrian street within the town core. The development of Market Square has increased pedestrian priority in the vicinity. Throughout other parts of the town centre it may be possible to increase footfall in tandem with a reduction in motorised traffic which would be beneficial to retailers and other businesses.

There is potential to improve permeability and accessibility between Clanbrassil Street, the Longwalk and the Marshes Shopping Centre's which are located to the south. It may be possible to improve overall legibility and connectivity through environmental and public realm improvements.

5.5 Environmental Quality and Amenity

Dundalk has an attractive and distinctive streetscape, centred on the historic core of the town which has retained its traditional form with two, three and four storey buildings set on deep narrow plots fronting onto the principle streets. The designation of Clanbrassil Street ACA has ensured Dundalk's primary shopping street has retained its unique character. Other historic streets such as Crowe Street and Francis Street have retained many notable buildings including the Court House, Town Hall and St Patricks Cathedral.

Notwithstanding this, in some instances the use of external shutters and inappropriate signage has detracted slightly from the overall streetscape.

The redevelopment and refurbishment of Market Square with its interactive water features and open air cafes has transformed this area to a highly attractive public realm. In addition it is a focal point for events including concerts, ice skating and weekly markets. Market Square has become an important public space for those residing, working and visiting Dundalk.

The Longwalk is an important shopping street and is one of Dundalk's main transportation nodes and as such it is often the first point of arrival for those working and visiting the town. The northern sections of the Longwalk are dominated by surface car parking with open views to the rear of the Clanbrassil Street premises to the east which this detracts from the overall visual amenity of the area. In addition connections with Clanbrassil Street are not clearly legible and this adversely impacts upon the overall retail experience. An opportunity exists to transform the Longwalk into an urban street by redeveloping Council owned land and consolidating surface car-parking. Any redevelopment should incorporate strong linkages with Clanbrassil Street.

Notwithstanding the fact that litter bins are provided throughout the town at times littering remains an issue. Considerable improvements have been made to Dundalk's soft and hard landscaping resulting in a more attractive public realm.

5.6 Diversity of Uses

Dundalk Town Centre has a range of retail, retail service, retail leisure, business and financial services. The retail offer within the town centre is supported by numerous businesses such as banks, post offices, solicitors, accountants and insurance brokers as well as, cafes and restaurants.

The representation of middle to high end independent retailers offering drapery, household and giftware differentiates Dundalk from a typical high street, ensuring Dundalk's uniqueness and drawing customers from a wide catchment. Notwithstanding this, Clanbrassil Street in particular has seen an increase in the number of lower end retailers including discount and charity shops. Whilst it is essential that a wide range of goods are on offer within Dundalk it is also important that higher order retailers are not discouraged from locating within the Town.

The opening of the Marshes Shopping Centre attracted many high street names including New Look, River Island and Clarkes. Never the less there is scope for improvement and it would be of great benefit if more multi-national retailers were to locate to the town which would attract additional shoppers and enable the town to compete more successfully with nearby towns such as Drogheda and Newry.

Dundalk and Northlink Retail Parks are the key locations for the sale of bulky comparison goods. In addition, the Coes Road Industrial Estate has seen the infiltration of some bulky comparison retailers.

There is a cluster of pubs, off licences and bookmakers to the north of the town and a considerable number of bars, night clubs and restaurants along Park Street and Dublin Road. The number of takeaways along Clanbrassil Street has increased gradually and this has to a degree eroded the overall ambience of the town centre. A fine balance exists between offering a range of eateries and eroding the town core's retail role.

The centre of Dundalk has a commercial role and there are several high street banks along the Core Shopping Area. Dundalk plays an important educational role in the region and is home to the Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT) though there is not an obvious student presence within the town. Leisure facilities include a municipal swimming pool, county museum, multi screen cinema, all weather race track and library. The town would benefit from a centrally located new or refurbished cinema.

5.7 Multiple Representation

Dundalk has a good range of independent retailers offering high end drapery and gifts. There are four multi-national convenience retailers operating within the town and a limited range of multi-national comparison retailers all of which are located within the Marshes Shopping

Centre. In order to compete successfully with other towns such as Newry and Drogheda the presence of an international Department Store would be of great benefit.


5.8 Rates of Vacancy

Assessment of the vacancy rate in a town centre is important and is widely accepted as a useful indicator of vitality & viability. The vacancy rate is relevant to planning functions and also for town centre management and strategy purposes.

There are 241 buildings along the Core Shopping area (excluding shopping centres) and of these 17 % are vacant. The location of the vacant units is indicated on Map 12.2.

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy



 <p>Comhairle Contae Lú Louth County Council County Hall, Millennium Building, Dundalk, Co. Louth.</p>	<p>Louth County Development Plan 2015 - 2021</p>	<p>Date: <i>October 2015</i></p>	<p>Drawing Name / Ref:</p>
		<p>Dundalk Vacant Properties <i>Appendix 12 - Map 12.2</i></p>	

Map 12.2: Dundalk Vacant Properties

5.9 Significant Changes in the Retail Environment Since 2009

The following notable retail developments (<1000sq.m) have taken place since 2009:

- Erection of discount foodstore at St. Helena's Quay (12/28),
- Substantial works have been completed at Dundalk Shopping Centre (10/65).

There are also a number of significant permitted retail developments where construction has not yet taken place, these include:

- Mixed use retail and leisure development at Dundalk Retail Park (09/41),
- District Centre at Knockshee, Old Golflinks Road (10/21),
- Supermarket and 5no. retail service units at the Fairways Hotel (10/568).

5.10 Retail Opportunity Sites

7 retail opportunity sites have been identified in Dundalk along the Core Shopping Area. Through redevelopment they have the potential to provide for modern retailing formats and make a positive contribution to the vitality and viability of the town centre. The sites are identified in Map 12.3 and are described as follows.

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy



Map 12.3: Dundalk Opportunity Sites

5.10.1 Opportunity Site 1 (Os1): Former Toymaster Building

Located to the west of the Longwalk extending to an area of 0.29 hectares and occupied by the former Toymaster building which is a two storey structure.

The site is zoned as 'Town Centre Retail' in the Dundalk and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015 the objective of which is "to protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre as the primary retail core of the town".

The site is located along Dundalk's Core Shopping Area as designated by this Retail Strategy occupying an important node at the most northerly point of the Longwalk.

5.10.2 Opportunity Site 2 (Os2): Longwalk Shopping Centre

Located to the west of the Longwalk comprising of the Longwalk Shopping Centre and associated surface car parking. The site is level extending to an area of 2.55 hectares.

Zoned as 'Town Centre Retail' in the Dundalk and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015 the objective for this land use is "to protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre as the primary retail core of the town".

The site is located along Dundalk's Core Shopping Area as designated by this Retail Strategy and is operating successfully but would benefit from modernisation.

5.10.3 Opportunity Sites 3a And B (OS 3a&OS 3b): Surface Car Parking To East Of The Longwalk

These sites are located to the east of the Longwalk and to the west of Clanbrassil Street. The sites are flat in nature extending to 0.33ha and 0.47ha, respectively. Both sites are presently being utilised for surface level parking. It is anticipated that these sites would be developed in conjunction with surrounding lands.

The sites have been zoned as 'Town Centre Retail' in the Dundalk and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015, the objective of which is "to protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre as the primary retail core of the town".

The sites are located along Dundalk's Core Shopping Area as designated by this Retail Strategy. Of particular importance in the future development of these lands would be improved connectivity and legibility with Clanbrassil Street which would increase footfall and interaction and creation of a street frontage along the Longwalk.

5.10.4 Opportunity Site 4 (OS 4): Row of Buildings To South Of Market Square

This comprises a row of buildings and associated yard to rear, extending to an the overall site area of 0.12 hectares. Only one building is occupied, the remainder including a four storey building on the corner of Earl Street are vacant.

The site has been zoned as 'Town Centre Retail' in the Dundalk and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015. The objective for this land use is "to protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre as the primary retail core of the town".

The opportunity site is located along Dundalk's Core Shopping Area as designated by this Retail Strategy. Of particular importance when considering the redevelopment options for this site is the proximity of Market Square which has been modernised and upgraded creating an attractive public realm.

5.10.5 Opportunity Site 5 (OS5): Vacant Retail Unit on Earl Street

This is a vacant four storey building located on the eastern side of Earl Street extending to 0.04 hectares comprising of two floors of glass fronted modern retail accommodation with office space over.

The site has been zoned as 'Town Centre Retail' in the Dundalk and Environs Development Plan 2009-2015 and the objective for this land use is "to protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre as the primary retail core of the town".

OS 5 is located along Dundalk's Core Shopping Area as designated by this Retail Strategy. Earl Street is an important pedestrian route connecting The Marsh Shopping Centre with Clanbrassil Street.

5.10.6 Opportunity Site 6 (OS6): Williamsons Mall

This site boasts a double frontage onto Francis Street to the north and onto the Ramparts to the South, via 'Williamsons Mall'. The site is used for surface car-parking and is enclosed by buildings which are primarily commercial/ retail in nature. The site extends to 0.648ha.

In the Dundalk and Environs Development Plan 2009 – 2015 the site is zoned as Town Centre Retail the objective of which is "to protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre as the primary retail core of the town".

Under Planning reference 09/26 planning permission was granted for a new mixed use development incorporating retail/ retail services, cafés, bar, amusement arcade, takeaway bookmakers, offices, restaurants and apartments. The development also includes a new pedestrian link connecting the Ramparts Road to Francis Street. Sensitive re-development of this area could create connectivity and permeability between Dundalk's principle shopping streets and the Marshes Shopping Centre to the south.

5.10.7 Opportunity Site 7 (OS7) – Former Dunnes And Associated Car-Parking To The East.

The principle and traditional access to the former Dunnes building is located along Park Street with additional access (including very limited car parking) from River Lane to the east. The site extends to 0.24ha and the building is single storey in character with storage to the rear.

In the Dundalk and Environs Development Plan 2009 – 2015 the site is zoned as Town Centre Retail the objective of which is "to protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre as the primary retail core of the town."

OS 5 is located along Dundalk's Core Shopping Area as designated by this Retail Strategy. The former Dunnes building would require some modernisation but its overall floor plate would

meet modern retailing requirements and its redevelopment would inject increased pedestrian flow into the general locality.

5.11 Key Actions And Recommendations Arising From This Health Check Are As Follows:

- Continue to utilise the BIDs scheme to attract additional visitors, shoppers and retailers to the town,
- Identify measures to attract additional national and international retailers including a Department Store, to the opportunity sites identified in this Retail Strategy and/ or vacant buildings along Dundalk's Core Shopping Area,
- Enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre particularly at off peak times and in the evening by encouraging the clustering of high end eateries as well as, supporting cafés and restaurants which open at off peaks time and in conjunction with event,
- The town would benefit from a centrally located new or refurbished cinema,
- Improve permeability and connectivity between Clanbrassil Street and the Longwalk by improvements to the public realm and/or through redevelopment of these lands,
- Improve legibility between Clanbrassil Street and the Marshes through re-development of Williamsons Mall and / or an environmental enhancement scheme,
- Maximise usage of existing parking facilities through the implementation of a parking management scheme and investigate the use of VMS signage and development of an APP for i-phones.

5.12 Conclusions

The refurbishment of Market Square has been a catalyst for increased activity at this central location within the town providing an attractive public space and is an ideal location for public events and festivals and a focal point for tourists and locals alike. There is a need to build on achievements thus far and cultivate an evening and off peak economy.

The overall ambience of the town centre has been somewhat eroded by the proliferation of vacant buildings particularly to the north of the town and this has been exasperated by the opening of numerous value shops. There is a need to counteract this trend by attracting high end retailers to the town centre particularly to the identified opportunity sites.

As is characteristic of the three settlements (Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee) car-parking remains a significant issue within the town. A car-parking management scheme should be implemented to ensure that all public and private car parks are operating at capacity. In addition VMS signage should be investigated to provide information regarding where car-parking spaces are available.

5.13 Drogheda

Drogheda has exceptional transport links and is advantageously located adjacent to the M1 Motorway. The train station has direct trains on the enterprise northbound to Dundalk/Belfast and southbound to Dublin Connolly. With an additional wide variety of Irish Rail commuter services connecting southwards. Excellent transport infrastructure in the vicinity of Drogheda has resulted in relatively short travel times from Drogheda to Dublin and Belfast. Dublin city centre is less than 45 minutes away whilst Belfast is less than 1.5hours. In addition, Dublin Airport is very easily accessible located a mere thirty minutes away from the town centre.

Drogheda is designated as a primary development centre in the *National Spatial Strategy 2002* and in the *Border Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022*. *The County Louth Development Plan 2009-2015* and the *Drogheda Borough Council Development Plan 2011-2017* designate Drogheda as a Level One settlement in the settlement hierarchy.

5.14 SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Drogheda is easily accessible by private car,
- Has good public transport provision with frequent bus and train services to and from both Belfast, Dublin and surrounding hinterland,
- Wide range of national and international comparison retailers primarily located within Scotch Hall and St Laurence's Street Shopping Centres in addition to independent retailers catering for the wedding industry ,
- The retail offer is supported by a range of complimentary services e.g. cafes and restaurants,
- Drogheda is an attractive historic town owing to its unique heritage features including Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs), town walls and protected structures,
- Drogheda is located within the Boyne Valley which is an international tourism destination,
- Good pedestrian priority within in the town centre has considerably enhanced the streetscape due to recent improvement schemes,
- The town is connected to Eircom's fibre network and as such has high speed broadband,
- Numerous car parks throughout the town,
- There is a large volume of retail floor space available within the town centre including units with modern floor plates particularly within the St Laurence Street Shopping Centre,
- Geographical location astride the River Boyne which is an important amenity resource and link to the wider Brú-na Bóinne area.

Weaknesses

- Deterioration of retail offer along Narrow West and West Street with particularly high vacancy levels in Narrow West Street,

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

- Limited range of night time facilities/activities impacts upon town centre vibrancy,
- Backlanes not widely utilised,
- Proliferation of non – retail services including bookmakers and amusement arcades in core shopping area,
- Suffers from traffic congestions at peak times and this affects its accessibility. High volume of heavy good vehicles travelling through town centre to access port,
- Historic setting can present problems for large floor plate provision,
- Limited range of public open space/public realm.

Opportunities

- Drogheda has a very large catchment area. An opportunity exists to develop its tourism and heritage product thereby increasing the number of visitors to the town,
- Increase in evening activities such evening opening hours for shops and restaurants would enhance vibrancy of the town,
- Enhance and provide additional linkages to existing public open space within the town centre,
- Encourage living over the shop,
- Revitalisation of Narrow West Street in conjunction with development of Courthouse,
- Implement the objectives and policies contained within the Urban Design Framework Plan including improvement of backlanes,
- Facilitate the expansion of retail facilities including national and international retailers,
- Improve visual amenity of vacant properties.

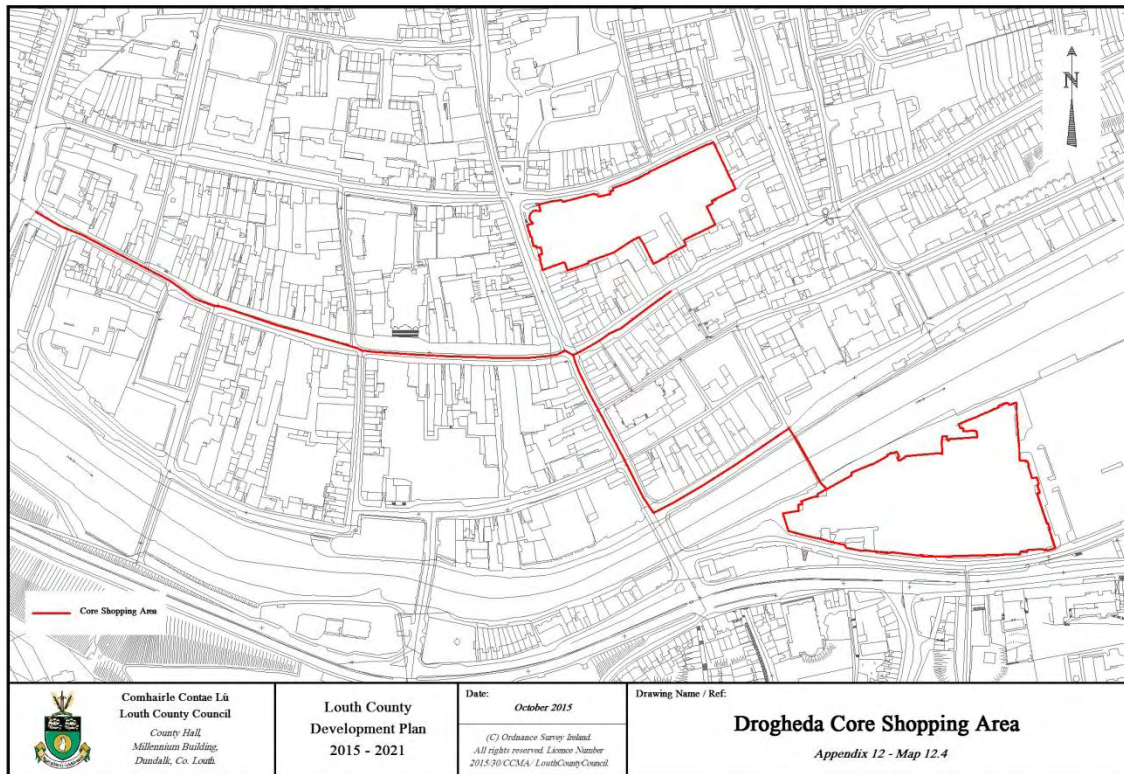
Threats

- Proliferation of bookmakers, bars, and fast-food outlets,
- Impact of out of town shopping centres,
- Further deterioration of retail offer on Narrow West Street and West Street and dereliction along former,
- Leakage of non bulky comparison goods to out of town retail centres,
- Leakage of social, cultural and leisure use outside the town centre.

5.15 Definition of The Core Retail Area

Drogheda's Core Retail Area extends along the towns traditional shopping streets Narrow West and West Street then connecting with St Laurence Street and Scotch Hall Shopping Centres. Map 12.4 identifies Drogheda's Core Shopping Area.

(With reference to the Core Shopping Areas as identified for Drogheda as contained in this Retail Strategy, these are diagrammatic only at strategic level. These will be subject to refinement and review for adoption at Local Area Plan.)



Map 12.4 Drogheda Core Shopping Area

5.16 Attractions

Drogheda's town centre encapsulates the range of retail and service functions which would be expected of a large national scale urban centre with a wide variety of national and international retailers.

It is a Heritage Town offering a wide range of cultural and historical attractions including Millmount Museum, the Highlands Gallery, St Peters Church, St Laurence's Gate in addition to its location within the Boyne Valley. The former Thosel building has been successfully converted to a tourist office and is ideally positioned in the heart of the town centre.

In terms of recreation and amenity Drogheda enjoys a wide range of facilities. The River Boyne is an important natural amenity resource and contributes to the overall ambience of the town. The pleasant riverside walk to the west of the town centre and the development of the Trim, Navan and Drogheda cycleway will significantly increase the attraction of the river for leisure, walking and cycling. There are many good quality open spaces across Drogheda including attractive parklands at St Dominick's and the Glen as well as the newly refurbished Lourdes Athletics Stadium.

Drogheda has a series of events and festivals running throughout the year attracting additional visitors and footfall to the town and which have spin off benefits for shops, business and eateries. Drogheda boasts fifteen primary schools, six secondary schools and an Institute of Further Education. Public buildings include a Garda Station, Library, Arts Centre, and Post Office. The post office attracts shoppers to a part of West Street which they may not have otherwise visited. Drogheda is one of the first locations in the country to be connected to the Eircom Fibre Network which increases the attractiveness of the town for businesses and investors alike.

5.17 Environment Quality/Amenity

Drogheda is one of Ireland's most historic urban settlements. It's historic urban form and structure remains a dominant and distinctive part of its physical character. This historic form is underscored by the town walls and back lanes. The town also boasts many historic landmark buildings and structures such as St Laurence's Gate, numerous church spires and Millmount. There are numerous Protected Structures and Architectural Character Area's (ACA's) within the town centre, all of which contribute to its unique character, ambience and atmosphere.

The maintenance and improvement of historic buildings within the town centre including full and active use of all floors for office and living accommodation will help ensure that Drogheda's physical and architectural quality is retained.

As previously stated there are a considerable number of vacant properties along Narrow West Street. Their proliferation in recent years has contributed to a feeling of dereliction and desolation. Notwithstanding this, there is likely to be a substantial increase in footfall along Narrow West Street and in the Old Abbey area due to the opening of the new Courthouse at Wellington Quay. The form of the buildings in the Old Abbey area and along Narrow West Street would lend themselves to the creation of an artisan quarter.

5.18 Accessibility

Drogheda is highly accessible by private car. As a result of its accessibility there is a significant volume of travel by car within the town and, in common with most urban centres in the country, Drogheda suffers from a dependence on car travel that has resulted in an urban road and street network that has, to a large extent, been dominated by vehicular traffic.

Drogheda which is also located on the Belfast to Dublin Railway Line is well serviced by frequent 'Enterprise', Inter-City and local services to and from Drogheda. There are also frequent private and public bus services to Dublin, Belfast, Dundalk and the surrounding hinterland. Accessibility would be greatly improved if there was an integrated bus service linking the bus and rail stations with the town centre and other services such as the hospital.

There are a number of public and private car parks operating within the town including two multi- storey car parks and those associated with St Laurence Street and Scotch Hall Shopping

Centres. Notwithstanding this, for those unfamiliar with the town's layout, these can be difficult to locate. The use of VMS signage on approach roads and other technologies such as an APP for i-phones and tablets could provide information regarding the location and availability of car parking spaces. This would ease access and greatly benefit those visiting the town.

A Smarter Travel Initiative operates at Council owned car parks on the Donore Road, Trinity Street and Scarlet Street facilitating users to park for free and walk into town, rather than parking in town. The car parks operate at capacity, indicating that the initiative has been successful.

Pedestrian priority in the town centre has been increased through the West Street Improvement Scheme, which introduced a one-way system, calmed traffic, expanded the pedestrian domain and strengthened the sense of place.

While cycle lanes are limited, the ***Draft Drogheda Active Travel Town Walking and Cycling Strategy***, proposes a comprehensive network of walking and cycling infrastructural improvements throughout the town. The River Boyne is a major amenity potential for the town and the development of the Trim-Navan Drogheda cycleway, as part of the National Cycle Network, would significantly increase the attraction of the river for leisure, walking and cycling.

The development of the ***Port Access Northern Cross Route (PANCR)*** will facilitate the removal of a significant proportion of existing HGV traffic from the R132 and St Marys Bridge and will further increase the attractiveness of the R132 as a walking and cycling route.

5.19 Diversity of Uses

Drogheda's traditional shopping streets are West and Narrow West Street. There are five shopping centres within Drogheda's Core Shopping area namely; the Abbey, Drogheda Town Centre, West Street Arcade the more recently built St Laurence Street and Scotch Hall Shopping Centres. Drogheda has a good range of international and national retailers. Notwithstanding this, the town would benefit from additional international retailers. The majority of international and national retailers are located within the more recently constructed shopping centres which have undoubtedly increased the range and type of goods available thereby making Drogheda a more attractive place to shop. However these have also resulted in a shift in retailing in a southerly and easterly direction and Drogheda's traditional shopping streets have suffered as a consequence. Reduction in footfall has been exasperated by the opening of retail parks to the north and south of the town. Narrow West Street in particular is experiencing very high vacancy levels.

In line with other towns throughout the Country the number of discount stores has increased considerably in recent years. These stores are important to provide choice to consumers but there is a risk that they will reduce the desirability of the town centre for other high end retailers. An accumulation of these types of uses can detract from the overall ambience of the town centre. Drogheda has a good range of pubs, coffee shops and restaurants though a limited number are open in the evening time.

5.20 Convenience

In terms of convenience shopping there are five multi-national and one national convenience retailer presently in operation. The multi-national retailers pertain to Tesco's, Marks and Spencers, Dunnes Stores as well as, the discount retailers Aidi and Lidl. These are supported by a wide range of smaller convenience stores dispersed throughout the town.

5.21 Comparison

The majority of multi-national and international retailers are located in the St Laurence Street and Scotch Hall shopping centres. Some comparison retailers are also located within the M1 Retail Park. Notwithstanding this, Drogheda boasts numerous bridal shops throughout the town and has become a specialist destination for wedding shopping.

5.21.1 Comparison Bulky

A range of national and international bulky comparison retailers are located within the M1 Retail Park. Overtime, some bulky retailers have infiltrated into the business areas. A concentration of independent bulky retailers can be found at Donore Road Industrial Estate, East Coast and Newgrange Business Parks. There are a number of bulky comparison retailers located within or close to the town centre.

5.22 Other

Drogheda's retail offer is supported by Drogheda Town Open Air Market at Bolton Street and artisan markets along West Street.

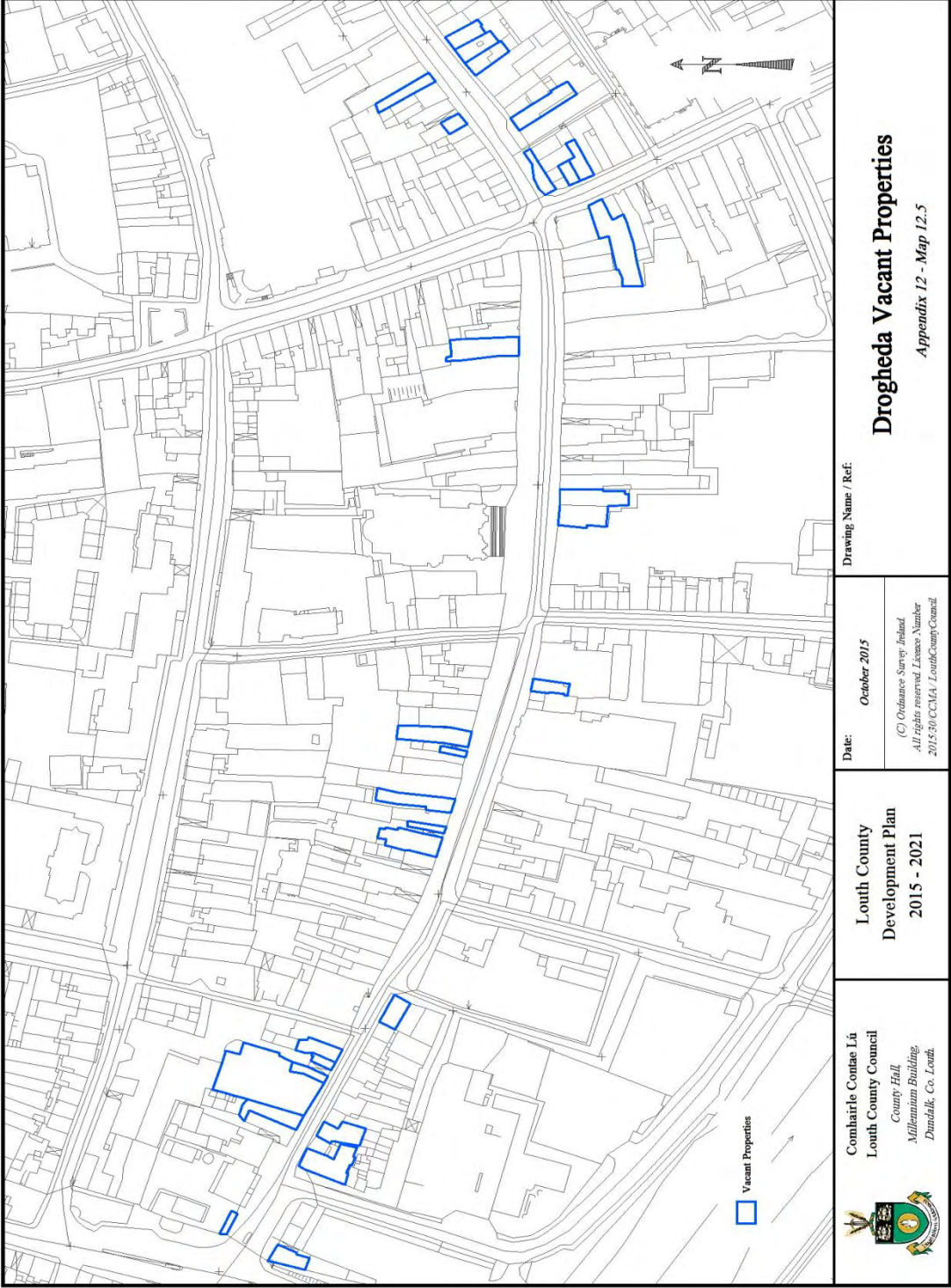
5.23 Multiple Representation

Drogheda has a wide variety of national and international comparison retailers primarily located within Scotch Hall and St Laurence Street Shopping Centres. In terms of convenience shopping a range of national and international bulky comparison retailers are located within the M1 Retail Park.

5.24 Rates of Vacancy

The land use survey revealed that there are 41 properties vacant at ground floor level along the core shopping area representing 21 % of the total retail properties. Map 12.5 shows the location of vacant properties. It is evident that there is a higher concentration of vacancies along Narrow West Street and within the St Laurence's Street Shopping Centre.

Map 12.5: Drogheda Vacant Properties



5.25 Significant Changes in the Retail Environment since 2009

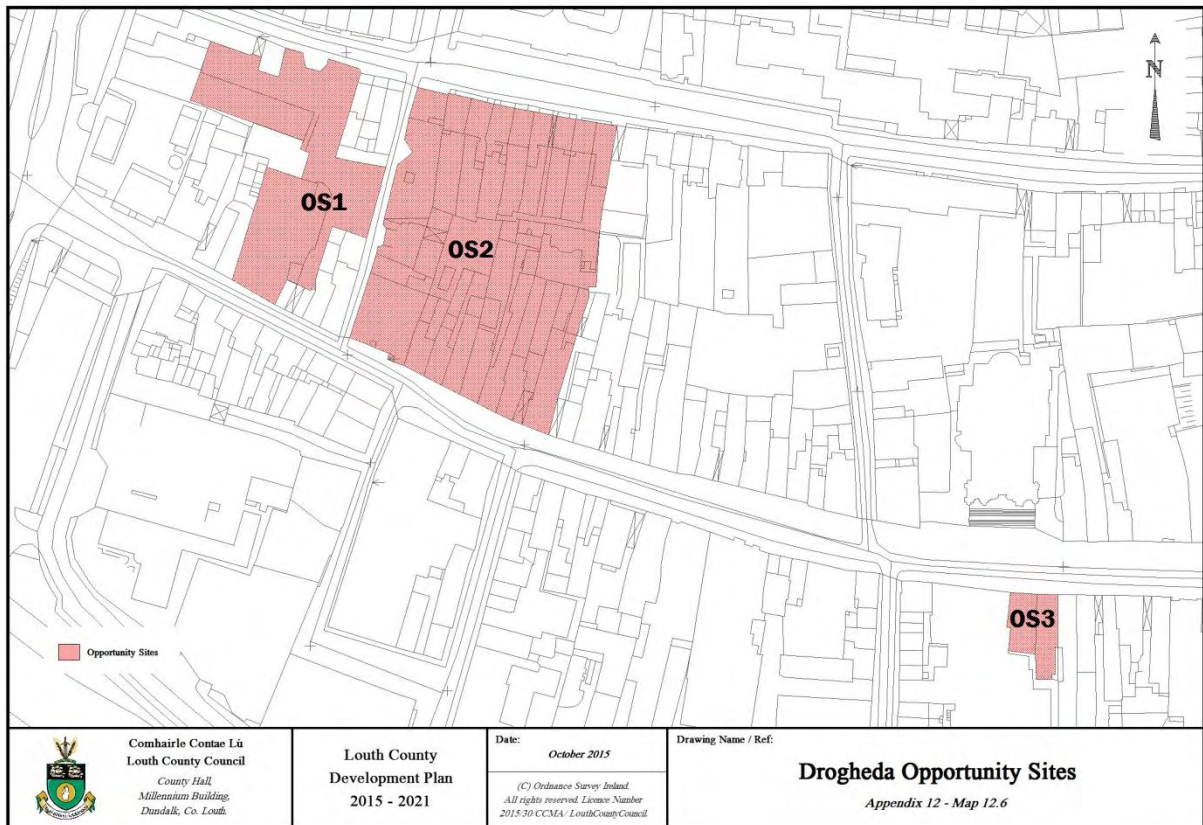
A number of significant planning permissions (<1000sq.m) have been granted for retail development since 2009, including:

- Numerous applications pertaining to extension of duration for Scotch Hall Phase 2 which in total incorporates 8980sq of retail floor space (09/76, 12/32& 12/33),
- A 10 year permission for Scotch Hall Phase 3 which is a mixed use development including 10,527sq.m of retail floor space (09/109),
- Extension of duration of planning application for a district centre retail & commercial development at Matthews Lane encompassing an additional 1780sq.m of retail floor space (13/09).

5.26 Retail Opportunity Sites

Three retail opportunity sites have been identified along the Core Shopping Area of Drogheda. Through sensitive redevelopment they have the potential to provide for modern retailing formats and make a positive contribution to the vitality and viability of the town centre. The sites are identified in Map 12.6 and described below.

Map 12.6: Drogheda Opportunity Sites



5.26.1 Opportunity Site 1 (OS1): Site to the North of Narrow West Street

This unique site is located to the north side of Narrow West Street, it comprises a three storey building which was formerly occupied by a discount store. There is car parking to the rear and east (Murdocks Car Park).

The site is zoned as 'Town Centre' in the Drogheda Borough Council Development Plan 2011-2017 the objective of which is: "To protect and enhance the special physical and social character of the existing town centre and to provide for new and improved town centre facilities and uses".

The site is located within an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and an Area of Archaeological Importance and there is a plethora of attractive protected structures in the vicinity. This will ultimately require very sensitive redevelopment of the site.

5.26.2 Opportunity Site 2 (OS2): Narrow West Street / Scholes Lane /Fair Street

Located on the northern side of Narrow West Street this site comprises of buildings fronting onto both Narrow West Street and Fair Street in conjunction with associated rear gardens. The site extends to 0.66ha and is bounded to the West by Scholes Lane.

The site is zoned as 'Town Centre' in the Drogheda Borough Council Development Plan 2011-2017 the objective of which is: "To protect and enhance the special physical and social character of the existing town centre and to provide for new and improved town centre facilities and uses".

The site is located with an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and an Area of Archaeological Importance. There are numerous exceptional protected structures contained within the site in addition to the highly distinctive burgage historic garden plots associated with the Fair Street properties. The Urban Design Framework Plan for The Heritage Quarter provides a number of schematic diagrams, for specific sites within the Drogheda's Heritage Quarter including this opportunity site.

Any redevelopment scheme must take cognisance of the Opportunity Sites irreplaceable historic fabric and regard should be had to The Urban Design Framework Plan for The Heritage Quarter.

5.26.3 Opportunity Site 3 (OS3): Former Easons Building on West Street

This extremely important site is located on the southern side of West Street extending to an area of 0.036 hectares and was last occupied by Easons.

The site is situated along Drogheda's main shopping street and zoned as 'Town Centre' in the Drogheda Borough Council Development Plan 2011-2017 the objective of which is: "To protect

and enhance the special physical and social character of the existing town centre and to provide for new and improved town centre facilities and uses”.

The site is located within an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and an Area of Archaeological Importance and there are numerous protected structures in the vicinity.

5.27 Key Actions and Recommendations:

- Rejuvenation of Narrow West Street such as the development of an artisan quarter in conjunction with the opening of the new courthouse at Wellington Quay,
- Enhance and protect Drogheda’s historic built environment through the implementation of the Drogheda Urban Design Framework Plan,
- Encourage redevelopment and reuse of opportunity sites and encourage additional international and national retailers which would attract additional footfall and improve retail experience,
- Ensure that the overall vitality and viability of the town centre is retained by restricting applications for non retail uses at ground floor level,
- Investigate potential of providing additional information regarding the location and number of car-parking spaces available in the town through the use of VMS signage on approach roads.

5.28 Conclusions

Drogheda’s unique historic townscape character requires that further development is cognisant and respectful of this historic fabric and its protection and enhancement. Therefore the policies and objectives contained in the Urban Design Framework Plan should be utilised when assessing future retail development opportunities.

There is a proliferation of vacant properties evident along Narrow West Street. The footprints of many of the buildings located thereon may not lend themselves to modern retail requirements and it is therefore necessary to consider alternative uses for this part of the town, such as an artisan quarter.

Drogheda’s vacancy rate along the core shopping area is higher than the settlements of Dundalk and Ardee. The proliferation of vacant properties has impacted upon its vitality and viability and is a matter which should be addressed with some urgency.

Car-parking within Drogheda can be problematic due in part to the one way system in operation. This could be potentially alleviated through the provision of VMS signage.

5.29 Ardee

Ardee is a traditional market town located in mid Louth at the intersection of the N52 with the N2 Dublin – Derry route.

Ardee has expanded significantly over recent years, from a population of 4,301 in 2006 to a population of 4,554 in 2011. This has been largely driven by car-borne residential commuter development, given its easy accessibility to Dublin, Drogheda and Dundalk.

The **Louth County Council Development Plan 2009-2015** and **Ardee Local Area Plan 2010-2016** identify Ardee as a Level 2 Settlement. The Louth Retail Strategy 2009 identifies Ardee as a Level 2 Settlement in the County Retail Hierarchy. It's designation as a Level 2 Settlement reflects its importance as a retail hub for mid Louth.

5.30 SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Ardee's strategic location along the N2 and N52 national primary routes and its proximity to the M1 ensure that the town is highly accessible by car,
- Appealing historic town with an ACA, numerous historic buildings and protected structures,
- Attractive expanse of public open space at the Fairgreen and along the River Dee contribute significantly to the overall amenity of the town,
- Visual amenity of vacant properties has been actively improved,
- Numerous residential properties along core shopping area,
- Attractive co-ordinated street furniture, including bins, seating and lamp posts,
- Ardee is County Louth's first Age Friendly Town and the town is the first in the Country to develop an age friendly business recognition programme which makes the town more attractive to senior citizens.

Weaknesses

- Traffic congestion as a result of high volumes of through-traffic (including heavy goods vehicles).
- Detrimental visual impact of the partially completed Super-Valu building,
- Lack of hotel serving the town,
- Proliferation of signage and over head cables detracts from the overall streetscape.

Opportunities

- Increased priority for pedestrian and cyclists through the implementation of the draft Ardee Active Travel Town Walking and Cycling Strategy,
- Undergrounding of overhead cabling,
- Redevelopment and reuse of opportunity sites,
- Extension and creation of attractive civic space at Market Square,
- Reduction in traffic congestion through the provision of by passes to the N2 and N53,

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

- Encourage redevelopment of a hotel within the town centre.

Threats

- Continuing impact of traffic congestion within town centre,
- The unfinished Super Valu development at Market Street,
- Impact of any out of town shopping centre.

5.31 Definition of The Core Shopping Area.

The Ardee Core shopping area is linear in form extending along Irish St, Market St, Castle St to the north of the town and Bridge Street to the south of the town, See Map 12.7.

(With reference to the Core Shopping Areas as identified for Ardee as contained in this Retail Strategy, these are diagrammatic only at strategic level. These will be subject to refinement and review for adoption at Local Area Plan

5.32 Attractions

Ardee has maintained its medieval street pattern and is an important town in terms of national and local built heritage, reflected in the Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) and numerous historic buildings and protected structures contained therein, including Ardee Castle.

The rich built heritage of the town is complimented by the town's significant natural assets including the trees and woodlands located in the grounds of Red House, Ardee Golf Course, St Joseph's and the Rectory. The grounds of the Red House located to the north of the town is designated as a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA). The River Dee passes to the south of the town and provides for a verdant attractive landscape contributing to the amenity of the town

Ardee was Ireland's first Age Friendly Town. The Age Friendly Strategy has permeated aspects of planning and infrastructure policy thereby helping to ensure that the town is an attractive place for older people. Ardee is the first town in the Country to develop an Age Friendly Business Recognition Programme. The programme encourages businesses to tailor their delivery to meet age friendly practices, ultimately enticing more mature members of society to shop and spend money within Ardee.

5.33 Accessibility

The town is situated at the intersection of the N2 primary Dublin-Derry route and the N52 national secondary route, resulting in congestion including heavy goods vehicles and associated impacts, particularly at peak times.

The Council has proposals to construct by-passes on the N52 and the N2 to the east and west of the town. The N52 section is likely to proceed in the medium term however the timeframe for delivery of the N2 by pass is unclear. There is scope to significantly improve the pedestrian and cyclist environment of the town through the implementation of the draft Ardee Active Travel Town Walking and Cycling Strategy which proposes a series of pedestrian, cycle and road network improvements.

Bus Éireann operates daily return services to Dundalk via Louth village, Drogheda via Collon, and Dublin via Ashbourne and the airport. These are supplemented by private bus operators.

The pay – parking system previously in operation was abolished in spring 2014. In addition to on street parking there are private and public car parks at Bridge Street, Ash Lane, to the rear of Centra and at the Health Centre. In order to further alleviate traffic congestion The Ardee Local Area Plan 2010-2016 proposes that additional car-parks are provided at Irish Street and O'Carroll Street.

5.34 Environmental Quality/Amenity

Ardee's unique built heritage contributes to its overall ambience and identity. The traditional 2 and 3 building height along the core shopping area has been retained. Maintenance of the traditional streetscape rhythm makes a positive contribution to the overall environmental amenity and character of the town.

The most significant recent development in Ardee relates to the Supervalu site to the rear of Market Street. This building is only partially complete and has a detrimental impact on the otherwise attractive streetscape when viewed from Market Street and Ash Walk. Works are presently underway to improve the overall visual amenity of the site.

The Fair Green is located to the north of the core shopping area comprising an expansive area of open space which is attractive and well maintained. The presence of the River Dee and the associated riverside walk to the south of the town provides for a popular and well utilised amenity.

The overall aesthetic quality of the streetscape has been enhanced through the provision of appealing co-ordinated street furniture, including bins, seating and lamp posts. The seating has been strategically placed throughout the town and appears to be well utilised. Landscaping works around the town are attractive and environmental quality is generally good.

Overhead cables in addition to the proliferation of signage to the west of the core shopping detract somewhat from the overall streetscape. The appearance of vacant properties has been improved significantly through the provision of high quality murals, tree planting and window displays.

Traffic congestion and heavy traffic flows are problematic and can detract from the retail experience.

5.35 Diversity of Uses

Convenience retailing is mostly confined to the Core Retail Area. In terms of convenience retailing provision, the main outlet is Super Valu which is supported by smaller supermarkets namely Centra and Spar. Ardee's range of convenience retailing is deemed commensurate with its role as a Level 2 Settlement in the retail hierarchy. A discount convenience retailer is located outside the town boundary.

In terms of comparison provision whilst there are no national or international multiples there is a relatively good range of independent stores. The scope of this offer includes gents and ladies fashions, numerous pharmacies, jewellers, bookshops, gift shops, homeware shops and several electrical outlets. The range of shops available in Ardee was identified as being a key attraction for shopper survey respondents. The absence of multi-national comparison retailers reflects Ardee's traditional role as a local service centre.

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

In terms of business and legal services the town centre is the location for a number of solicitors, auctioneers and insurance broker's offices and also three retail banks. The shopper survey revealed that aside from shopping, 45% of respondents visit Ardee for administrative services which include banking activities, post office, credit union and solicitors. Ardee also provides a limited range of retail services such as travel agents, betting shops and hairdressers. Community services such as health centres, dentist, doctors are either located on the north side of the river or in the vicinity of the Bridge and John Street junction.

Ardee provides public services in the form of a library, Garda station and courthouse. The presence of primary and post primary schools also gives the town an additional function.

Within Ardee there are numerous bars and several café/ restaurants some of which are open in the evening. The aforementioned facilities make a significant contribution to the night time economy of the town as well as, its vibrancy. The shopper survey revealed that 29% of respondents think that the variety of cultural and recreational facilities such as the castle, parks, children's play facilities, bars and restaurants are important attractions.

Ardee's core shopping area greatly benefits from the numerous residential properties fronting directly onto the street. Not only are the residential properties visually attractive but make an invaluable contribution to the vitality of the town. The residential properties also provide informal surveillance improving public safety particularly at off peak times.

Creation of an attractive civic space along main street (Castle /Market / Bridge and Irish Street) could be achieved by re-allocating the space provided to traffic and parking and providing a wider space for people to engage in activities. This increased space could incorporate an element of landscaping to help reduce the environmental intrusion created by the N2 corridor.

Part of the retail survey involved undertaking a land use survey. This survey has revealed that there is 3,386 q.m of convenience and 3,018 sq.m of comparison floorspace within the Ardee Town boundary in addition to 1,300 sq. m convenience floorspace beyond the town centre boundary on the Drogheda Road.

5.36 Multiple Representation

National convenience multiples operating in the town include Supervalu, Centra and Spar. Supervalu has the largest floor plate and the majority of the market share. The town supports a limited range of comparison retailing comprising of independent traders. There are no international convenience or comparison retailers presently operating in the town.

5.37 Rates of Vacancy

There are 129 buildings along the Core Retail Area and of these 13 % are vacant. The location of the vacant units are indicated on Map 12.8.

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy



Map 12.8 Ardee Vacant Properties

5.38 Significant Changes to the Retail Environment

Since the 2009 Louth Retail Strategy there has been one significant planning application (10/53) granted for a retail outlet/ foodstore with a gross floor area of 1,497m² (1,080m² net retail area). The site is located opposite Market Square at the Market Street/Market House Lane junction.

5.39 Retail Opportunity Sites

4 retail opportunity sites have been identified in Ardee along the Core Shopping Area and would be suitable to provide for modern retailing formats. These are shown on Map 12.9 and described as follows.

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy



Map 12.9 Ardee Opportunity Sites

5.39.1 Opportunity Site 1: To The North East Of The Town Centre

This is located to the extreme North East of the Town Centre and is presently utilised as a fuel depot and hardware business. The site extends to 2.62 hectares.

Within the Ardee Local Area Plan 2010-2016, the site is zoned as 'Town Centre' the objective of which is 'to provide, protect and enhance town centre facilities and enable town centre strengthening'.

It is also located within an Archaeological Conservation Area (ACA) and Area of Special Archaeological Interest. The site is located along Ardee's Core Shopping Area as designated by this Retail Strategy.

The development of this site has the potential to significantly increase footfall along Irish Street.

5.39.2 Opportunity Site 2: Junction of Market Street/Market House Lane

The site is located opposite Market Square at the Market Street/Market House Lane junction.

Within the Ardee Local Area Plan 2010-2016, the site is zoned as 'Town Centre' the objective of which is 'to provide, protect and enhance town centre facilities and enable town centre strengthening'.

It is also within an Archaeological Conservation Area (ACA) and Area of Special Archaeological Interest. The site is located within Ardee's Core Shopping Area as designated by this Retail Strategy.

The site is presently occupied by two retail outlets, a residential dwelling and outbuildings with an area of open space to the rear. The total site area extends to 0.4ha with an extant permission on the site (10/53) for a retail outlet/ foodstore with a gross floor area of 1,497m².

OS2 is strategically located in the heart of the Ardee Core Retail Area and should be prioritised for development.

5.39.3 Opportunity Site 3 (OS3): Former Ardee Bakery

This site is the former Ardee Bakery and is located on the eastern side of the Castle Street, extending to 0.81 hectares.

Within the Ardee Local Area Plan 2010-2016, the site is zoned as 'Town Centre' the objective of which is 'to provide, protect and enhance town centre facilities and enable town centre strengthening'.

The building is a Protected Structure, located along Ardee's Core Retail Area, within an Archaeological Conservation Area (ACA) and Area of Special Archaeological Interest.

The former bakery would be suitable for conversion to retail units at ground floor level with office or residential over. Any future applications must be cognisance of the constraints outlined above.

5.39.4 Opportunity Site 4 (OS4) Super Valu and building fronting onto Market Street

The site is bounded by Market Street to the East and Ash Walk to the South.

Within the Ardee Local Area Plan 2010-2016, the site is zoned as 'Town Centre' the objective of which is 'to provide, protect and enhance town centre facilities and enable town centre strengthening'.

The buildings fronting Market Street are located within an Archaeological Conservation Area. The site is located along Ardee's core shopping area as designated by this Retail Strategy.

The site is presently occupied by Super Valu, associated car parking and a number of buildings fronting onto Market Street. The total site extends to 1.4 ha with extant permissions on the site 12/103 and 13/522.

OS4 is strategically located in the heart of Ardee's core retail area and should be prioritised for development.

5.40 Key Actions and Recommendations:

Key actions and recommendations arising from the Town Centre Health Check are as follows:

- Protect existing convenience and comparison retailing in the town centre,
- Promote the identified opportunity sites for retail development,
- Improved road infrastructure to ease traffic congestion and increase pedestrian and cyclist permeability,
- Ensure appropriate measures are undertaken to improve visual amenity of Super Valu site,
- Encourage re- use of existing vacant properties.

5.41 Conclusions

In terms of vacancy rates Ardee compares favourably with Dundalk and Drogheda. The level of convenience and comparison retailing available in Ardee is commensurate with its role as a sub regional centre and Level 2 Settlement. The presence of a significant number of residential properties in the core shopping area enhances the town's vibrancy and vitality. Ardee has an attractive physical environment underpinned by its unique built heritage. Its appealing built environment has been augmented by attractive street furniture and planting. One of the biggest challenges facing Ardee is to address the high levels of vehicular congestion and to provide greater priority for cyclist and pedestrians and to retain the primacy of the core shopping area.

6.0 Assessment of Competing Centres

6.1 Introduction

This chapter contains an assessment of competing centres. The results of the householder surveys conducted have shown that the most prominent competing centres are Dublin City Centre, Newry, Blanchardstown and Swords Shopping Centres. It should be noted that the majority of respondents did not choose these competing centres as the primary location for any of their shopping requirements.

6.2 Dublin City Centre

6.2.1 Introduction

Dublin City Centre has the largest quantum of retail floor space within the country, a fact which reflects its position at the top of the national retail hierarchy, as specified within the ***Retail Planning Guidelines 2012 and the Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017***.

6.2.2 Accessibility

Dublin is highly accessible by road and public transport. It is directly connected to all major cities and towns by the national road network. There are a significant number of public car parks within the city. Due to high volumes of traffic, congestion is an issue at peak times. Dublin is extremely well served in terms of public bus and rail service. In addition, it offers frequent inner city Luas services and has a comprehensive DART network.

6.2.3 Retail Facilities

Dublin City Centre has the highest quantum of retail floorspace and as such still retains its position as the premier retail centre in the State. Dublin's city centre shopping experience is currently heavily concentrated on the main shopping streets or spines of Henry and Grafton Streets. Historically Grafton Street has been regarded as the more up market/ high fashion location and Henry Street as the more main stream fashion location.

Dublin City Centre also has a number of specialist shopping areas away from the core retail areas where certain types of traders have grouped- such as the antique dealers in the Thomas / Francis Street area, furniture shops at Capel St. and designer clothing around Powerscourt Townhouse.

6.2.4 Conclusion

The Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017, acknowledges that Dublin City Centre is the States' premier retail location but also recognises that the growth in the retail offer of suburban and regional centres is not being matched by a corresponding growth in the city centre. The aforementioned Development Plan contains policies and objectives to address these issues.

6.3 Newry

6.3.1 Introduction

Newry lies approximately 18km north of Dundalk, immediately across the border in Northern Ireland. The revised Regional Development Strategy 2035 defines Newry as a Sub-Regional Centre performing a higher service centre role. Newry – is also considered to be the South Eastern City Gateway with links to Warrenpoint Harbour and strategic links to Dundalk and Dublin.

6.3.2 Accessibility

Newry which is located along the Dublin to Belfast Corridor immediately off the A1 is highly accessible in terms of private car. The Enterprise Express Service operating between Belfast Central and Dublin Connolly stops at Newry Train Station at two-hour intervals. There are regular private and public bus services to and from Dundalk.

6.3.3 Retail Facilities

Newry's traditional town centre comprises Hill Street and John Mitchel Place which provides a range of comparison shopping with a mix of both national multiples and locally owned names. Newry also has two modern shopping centres: The Quays and The Buttercrane. In addition to the retail experience The Quays is also home to a multi-screen cinema complex and food court. The shopping centres are home to numerous comparison multiples including Exhibit, Next, Oasis and River Island.

In terms of convenience shopping Newry offers numerous international retailers including Sainburys, Tesco's, Marks and Spencers, Dunnes and Lidl. There are two retail parks namely, The Old Creamery and Damolly.

6.3.4 Conclusion

Newry has at various times been a significant draw on economic activity due to differentials in taxation policy and currency values. However, the information produced as part of the householder surveys indicates that only a relatively small proportion of County Louth's population shop in Newry on a regular basis. The majority of those who do go to Newry on a regular basis are those who are in closest proximity namely those residing in North Louth.

6.4 Blanchardstown Shopping Centre

6.4.1 Introduction

Blanchardstown is identified as a Level 2 (major Town Centres and County Towns) in the *Retail Planning Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016, the Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017* and in the *Fingal Development Plan 2011-2017*.

6.4.2 Accessibility

Blanchardstown Centre is easily accessible by private car located as it is on the N3/ Navan Road just off the M50 ring road. It is readily accessible by public bus with 600 bus services to the centre every day. The shopping centre also offers 7,000 free car parking spaces in addition to a coach park.

6.4.3 Retail Facilities

Blanchardstown Shopping Centre offers 180 retail outlet stores, 3 retail parks and a range of leisure and retail facilities including a cinema, leisure complex, crèche facilities and a 4* hotel.

6.4.4 Conclusion

The Blanchardstown Shopping Centre, which is one of the largest shopping centres within Dublin, is easily accessible from County Louth by both car and public bus and as such is identified in the householder survey as one of County Louth's competing Centres. 14.00% of all of the respondents to the Louth householder survey stated that they visit the shopping centre. However, only 8.22% of those respondents visit once a month, while the remaining 91.78% only do so on a couple of occasions per year.

In response to questioning the type of shopping which respondents undertake in the Blanchardstown Shopping Centre, all respondents stated that they choose the location only for comparison shopping.

6.5 Swords

6.5.1 Introduction

Swords is identified as a Level 2 (major Town Centres and County Towns) in the *Retail Planning Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016, The Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017* and in the *Fingal Development Plan 2011-2017*.

6.5.2 Accessibility

Swords is located adjacent to the M1 motorway on the primary route between the main urban centres of County Louth and Dublin.

6.5.3 Retail Facilities

The core retail centre of Swords is identified as the frontages from Bridge Street/Chapel Lane along Main Street and to the Malahide Road incorporating the The Pavilions Shopping Centre.

The traditional town centre generally provides retail services whilst the main focus of convenience and comparison shopping is the Pavillions Shopping Centre. It is anchored by Superquinn and Dunnes. In terms of comparison shopping, high street brands presently include Argos, Barratts, Best Menswear, Boots, Clarks, Currys, Diesels, Dunnes Stores, Easons, Elverys, H&M, Jack and Jones, Mothercare, Next, Pamela Scott and River Island. The Pavillions also offers a cinema and number of food outlets.

6.5.4 Conclusion

The type of retail facilities available in the Pavillions Shopping Centre are similar to those available in Drogheda. 11.80% of all respondents to the householder survey stated that they had chosen to shop within Swords, with more than two thirds of these doing so only once or twice per year. Only a small proportion of respondents (3.51%) travel to Swords for convenience shopping.

6.6 Summary

In assessing the results of the Louth householder survey, it would appear that whilst a significant proportion (64.20%) of respondents did choose to shop in the competing centres named above, the majority did so no more than once or twice per year, and therefore the retail outflow which results from this is defined as being negligible. For most respondents, they choose to travel to these competing centres to undertake comparison shopping, with the comparative rates for convenience and bulky goods shopping being much lower.

7.0 Quantitative Analysis and Capacity Assessment

7.1 Introduction

This assessment provides a quantitative analysis of the estimated amount of convenience, comparison and bulky goods floorspace required for Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee over the lifetime of the Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021 and for the three years beyond. A survey of existing floorspace in County Louth was undertaken. For the purposes of this study the base year is 2013. It should be noted that the figures contained within this chapter are estimates only and should not be interpreted in an overly prescriptive manner. Nonetheless, the quantitative section provides a broad overview of the current position and future demand for retail floorspace in County Louth. In the event that a planning application for retail development is received which does not accord with the broad assessment contained herein, the onus is on the applicant to demonstrate that, if permitted the proposed development will not adversely impact upon the vitality or viability of any town centre.

7.2 The Approach

The approach is a step by step capacity assessment including:

- Estimate of population at base and design year,
- Estimate of expenditure per capita on convenience, comparison and bulky household goods at the base and design year,
- Incorporate projections of inflow and outflow levels based on results of household and shopper surveys,
- Estimates of total available expenditure in the base and design year for residents of County Louth,
- Estimates of likely increase in future expenditure available for the provision of additional floorspace,
- Estimates of the likely average turnover of new floorspace for convenience, comparison and bulky household,
- Estimate the capacity of additional floorspace in County Louth,
- Estimate the amount of vacant retail floorspace,
- Allocation of floorspace between the main settlements in the County i.e Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee.

7.3 Definition of the Study Area

For the purposes of this retail strategy the study area pertains to the administrative Boundary of County Louth.

7.4 Population of the Study Area

The Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region (BRAPG's) 2010-2022 set population targets for County Louth of 132, 648 persons by 2016 and 142,800 persons by 2022. It is the intention of the Planning Authority to work towards the population targets outlined therein but with the starting point being the 2011 Census figure. Thus between 2011 and 2016 the population is estimated to increase from 122,897 to 132,648 equating to a 7.9% increase in the total population over this period. If this population is apportioned there will be a 1.54% increase per annum between 2011 and 2016. Based on the *BRAPG's* the population target will subsequently increase to 142,800 in 2022, the equivalent of 7.65% over this period , or an average of 1.24% between 2017 and 2022 .The population projections for County Louth until the year 2024 are based on an average increase of 1.24% and can be found detailed in the Louth Housing Strategy.

Table 55: County Louth Population Projections

Population Projections		
Year	Percentage Increase	Population
2011		122,897
2012	1.54	124,788
2013	1.54	126,708
2014	1.54	128,658
2015	1.54	130,638
2016	1.54	132,648
2017	1.24	134,292
2018	1.24	135,956
2019	1.24	137,641
2020	1.24	139,346
2021	1.24	141,073
2022	1.24	142,800

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

2023	1.24	144,570
2024	1.24	146,361

Source: Louth Housing Strategy Future Analytic Consulting.

7.5 Expenditure per Capita

Expenditure for convenience and comparison goods is based on information contained within the Annual Services Inquiry as published by the Central Statistics Office. The most recent Annual Service Inquiry figures pertain to 2011 and were published in August 2013.

In order to work out expenditure per capita for convenience and comparison goods the aforementioned figures are divided by Ireland's population in 2011.

The 2011 national expenditure per capita figure for convenience goods is estimated at 3,875 and for comparison goods is estimated at 3,416. These figures are amended to May 2013 prices using the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

CSO publication "**County Incomes and Regional GDP**" has revealed that the County Louth expenditure figures are broadly in line with the national average, on this basis there is no need to adjust the figures.

Table 56: Adjustments to Expenditure Per Capita

Expenditure / capita	Convenience	Comparison
2011	3777	3346
Adjusted in accordance with Consumer Price Index May 2013	3875	3416

The Retail Sales Index 2009-2013 shows that overall expenditure on convenience goods has remained fairly static. It is considered that households requirement for convenience products have largely been met and between 2013 and 2024 there will be marginal change in expenditure on grocery items. For the purposes of this retail strategy a conservative estimate of 1% for future expenditure on convenience goods is set between 2013 and 2024.

The Retail Sales Index 2009-2013 indicates that there has been a decline in comparison goods expenditure. As the economy improves households shall have more disposal income and

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

more money shall be spent on durable goods. In the future, expenditure on comparison goods is likely to exceed expenditure on convenience goods based on the retail sales index a conservative estimate is made that expenditure on comparison goods shall grow by 2% between 2013 and 2016. Based upon an assessment of the prevailing economic outlook, as well as the rate of growth which has been employed in a number of other recent retail strategies it is estimated that expenditure on comparison goods shall grow by 3% between 2016 and 2021 (and for the three years beyond).

Table 57 below shows the projected expenditure per Capita for convenience and comparison goods between years 2013 & 2024.

Table 57: Projected Expenditure per Capita for Convenience & Comparison Goods 2013-2024

Year	Convenience		Comparison	
	Growth		Growth	
2013	1%	3875	2%	3416
2014	1%	3913	2%	3484
2015	1%	3952	2%	3554
2016	1%	3991	3%	3660
2017	1%	4031	3%	3770
2018	1%	4071	3%	3883
2019	1%	4112	3%	3999
2020	1%	4153	3%	4119
2021	1%	4194	3%	4243
2022	1%	4235	3%	4370
2023	1%	4277	3%	4501
2024	1%	4320	3%	4636

Assumptions: Convenience expenditure estimated to grow by 1% between 2013 & 2024. Comparison expenditure estimated to grow by 2% in 2014 & 2015 and 3% between 2016 & 2024

7.6 Total Available Expenditure

In order to ascertain the total available expenditure for convenience and comparison goods it is necessary to multiply the population targets for 2013, 2015, 2021 and 2024 by the projected expenditure per capita.

Table 58: Projected Expenditure Per Capita

Year	Expenditure / Capita		Population Projections	Total Available Expenditure	
	Convenience	Comparison		Convenience	Comparison
2013	3875	3416	126,708	490,993,500	432,824,528
2015	3952	3554	130,638	516,281,376	464,287,452
2021	4194	4243	141,073	591,660,162	598,572,739
2024	4320	4636	146,361	632,279,520	678,529,596

For the purpose of this retail strategy it is necessary to differentiate between comparison and bulky household goods as their turnover per square metre shall be different. The 2011 Annual Service Inquiry provides the turnover figures for various convenience and comparison goods. Within the 2011 Annual Services Inquiry bulky household goods account for approximately 20% of turnover of all comparison goods. Estimates for total available expenditure for comparison and bulky household goods are outlined in the table below:

Table 59: Total Available Expenditure for Convenience, Comparison and Bulky Household Goods 2013-2024

	Convenience	Comparison	Bulky Household Goods
2013	490,993,500	346,259,622	86,564,905
2015	516,281,376	371,429,961	92,857,490
2021	591,660,162	478,858,191	119,714,547
2024	632,279,520	542,823,677	135,705,919

7.7 Adjustments to Available Expenditure

Some adjustments to available expenditure are required to take into account trade draw too and leakage from the County. Shopper and householder surveys were conducted to *inter alia* establish inflows and outflows. The aforementioned report provided details regarding consumer outflow and inflow levels for convenience, comparison and bulky household goods. The main findings are listed below:

Convenience:

Retail spend inflow of 3.8% for convenience goods.

Retail spend outflow of 2.8% for convenience goods.

Comparison:

Retail spend inflow of 8% for comparison goods.

Retail spend outflow of 7% for comparison goods.

Bulky Household Goods:

Retail spend inflow of 1% for bulky household goods.

Retail spend outflow of 8% for bulky household goods.

Table 60: Total Available Expenditure In County Louth Adjusted To Account for Inflow And Outflow Levels Of Expenditure

Period		Convenience (€)		Comparison (€)		Bulky Household Goods (€)
2013						
Resident Expenditure		490,993,500		346,259,622		86,564,905
Less Outflows %	2.8	13,747,818	7	24,238,173	8	6,925,192
Resident Expenditure		477,245,682		322,021,449		79,639,713
Add inflows %	3.8	18,135,336	8	25,761,715	1	796,397
Retail Spend		495,381,018		347,783,164		80,436,110
2015						
Resident Expenditure		516,281,376		371,429,961		92,857,490
Less Outflows %	2.8	14,455,878	7	26,000,097	8	7,428,599
Resident Expenditure		501,825,498		345,429,864		85,428,891

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

Add inflows %	3.8	19,069,368	8	27,634,389	1	854,289
Retail Spend		520,894,867		373,064,253		86,283,180
2021						
Resident Expenditure		591,660,162		478,858,192		119,714,547
Less Outflows %	2.8	16,566,484	7	33,520,073	8	9,577,163
Resident Expenditure		575,093,678		445,338,119		110,137,384
Add inflows %	3.8	21,853,560	8	35,627,049	1	1,101,383
Retail Spend		596,947,238		480,965,168		111,238,767
2024						
Resident Expenditure		632,279,520		542,823,677		135,705,919
Less Outflows %	2.8	17,703,826	7	37,997,657	8	10,856,473
Resident Expenditure		614,575,694		504,826,020		124,849,446
Add inflows %	3.8	23,353,876	8	40,386,081	1	1,248,494
Retail Spend		637,929,570		545,212,101		126,097,940

The inflow and outflow levels for convenience, comparison and bulky household goods is relatively low and it's expected that these levels shall remain fairly constant over the Plan period and beyond. It should be noted that outflow levels for convenience and comparison goods are considerably less than the 2009 Retail Strategy. This can be attributed to a number of factors including comparable cost of goods and VAT rates on both sides of the Border and as well as, an exchange rate which is less conducive to cross border shopping.

In addition, it is likely that the opening of the 24 hour Tesco Metro at Matthews Lane District Centre in Drogheda has reduced the number of people visiting competing centres and at the same time increased the number of people visiting the County to undertake their convenience shopping. It is also possible that with the increase in fuel prices people are less likely to travel outside the County to undertake their shopping.

7.8 Existing Retail Floorspace in County Louth

A survey of existing retail floorspace in County Louth was carried out in 2013. The results are summarised in Table 61 below:

Table 61: Existing Floorspace within County Louth 2013

Settlement	Convenience (sq.m)	Comparison (sq.m)	Bulky Goods (sq.m)	Household
Dundalk	21,593	43,393	24,445	
Drogheda	17,614	35,565	22,060	
Ardee	4686	3018		
Total	43,893	81,976	46,505	

It should be noted that Table 61 above does not take into consideration floorspace granted but not yet constructed. The reason being that extant permissions may not be built and if they are constructed it may be at a smaller scale than originally permitted.

7.9 Turnover Ratio of Existing Floorspace in County Louth

The turnover ratio of the existing floor space in County Louth is ascertained by dividing the available resident expenditure in 2013 for convenience, comparison and bulky comparison goods by the existing floorspace in each category.

Table 62: Turnover Ratio of Existing Floorspace

Type of Goods	Available Expenditure €	Floorspace sq.m	Turnover Ratios assumed for Existing Floorspace €
Convenience	490,993,500	43, 893	11,186
Comparison	346,259,622	81,976	4,224

Appendix 12
Retail Strategy

Bulky Household Goods	86,564,905	46,505	1861
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The last column on the table above shows the turnover ratios assumed for existing floorspace in County Louth. Generally those stores located in new shopping centres and in prime high street locations are likely to have a greater turnover than those located in older shopping centres or away from the core shopping area. It is also a fair assumption that most multi-national retailers would have a greater turnover than independent retailers.

The residual surplus for additional retail floorspace within the County is obtained by subtracting the total available expenditure of existing floor space for convenience, comparison and comparison bulky goods set out in Table 59 by the total available expenditure total available expenditure for convenience, comparison and comparison bulky goods taking into account Outflow and Inflow levels as set out in Table 60.

Table 63: Available Expenditure for Additional Retail Floorspace In County Louth

Year	Total Available expenditure taking into account Outflow and Inflow levels (€)	Total available expenditure of existing Floor space (€)	Residual Surplus(€)
Convenience			
2013	495,381,018	490,993,500	4,387,518
2015	520,894,867	490,993,500	29,901,367
2021	596,947,238	490,993,500	105,953,738
2024	637,929,570	490,993,500	146,936,070
Comparison			
2013	347,783,164	346,259,622	1,523,542
2015	373,064,253	346,259,622	26,804,631
2021	480,965,168	346,259,622	134,705,546
2024	545,212,101	346,259,622	198,952,479
Bulky Household Goods			
2013	80,436,110	86,564,905	-6,128,795
2015	86,283,180	86,564,905	-281,725
2021	111,238,767	86,564,905	24,673,862
2024	126,097,940	86,564,905	39,533,036

7.10 Floorspace Capacity

In order to calculate the requirements for additional retail floorspace within the County, the residual surplus should be divided by the turnover per sq.m of future retail floorspace as set out in Table 64 below.

Table 64: Floorspace Potential

Year	Residual Surplus (€)	Turnover Ratio	Additional Floorspace Potential sq.m
Convenience			
2013	4,387,518	11,186	392
2015	29,901,367	11,186	2,673
2021	105,953,738	11,186	9,471
2024	146,936,070	11,186	13,135
Comparison			
2013	1,523,542	4,224	360
2015	26,804,631	4,224	6,346
2021	134,705,546	4,224	31,890
2024	198,952,479	4,224	47,100
Bulky Household Goods			
2013	-6,128,795	1861	-3293
2015	-281,725	1861	-151
2021	24,673,862	1861	13,258
2024	39,533,036	1861	21,243

7.11 Vacant Floorspace

The amount of vacant floorspace for convenience, comparison and bulky goods is shown in Table 65.

Table 65: Vacant Floorspace

Town	Convenience	Comparison	Bulky Household Goods
Dundalk	3712	6128	9057
Drogheda	362	6758	7074
Ardee	75	2230	200
Total	4149	15, 116	16,331

When calculating the amount of additional floor space required for convenience, comparison and bulky goods it is important that the amount of existing vacant floor space is subtracted from the overall requirement.

Table 66: Floorspace Potential in Dundalk, Drogheda And Ardee Having Regard to Existing Vacant Floorspace

Year	Additional Floorspace Potential sq.m	Vacant Floorspace sq.m	Indicative Floorspace Potential sq.m
Convenience			
2021	9471	4149	5322
2024	13,135	4149	8986
Comparison			
2021	31,890	15, 116	16,774
2024	47,100	15, 116	31,984
Bulky Goods			
2021	13,361	16, 331	-2970
2024	21,243	16,331	4912

Tables 67, 68 and 69 below set out the indicative potential for additional convenience, comparison and bulky household goods floor space in the towns of Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee, over the lifetime of the County Development Plan and for the three years beyond. The potential floor space capacity for each town is in accordance with the settlement and retail hierarchy of the County and has been proportioned in accordance with population target of the aforementioned settlements for 2021 (Dundalk 51%, Drogheda 42% and Ardee 7%).

Table 67: Indicative Convenience Floorspace Potential

Settlement	2021 (sq.m)	2024 (sq.m)
Dundalk	2714	4583
Drogheda	2235	3774
Ardee	373	629
Total:	5322	8986

Table 68: Indicative Comparison Floorspace Potential

Settlement	2021 (sq.m)	2024 (sq.m)
Dundalk	8555	16,312
Drogheda	7045	13,433
Ardee	1174	2238
Total:	16,774	31,984

Table 69: Indicative Bulky Household Goods Floorspace Potential

Settlement	2021 (sq.m)	2024 (sq.m)
Dundalk		2505
Drogheda		2063
Ardee		344
Total	N/A	4912

The quantum of convenience, comparison and bulky household goods floorspace is based on meeting the needs of population targets outlined in the RPG's (and in the Housing Strategy), has cognisance of trade draw and leakage, takes into account the volume of existing retail floorspace and also existing vacancy levels.

In accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines the indicative floorspace requirements are only intended to provide broad guidance as to the additional quantum of floorspace provision; and should not be treated in an overly prescriptive manner, nor serve to inhibit competition. Any additional new floorspace proposed could replace some existing outdated or poorly located retail floor space. In the event that a planning application is submitted for retail development which does not confirm with the scale outlined in this retail strategy the onus is on the applicant to prove to the Planning Authority that the development will not detract from the vitality or viability of the town centre.

It is acknowledged that both the performance of the national economy and local market forces will change over time. It may therefore be necessary to monitor and adjust these figures over the lifetime of the Plan.

Enhancing the range and quality of comparison floorspace within Dundalk and Drogheda is essential to meet future demand as the population of the County grows and also to enhance the current retail offer thereby helping to ensure that the current level of expenditure leakage does not increase.

It should be noted that there is no requirement for additional bulky floorspace within the County over the lifetime of the Development Plan.

In accordance with the Retail Planning Guidelines the preferred location for all new retail development is the core shopping area. Notwithstanding this, it is acknowledged that retail warehousing does not fit easily into this location. Given that the majority of vacant retail floor space pertaining to bulky goods meets modern standards, it should be first choice for the location of any additional retail warehousing. The Retail Planning Guidelines state that retail parks involve the development of 3 or more retail warehouses comprising of 8000sq.m to 15,000 sq.m around a shared car park.

It should be noted that the bulky goods indicative floor space potential for Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee would not cater for the development of an additional retail park.

7.12 Extant Planning Permissions

Throughout County Louth there are numerous extant planning applications pertaining to retail development which have yet to be activated or have been activated but trading has not yet commenced, see Table 70 below. For the purpose of this retail strategy extant permissions have not been included within the overall amount of retail floor space within the County. The reason being that given the economic climate the aforementioned permissions may not be realised and if they are implemented, development maybe at a smaller scale. It should be noted that many of the live retail applications approved do not specify the type floor space i.e. convenience or comparison. When ascertaining the amount of convenience or comparison retail floor space a judgement was made based on the location of the permission.

Table 70: Extant Planning Permissions

	Convenience (sq.m)	Comparison (sq.m)	Bulky (sq.m)
Louth	2376	3206	
Dundalk	12058	22335	
Drogheda	2169	13777	5424
Ardee	2751	2027	
Total:	19354	41345	5424

8.0 Policies and Actions

8.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to set out key policies and actions in terms of the future development of retail facilities in County Louth. The principle of a hierarchy of retail centres informs the consideration of zoning for retail development in development plans/local area plans and is an essential component of the retail strategy.

8.2 Retailing Hierarchy

Retail Planning: Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012, state that retail functions tend to reflect broad tiers of urban development including:

- Metropolitan,
- Regional,

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

- Sub regional (including district centres in larger urban areas, small towns and rural areas,
- Local shopping.

The classification is indicative and below the metropolitan Level the specific retail functions overlap in many respects.

The aforementioned Guidelines identify Dublin and other large cities such as Cork, Limerick/Shannon, Galway and Waterford as being within the Metropolitan Tier. No settlements within County Louth are located within this Metropolitan Level.

The Guidelines state that beyond Ireland's five main cities, there exists a tier of other Gateways, Hub Towns and towns performing important regional retailing functions. The aforementioned tier includes the Border Regional gateway of Dundalk and other large towns including the primary development centre of Drogheda.

The next tier in the Retail Planning Guidelines (Level 3) pertains to sub regional and includes district centres located within Dublin, other gateway cities and towns, hub towns as well as, other towns (generally in excess of 10,000 people). Ardee is considered to form a sub regional retailing function and as such falls within Level 3 of the retailing hierarchy. There are district centres within Dundalk and Drogheda urban areas. Such centres are to provide an appropriate range of retail and non-retail function to serve the needs of the community and their respective catchment areas, with an emphasis on convenience and comparison shopping.

Level 4 comprises of a number of small towns in the 1,500-5,000 population category, providing convenience shopping, either in small supermarkets or convenience shops, and in some cases, also provide some small scale comparison shopping. Numerous neighbourhood centres within Dundalk and Drogheda would also fall within this category. The purpose of Level 4 Settlements is to provide retail development in accordance with the planned population growth and to serve local catchments.

Level 5 consists of local level shopping and comprises of a mixture of neighbourhood shops in suburban areas and village stores/post office in rural areas.

Table 71: Retail Hierarchy for County Louth

Level	Centre	
Level 1	Metropolitan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Level 2	Major Town Centres and County Town Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dundalk • Drogheda
Level 3	Town and /or District Centre and sub county town centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ardee • District Centres in Dundalk and Drogheda.
Level 4	Local Centres, small town and Villages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various
	Neighbourhood Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various
Level 5	Corner shops/ small villages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various

8.3 Distribution of Floorspace Requirements

The floorspace requirement for convenience, comparison and bulky goods in the settlements of Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee has been estimated over the lifetime of the Louth County Council Development Plan 2015- 2021 and for the three years beyond (2024). The floor space requirement is an estimate, calculated inter-alia on the basis of available expenditure, trade draw and leakage levels and has regard to the retail and settlement hierarchys. An assessment of this is detailed in Chapter 7.

In terms of the estimated convenience floorspace requirement for Dundalk and Drogheda over the lifetime of the Plan the figures are fairly similar. Over the same period it is estimated that significantly less convenience floorspace is required within Ardee which reflects the towns status as a Level 3 or sub county town centre in the Louth Retail Hierarchy.

With regard to the estimated comparison floorspace requirement over the Plan period, Dundalk has the highest estimated requirement of 8555sq.m, followed by Drogheda 7045sq.m. Again Ardee has the lowest estimated requirement 1174sq.m. The development of middle to high order comparison retail floor space in Dundalk and Drogheda should be given priority. This is consistent with the findings of the householder survey which indicate outflow levels for comparison goods which are almost double that for convenience goods. In terms of vitality and viability it is of extreme importance that any additional floor space is developed in a town centre location.

With regard to the estimated convenience and comparison floor space requirements to 2021, it should be noted that if extant permissions pertaining to the aforementioned types of retailing be constructed in each settlement, the estimated floorspace requirements would be exceeded.

In terms of bulky goods floorspace requirement there is no requirement for additional bulky floorspace within the County over the period of the Development Plan. In terms of bulky goods it should also be noted that in many retail parks throughout the County and indeed the State as a whole, comparison uses have tended to creep in, which has in effect reduced the amount of floor space available for the sale of bulky goods.

8.4 Conclusion

As per the *Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012*, the estimate of future retail floorspace requirements contained within this retail strategy are intended to provide broad guidance only and should not be interpreted in an overly prescriptive manner. It is not intended to place a definitive cap for future retail development in the aforementioned settlements. The floorspace requirement for each settlement is reflective of its status in the County Retail Hierarchy. In all cases the primacy of the town centres should be retained and prioritised for any new retail development.

8.5 Specific Policies for County Louth.

The purpose of the policies outlined below is to support competitiveness and choice in the retail sector in conjunction with promoting the vitality and viability of County Louth's town centres and to promote the town centres as vibrant and attractive areas encouraging development in retailing and other complimentary land uses. The Council should also aim to realise the key recommendations and actions outlined in the town centre health checks over the lifetime of this Retail Strategy and beyond.

8.5.1 Policies Retail Hierarchy

- To adopt the retail hierarchy contained in Chapter 8, Table 71 of this Retail Strategy,
- Support applications for retail development which are in line with the retail hierarchy and accord with the scale and type of retailing identified for that location in accordance with Chapter 7,
- To recognise the gateway of Dundalk as a regional shopping centre and the primary development centre of Drogheda, as the principle locations for future retail development particularly for middle to high order comparison goods,
- Support shall be provided to planning applications which will maintain and enhance the supremacy of the core shopping areas as identified in Chapter 5 of this Retail Strategy, subject to compliance with the criteria for proper planning and sustainable development,
- To apply the sequential approach when considering any significant new retail development outside of the core retail area,
- Support shall be provided for appropriate retail developments on Opportunity Sites identified in Chapter 5 of this Retail Strategy, subject to compliance with the criteria for proper planning and sustainable development,
- To encourage large commercial developments to incorporate retail, residential, employment and entertainment/cultural uses within the design,

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

- To require a high quality of design and finish for new and replacement shopfronts, signage and advertising,
- To encourage the reuse and redevelopment of existing retail warehouse units within retail parks for the sale of bulky comparison goods,
- To create town centres which are accessible by sustainable transport modes including walking, cycling and public transport,
- To apply the sequential approach where the net retail sales floor area associated with a petrol filling exceeds 100sq.m,
- To ensure that a number of local centres be provided to meet the basic convenience and lower order comparison requirements of any expanding communities,
- To encourage and support the reuse and revitalisation of vacant (and derelict) shops and properties within the town and village centres,
- To promote the ***Retail Design Manual -A companion Document to the Retail Planning Guidelines April 2012*** and ensure that the following 10 key urban principles are an integral part of any application for retail development:
 1. *Design Quality*: contributing to making places that are attractive, inclusive, durable and adaptable places to live, work, shop and visit.
 2. *Site + Location*: Healthy city and town centres contributing to the proper planning and sustainable development of their locations.
 3. *Context + Character*: Regard for the character and the physical, social and economic contexts of the site and its location.
 4. *Vitality + Viability*: Vitality and viability in city and town centres that are attractive and competitive places to live, work, shop and visit.
 5. *Access + Connectivity*: City and town centres that are accessible and well-connected, easy to get to and convenient to move about.
 6. *Density + Mixed Use*: Higher density and mixed use development creating compact urban areas and the efficient use of land.
 7. *Public Realm*: Well-designed and well-used open spaces contributing to a high quality public realm in the location.
 8. *Built Form*: Built form, scale and mass contributing to a high standard of urban design and quality in the built environment.
 9. *Environmental Responsibility*: Environmentally responsible use of energy resources to lower fuel consumption and carbon emissions.
 10. *Sustainable Construction*: Construction materials and technologies that have regard for the environmental impacts of their production, transportation, use and disposal.

8.5.2 General Measures to Promote Town Centres

8.5.2.1 Provide A Variety Of Different Uses Within The Town Centre Including Retail

Shopping centres often provide a variety of different retailers, leisure and entertainment facilities as well as, a range of restaurants and eateries. In order for town centres to compete successfully with existing shopping centres it is necessary that they are not solely about selling goods. Shopping should be just one part of a rich mix of uses which include housing, offices,

sport, schools and other social, commercial and cultural enterprises. They should become places where people go to engage with the wider community. The Council shall encourage a diversity of uses which shall improve the vitality and viability of town centres.

8.5.2.2 Tourism and Town Centre

Tourism has the potential to have a significant role in promoting the viability and vitality of town centres and supporting the night-time economy. Tourism can bring a broad range of economic and social benefits.

8.5.2.3 Leisure and Cultural Activities

It is essential that town centres provide a wide variety of leisure and cultural activities which complement the shopping experience. The Council will encourage the development of sustainably located cultural, entertainment and recreational facilities that can be used by both visitors and residents, helping to strengthen the role of the towns whilst also reducing the need for residents to travel outside the County.

8.5.2.4 Improvements to The Public Realm

In terms of parks, squares, gardens and other public spaces the presence of an attractive cohesive public realm is essential not only for residents and visitors but also as a vital business and marketing tool. Companies are attracted to locations that offer well designed, well managed public spaces and these in turn attract customers, employees and services. In addition to public realm improvements, it is important that cohesive high quality street furniture including bins, seating and signage is utilised. The Council shall promote ongoing environmental improvements to the public realm in all towns throughout the County.

8.5.2.5 Revitalisation of Vacant Properties And Shops

The presence of vacant property negatively impacts upon the visual amenity of the town centre, detracts from its overall ambience and can in many instances, reduce informal surveillance resulting in users of the street feeling unsafe. Vacant properties also negatively impact upon the vitality and viability of town centres.

The re-use of vacant commercial property in the town centre should be encouraged. The so called 'pop-up' shop initiative could be implemented as it potentially offers temporary, low-cost space for community benefit, social enterprise and local business entrepreneurs. The economic and social benefits that may accrue include:

- Reduction in the visual impact of vacant property in the Town Centre,
- Increased footfall and attraction of new visitors to the Town Centre,
- Publicity generation,
- Reduced cost space for community organisations, social enterprise and local business,
- Market Research of new ideas and/or new audiences,
- Showcasing potential of vacant units to improve re-letting.

It should be noted that 'pop-up' shops are subject to normal planning and licensing criteria.

Where it is not possible to attract new businesses or retailers to vacant properties in order to improve their visual amenity it is essential that alternative options are considered including:

- The use of replica window displays,
- Painting of attractive murals on façade of buildings,
- Use of evergreen planting,
- In addition, where sites are undergoing construction it may be possible to utilise temporary hoardings.

8.5.2.6 Evening and Night Time Economy

The evening and night time economy is an important element in all town centres to ensure their vitality and viability especially after hours. It has the potential to generate jobs, increase activity and movement, thereby helping to make places safer during the evening. Growth of this sector can present challenges, including the alleviation of fears over crime, anti-social behaviour and noise, which can be associated with late-night uses, such as pubs, clubs and bars. It is essential therefore that development is directed to the most appropriate locations, whereby conflict with existing more sensitive uses is avoided.

8.5.2.7 Improve Accessibility to The Town Centres

Increasing maximum accessibility for all users is key to the future success of town centres.

Improvements to public transport including linked bus routes, a comprehensive network of cycle lanes and footpaths suitable for those with impaired mobility, are considered essential to improve accessibility. It is also important that car parking within the town centre is properly managed to ensure that it is operating at maximum capacity. Additionally, public car park users should pay when they leave rather than on arrival as this would encourage longer stays in the town centre.

8.5.2.8 Litter Management

The proliferation of litter creates a poor impression of the town and undermines enjoyment of the street. The Council will encourage and support measures to ensure street cleaning and bin management in all town and village centres.

8.5.2.9 Festival, Events and Street Markets

Festivals and events improve the vitality and viability of the town centres, often attracting visitors at off peak season. They have a spin off effect in terms of generating additional revenue as well as raising the profile of the town and attracting repeat visitors. Street markets are located throughout the County in both small and large towns and are often a tourist attraction and alternative to normal retail formats. Such markets can present a welcome addition to the retail option of town centres and can compliment and augment the existing retail and non-retail uses.

8.5.2.10 Living Over The Shop

As common in many other counties, properties in Louth's town centres have unused or underutilised upper floor areas. In terms of total floor space involved, this represents a very valuable asset capable of yielding a substantial return. The advantages of living over the shop include the refurbishment and conversion of vacant or under-utilised space thereby increasing the value of the building, reduction in maintenance problems, providing improved rental and economic returns, unlocking the development potential of, and provision of additional residential units. Living over the shop also increases the critical mass of population to support retail facilities and ensure towns are active living centres.

8.6 Key Objectives In Relation To Dundalk, Drogheda and Ardee

8.6.1 Dundalk

- Develop and enhance Dundalk as a Gateway town as befits its status as Level 2 Settlement in the retail hierarchy (RPG's),
- Continue to support the BIDS Scheme,
- Encourage the establishment of a suitable off peak and evening economy,
- Improve linkages, accessibility and permeability to the south and west of the town centre,
- Consider policies restricting the type of non retail uses along the core shopping area
- Encourage high end international and national retailers including a department store to locate within the Core Shopping Area,
- Promote the provision of directional signage to car parking facilities along with digital parking information.

8.6.2 Drogheda

- Develop tourism and heritage product in conjunction with the Boyne Valley Region,
- Implement the policies and objectives contained within the Urban Design Framework Plan for the Heritage Quarter including enhancement of existing public open space and backlanes,
- Increase priority for pedestrians and cyclists through the implementation of the draft Drogheda Active Travel Town Walking and Cycle Strategy,
- Encourage alternative uses along Narrow West Street such as the development of an artisan quarter,
- Consider policies restricting the type of non retail uses along the Core Shopping Area,
- Improve ambience of town centre (e.g. encouraging street performers & busking).
- Encourage evening activities.

8.6.3 Ardee

- Increase priority for pedestrian and cyclists through the implementation of the draft Ardee Active Travel Town Walking and Cycle Strategy,
- Create an attractive civic space along Main Street,
- Support the development of Ardee Castle as a second site for the County Museum service.

9.0 Criteria for Assessing Future Retail Development

9.1 Introduction

The principal aim of this chapter is to provide policy recommendations regarding the assessment of future planning applications for retail development.

9.2 Criteria For Assessing Future Retail Development

The criteria for assessing applications for significant retail development i.e. retail developments greater than 1,000sq.m net retail floor area are outlined below. Retail Impact Statements will not necessarily be required for developments less than 1,000sq m net retail floor area, unless it is considered that they may have a material impact on the vitality and viability of an existing retail centre. Retail Impact Statements may not be required for retail developments that are located within identified retail centres in a development plan, including town centres, district centres and neighbourhood centres that are clearly in accordance with the strategy.

9.3 Sequential Test

Where the location of a proposed retail development is not consistent with the policies /objectives of the relevant development plan/local area plan/retail strategy, then that development proposal must be subject to the Sequential Approach.

Sequential Approach development:

The overall preferred location for new retail development is within city and town centres. Retail development may also be appropriate within District Centres identified in the settlement hierarchy at a scale appropriate to the needs of the area. Only where the applicant can demonstrate and the planning authority is satisfied, that there are no sites or potential sites within a city, town centre or designated district centre should an edge-of-centre site be considered. In addition, only in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated that there are no sites or potential sites available either within the centre or on the edge of these centres should an out-of-centre site be considered.

9.3.1 Policy Principles of Sequential Approach

- a) *Suitability* - e.g. zoning, current land use, capacity, traffic & transportation issues.
- b) *Availability* - genuinely available at the time that site acquisition/ assembly begins & development must be deliverable in reasonable time frame.
- c) *Viability*: financial viability of a development and cost of site acquisition. Excessive development costs relative to value are also a consideration.

9.3.2 Application of Sequential Approach

Flexibility and realism is required on the part of the retail developers and planning authorities to ensure that the various forms of retailing are developed in the most appropriate locations.

Applications for retail developments in edge of or out of centre locations in excess of 1,000sq.m net retail floor area should be subject to the sequential test.

Criteria noted above i.e. suitability, availability and viability must be considered when applying the sequential test.

In addition to the sequential test, the applicant should address the following criteria and demonstrate whether or not a proposal would:

- Support the long term strategy for city/ town centres as established in the retail strategy/ development plan and not materially diminish the prospect of attracting private sector investment into one or more town centres,
- Have the potential to increase employment opportunities and promote economic regeneration,
- Have the potential to increase competition within the area and thereby attract further consumers to the area,
- Respond to consumer demand for its retail offering and not diminish the range of activities and services that an urban area can support,
- Cause an adverse impact on one or more town/ city centres, either singularly or cumulatively with recent development or other outstanding planning permission (which have a realistic prospect of implementation) sufficient to undermine the quality of the centre, or its wider function in the promotion and encouragement of the arts, culture, leisure or, public realm function of the town centre critical to the economic and social life of the community,
- Cause an increase in the number of vacant properties in the primary retail area that is likely to persist in the long term,
- Ensure a high standard of access both by public transport, foot, private car so that the proposal is easily accessible by all sections of society,
- Link effectively with an existing town centre so that there is likely to be commercial synergy.

9.4 Other Criteria That Should Be Considered In The Assessment Of Significant Applications Include:

- That there is a quantitative and qualitative need for the development,
- The contribution of the development towards the improvement of the town centre in terms of urban design and reference to the Retail Design Manual,
- The contribution of the development towards site or area regeneration,
- The role of the development in improving the competitiveness of the town against other competing centres,
- Compliance with development plan/local area plan policies and objectives,
- The development is easily accessible by the elderly and less-abled persons/ those with impaired mobility.

9.5 Criteria For Assessing Particular Types Of Development

This section sets out the criteria for assessing planning applications for different types of retail development.

9.5.1 Large Convenience Stores

- Comprises super markets, superstores and hypermarkets,
- Require extensive areas of open floor space with adjacent car –parking,
- Should be located in town centres or district centres or on edge of centres,
- Should be of a size that accords with the general floor space requirements in the Retail Strategy/ Development Plan/LAP,
- Should provide vitality to existing shopping area & be supported by public transport,
- If it is not possible to bring forward suitable sites in or on the edge of the town, the sequential approach should apply to identify most preferable sites,
- Where a proposal for a large convenience store involves sale of comparison goods then the floorspace for convenience goods sales should be clearly delineated on floor plans,
- Balance between convenience and comparison goods is a critical element in the assessment of the development proposal,
- Where significant area is for comparison goods, then the potential impact of such on existing comparison good stores in the catchment area must be included in the assessment,
- Note there is no distinction between ‘discount store’ and other convenience stores.

9.5.2 Retail Parks and Retail Warehouses

- Retail Park comprises of an agglomeration of retail warehouses selling mainly bulky goods transported off site by car,
- Generally located in out of centre locations to facilitate access by car,
- Number of retail parks has grown substantially and there has been a blurring of definition of goods sold in these parks which has had a detrimental impact on town centres,
- Presumption against further development of out of town retail parks in the Retail Planning Guidelines,
- Development Plan should identify types of bulky household goods to be sold in retail warehouses.

9.5.2.1 Type of Goods Sold

- Range of goods to be tightly controlled and limited to bulky goods as identified in **Annex 1 of the Retail Planning: Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2012**,
- Retail floor space dedicated to sale of ancillary items associated with otherwise bulky goods should not exceed 20%. Such space to be clearly delineated on planning application drawings.

9.5.2.2 Size of Units

- Planning authorities may consider it appropriate to impose a minimum size condition, preventing the construction or subdivision of retail warehouse units into stores less than 700m²,
- Cap on large – scale single retail warehouse units in excess of 6,000m² gross (including garden centre) shall remain,
- If appropriate, planning authorities shall impose appropriate conditions to prevent the provision of single large units through new development or coalescence/linking of two or more stores,
- 6,000m² gross threshold should apply in all cases. *N.B. No exceptional circumstances apply in Louth.*

9.5.3 Factory Shops

- Units associated with or adjacent to production facility should be restricted by means of condition to the sale of products produced by the relevant factory.

9.5.4 Outlet Centres

- Consist of groups of stores retailing end of season or discounted items, typically located in out- of centre locations,
- Applicants must demonstrate & planning authorities must ensure that products sold will not be in competition with those currently on sale in typical city/ town centre location,
- Applications for outlet centres should be considered having regard to the provisions of relevant Development Plan/LAP/Retail Strategy & assessed in accordance with the sequential approach,
- Most appropriate location is likely to be where commercial synergy can be achieved between the outlet centre and an urban centre.

9.5.5 Retailing In Small Town And Villages

- Where appropriate, the maximum size of store consistent with maintaining a variety of shops and protecting an appropriate level of retail provision in the rural area should be identified,
- There is a clear presumption in favour of central or edge of centre locations for new developments.

9.5.6 Local Retail Units

- Corner shops, shops located in local or neighbourhood centres serving residential districts perform an important function in urban areas and where appropriate, should be safeguarded in relevant Development Plan/Local Area Plan through appropriate land use zoning.

9.5.7 Retailing in Rural Areas

- Retailing in rural areas should generally be directed to existing settlements.
- However there maybe exceptional circumstances such as:
- A retail unit which is ancillary to activities arising from farm diversification,

Appendix 12 Retail Strategy

- A retail unit designed to serve tourist or recreational facilities, and secondary to the main use,
- A small scale retail unit attached to an existing or approved craft workshop retailing the product direct to the public; and/or ,
- A small scale retail unit designed to serve a dispersed rural community.

9.5.8 Casual Trading

- Casual trading, including farmers markets, can make a valuable contribution to the local economy and contribute to the vitality and viability of a retail centre,
- Such activities should be properly regulated as per the provision of the Casual Trading Act 1995 and consideration should be given to the quality of offer of such casual trading.

9.5.9 Retailing and Motor Fuel Stations

- Convenience shops have become part of the normal ancillary services provided within motor fuel stations,
- Such shops should remain on a scale appropriate to their locations,
- Floor space of shops should not exceed 100m² net retail floorspace,
- Where permission is sought for a floor space in excess of 100m², the sequential approach to retail development shall apply.

Appendix 13

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Section 1.0

1.1	Introduction to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)	1
1.2	Report Structure	1
1.3	Scope and Objective	1
1.4	Flood Policy and legislation	1
	1.4.1 EU Floods Directive	1
	1.4.2 National Policy	2
1.5	Flood Risk	3
	1.5.1 Probability of Flooding	4
	1.5.2 Consequences of Flooding/Vulnerability	5
1.6	Study Area	7
	1.6.1 Drainage Catchments	8
	1.6.2 People, Property and Infrastructure	8
1.7	Environment	9
1.8	Regional Planning Guidelines and the SFRA	11
	1.8.1 Settlement Hierarchy in County Louth	11
	1.8.2 The Planning System and Flood Risk Guidelines Objectives and Principles	12
	1.8.3 The Sequential Approach and the Justification Test	12
	1.8.4 Sequential Approach Principles in Flood Risk Management	13
	1.8.5 Scales and Stages of Flood Risk Assessment	14
	1.8.6 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	16
1.9	Compilation of Data	17
	1.9.1 Overview	17
	1.9.2 National Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment	17
	1.9.3 Irish Coastal Protection Strategy Study 2013	18
	1.9.4 Border Region Regional Flood Risk Assessment 2010 (RFRA)	18

Section 2.0

2.1	Sources of Flooding	21
2.2	Fluvial Flooding	21
2.3	Coastal/Estuarine Flooding	22
2.4	Pluvial Flooding	23
2.5	Groundwater Flooding	23
2.6	Flooding from Drainage Systems	23

Appendix 13 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

2.7	Flooding from Reservoirs and other Artificial Sources	24
2.8	Flooding Impacts	24
2.9	Flooding Impacts on People	24
2.10	Flooding Impacts on Property and Infrastructure	25
2.11	Flooding Impacts on the Environment	26
2.12	Climate Change	26
2.13	Climate Change and Flood Risk Assessment	27
2.14	Management of flood risk from a Planning Perspective	28
2.15	Flood risk Policies and Objectives	28
2.16	Specific Development Planning Applications	28
2.17	Flood Management Action Plan	29
2.18	Strategic Flood Risk Management Plan	29
2.19	Site Specific Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP)	29
2.20	Development Relating to Management of Surface Water	29

Section 3.0

3.1	Strategic flood risk assessment, Level 3 Settlements, Walk Over Surveys	30
3.2	Impact of Strategic Flood Risk Assessment on the Louth County Core Strategy	30
3.3	Annagassan	32
3.4	Baltray	35
3.5	Carlingford	38
3.6	Castlebellingham/Kilsaran	41
3.7	Clogherhead	44
3.8	Collon	47
3.9	Dromiskin	49
3.10	Knockbridge	51
3.11	Louth Village	53
3.12	Omeath	55
3.13	Tallanstown	58
3.14	Termonfeckin	61
3.15	Tullyallen	64

Section 4.0

4.1	Level Four Settlements	66
4.2	Ballagan	68
4.3	Ballapousta	70
4.4	Bellurgan	72
4.5	Darver	74
4.6	Dromin	76
4.7	Faughart	77
4.8	Glenmore	78
4.9	Grange	80

Appendix 13 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

4.10	Grangebellew	82
4.11	Greenore	84
4.12	Gyles Quay	86
4.13	Kilcurry	88
4.14	Kilkerley	89
4.15	Lordship	91
4.16	Mountbagnall	93
4.17	Muchgrange	95
4.18	Philipstown	97
4.19	Ravensdale	98
4.20	Reaghstown	100
4.21	Sandpit	102
4.22	Sheelagh	104
4.23	Stabannon	105
4.24	Tinure	107
4.25	Willville	108

Tables

Table 1.0	Definitions of Flood Zones	6
Table 1.1	Special Protection Areas (SPA) in County Louth	9
Table 1.2	Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) in County Louth	9
Table 1.3	Proposed Natural Heritage Areas in County Louth (pNHA)	10
Table 1.4	Settlement Hierarchy in County Louth	11
Table 1.5	Matrix of Vulnerability versus Flood Zone to illustrate Appropriate Development and that required to meet Justification Test	14
Table 1.6	Flood Risk Assessment Stages Required per Scale of Study Undertaken	15
Table 1.7	Flood data available for County Louth	17
Table 1.8	RPG Settlement Hierarchy for County Louth	18
Table 1.9	Key towns in County Louth at risk of flooding	19
Table 1.10	Reports extracted from Office of Public Works, National Flood Hazard Mapping Application, County Louth Towns	20
Table 2.0	Climate Change Scenarios	27

Figures

Figure 1.0	Source-Pathway-Receptor Model	4
Figure 1.1	Sequential approach to management of flood risk in the Planning process	13
Figure 1.2	The integration of the SFRA with the SEA and wider Development Plan process	16

Appendix 13 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Maps

Map 1	Map of Ireland indicating County Louth	7
Map 2	Indicating significant urban settlements County Louth	8
Map 3	Level Three Settlement Locations	31
Map 4	Annagassan Composite Map	34
Map 5	Baltray Composite Map	37
Map 6	Carlingford Composite Map	40
Map 7	Castlebellingham/Kilsaran Composite Map	43
Map 8	Clogherhead Composite Map	46
Map 9	Collon Composite Map	48
Map 10	Dromiskin Composite Map	50
Map 11	Knockbridge Composite Map	52
Map 12	Louth Composite Map	54
Map 13	Omeath Composite Map	57
Map 14	Tallanstown Composite Map	60
Map 15	Termonfeckin Composite Map	63
Map 16	Tullyallen Composite Map	65
Map 17	Level Four Settlement Locations	67
Map 18	Ballagan Composite Map	69
Map 19	Ballapousta Composite Map	71
Map 20	Bellurgan Composite Map	73
Map 21	Darver Composite Map	75
Map 22	Dromin Composite Map	76
Map 23	Faughart Composite Map	77
Map 24	Glenmore Composite Map	79
Map 25	Grange Composite Map	81
Map 26	Grangebellew Composite Map	83
Map 27	Greenore Composite Map	85
Map 28	Gyles Quay Composite Map	87
Map 29	Kilcurry Composite Map	88
Map 30	Kilkerley Composite Map	90
Map 31	Lordship Composite Map	92
Map 32	Mountbagnall Composite Map	94
Map 33	Muchgrange Composite Map	96
Map 34	Philipstown Composite Map	97
Map 35	Ravensdale Composite Map	99
Map 36	Reaghstown Composite Map	101
Map 37	Sandpit Composite Map	103
Map 38	Sheelagh Composite Map	104
Map 39	Stabannan Composite Map	106
Map 40	Tinure Composite Map	107
Map 41	Willville Composite Map	108

1.1 Introduction to The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

The Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021 will replace the existing Louth County Development Plan 2009-2015. This report details the SFRA for County Louth, and has been prepared in accordance with requirements of the DECLG and OPW Planning Guidelines, 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management.' (2009). The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment provides tools and methods to assist users in identifying the level of flood risk associated with an area to inform planning decisions. It supports the application of the sequential approach and provides data and maps to help in assessing sites against flood risk criteria. Where development is or would be at risk of flooding, it provides information on the mitigation measures considered deliverable to reduce the actual risk to that development and on the residual risks that would remain and how they might be managed.

1.2 Report Structure

This SFRA considers the broader settlement strategy of the Border Region, Regional Planning Guidelines and countywide policies and objectives of the Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021. The report also gives a brief background to the study area; explains the concepts and definitions of flood risk terms; reviews the indicators of flood risk based on the data available; details the methodology behind the preparation of the Flood Zone Mapping and discusses recommended policies and objectives for flood risk management in relation to the Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021. The SFRA includes a review of flood risk in each settlement indicating where, application of these policies is adequate to allow future development or where high development pressures require a more detailed assessment of flood risk. As an integral part of the process, detailed walkover surveys were carried out for each settlement.

1.3 Scope and Objective

The purpose of the SFRA under the 'Planning System and Flood Risk Management' is, *"to provide a broad (area-wide) assessment of all types of flood risk to inform strategic land-use planning decisions. SFRA's enable the Local Authority to undertake the sequential approach, including the Justification Test, allocate appropriate sites for development and identify how flood risk can be reduced as part of the development plan process."*

1.4 Flood Policy and Legislation

1.4.1 EU Floods Directive

European Directive 2007/60/EC on the assessment and management of flood risk aims to reduce and manage the risks that floods pose to human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity. The Directive applies to inland waters as well as all coastal waters across the whole territory of the EU. The Directive requires Member States to:

- Carry out a preliminary assessment by December 2011 in order to identify the river basins and associated coastal areas where potential significant flood risk exists.

- Prepare flood hazard and risk maps for the identified areas by December 2013.
- Prepare flood risk management plans focused on prevention, protection and preparedness by December 2015. These plans are to include measures to reduce the probability of flooding and its potential consequences.

Implementation of the EU Floods Directive is required to be coordinated with the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive and the current River Basin Management Plans.

1.4.2 National Policy

Historically, flood risk management focused on land drainage for the benefit of agricultural improvement. With increasing urbanization, the Arterial Drainage Act 1945, was amended in 1995 to permit the OPW to implement localised flood relief schemes to provide flood protection for urban areas including cities, towns and villages.

In line with changing national and international concepts on how to manage flood risk most effectively and efficiently, a review of national flood policy was undertaken in 2003/2004. The review was undertaken by an Inter-Departmental Review Group, led by the Minister of State at the Department of Finance with special responsibility for the OPW. The Review Group prepared a report that was put to Government, and subsequently approved and published in September 2004 (Report of the Flood Policy Review Group, OPW, 2004). The scope of the review included an evaluation of the roles and responsibilities of the different bodies with responsibilities for managing flood risk, and to set a new policy for flood risk management in the State into the future. The adopted policy was accompanied by many specific recommendations, including:

- Focus on managing flood risk, rather than relying only on flood protection measures aimed at reducing flooding;
- Taking a catchment-based approach to assess and manage risks within the whole-catchment context;
- Being proactive in assessing and managing flood risks, including the preparation of flood maps and flood risk management plans.

The national Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) programme commenced in Ireland in 2011 to deliver on core components of the National Flood Policy, and on the requirements of the EU Floods Directive. The Programme is being implemented through CFRAM studies which are being undertaken for each of the six river basin districts in Ireland. The CFRAM programme includes three main stages;

Stage 1 Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment 2011

Stage 2 Flood Risk Hazard Mapping 2013

Stage 3 Flood Risk Management Plans 2015

Stage 1 identified areas where there might be a significant risk of flooding, highlighting communities, facilities and sites where the risk due to flooding might be potentially significant. These areas were identified as Areas for Further Assessment (AFA) which will be subject to more detailed assessment to establish the extent and degree of flood risk. The Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment covering County Louth has identified the following settlements as Areas for Further Assessment;

- Carlingford,
- Greenore,
- Dundalk,
- Blackrock,
- Annagassan,
- Ardee,
- Termonfeckin,
- Baltray
- Drogheda.

1.5 Flood Risk

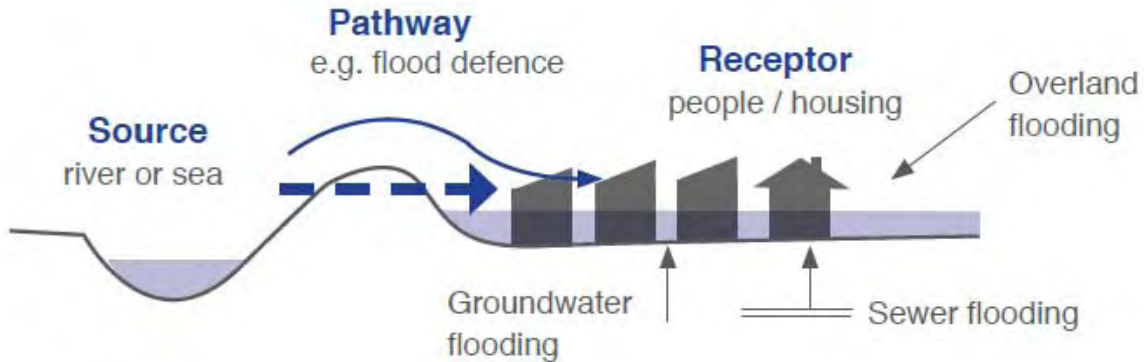
In order to manage flood risk it is important to understand what the term “*flood risk*” implies and to define the components of flood risk in order to apply the principals of the 'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management'. The Guidelines published in 2009 describe flooding as a natural process that can occur at any time and in a wide variety of locations. Flooding can often be beneficial, and many habitats rely on periodic inundation. However, when flooding interacts with human development, it can threaten people, their property and the environment.

Flood risk is generally accepted to be a combination of the likelihood of flooding and the potential consequences arising, and is normally expressed in terms of the following relationship:

$$\text{Flood Risk} = \text{Probability of Flooding} \times \text{Consequences of Flooding}$$

The assessment of flood risk requires an understanding of the sources, the flow path of floodwater and the people and property that can be affected. The *source - pathway - receptor model*, shown below in Figure 1 below, illustrates this and is a widely used environmental model to assess and inform the management of risk.

Figure 1.0 Source-Pathway-Receptor Model



Source: Planning System and Flood Risk Management 2009

This is a standard environmental risk model common to many hazards and should be the starting point of any Flood Risk Assessment. Principal sources of flooding are intense or prolonged rainfall or higher than normal sea levels which can be of particular concern in a coastal county such as Louth, while the most common pathways are rivers, drains, sewers, overland flow and river and coastal floodplains and their defense assets. Receptors can include people, their property and the environment. All three elements must be present for flood risk to arise.

Mitigation measures, such as defenses or flood resilient construction have little or no effect on sources of flooding but they can block or impede pathways or remove receptors. Flood risk assessments require identification and assessment of all three components listed below:

1. The probability and magnitude of the source(s) (e.g. high river levels, sea levels and wave heights)
2. The performance and response of pathways and barriers to pathways such as floodplain areas and flood defense systems
3. The consequences to receptors such as people, properties and the environment.

The planning process is primarily concerned with the location of receptors, taking appropriate account of potential sources and pathways that might put those receptors at risk.

1.5.1 Probability of Flooding

The likelihood of flooding is normally expressed as the percentage probability based on the average frequency measured or extrapolated from records over a large number of years. A 1% probability indicates the flood level that is expected to be reached on average once in 100 years, i.e. it has a 1 in 100 chance of occurring in any one year.

Considered over the lifetime of development, such an apparently low-frequency or rare flood has a significant probability of occurring. For example:

A 1% flood has a 22% (1 in 5) chance of occurring at least once in a 25-year period - the period of a typical residential mortgage

A 53% (1 in 2) chance of occurring in a 75-year period - a typical human lifetime. In the DECLG / OPW guidelines the likelihood of a flood occurring is established through the identification of Flood Zones which indicate a high, moderate or low risk of flooding from fluvial or tidal sources, as defined in Table 1 It is important to note that the Flood Zones do not take other sources to flooding, such as groundwater or pluvial, into account, so an assessment of risk arising from such sources should also be made.

1.5.2 Consequences of Flooding / Vulnerability

Consequences of flooding depend on the hazards caused by flooding (depth of water, speed of flow, rate of onset, duration, wave-action effects, water quality) and the vulnerability of receptors (type of development, nature, e.g. age-structure, of the population, presence and reliability of mitigation measures etc). The 'Planning System and Flood Risk Management' provides three vulnerability categories, based on the type of development, which are detailed in Table 3.1 of the Guidelines, and are summarised as:

- Highly vulnerable, including residential properties, essential infrastructure and emergency service facilities;
- Less vulnerable, such as buildings used for retail and commercial and local transport infrastructure
- Water compatible, including amenity open space, outdoor recreation and associated essential infrastructure, such as changing rooms.

Table 1.0: Definitions of Flood Zones

Flood Zone	Description
<p>Zone A</p> <p>High Probability of Flooding</p>	<p>More than 1% probability (1 in 100) for river flooding and more than 0.5% probability (1 in 200) for coastal flooding. Most types of development would be considered inappropriate in this zone.</p>
<p>Zone B</p> <p>High Probability of Flooding</p>	<p>0.1% to 1% probability (between 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000) for river flooding and 0.1% to 0.5% probability (between 1 in 200 and 1 in 1000) for coastal flooding. Highly vulnerable development, such as hospitals, residential care homes, Garda, fire and ambulance stations, dwelling houses and primary strategic transport and utilities infrastructure, would generally be considered inappropriate in this zone.</p>
<p>Zone C</p> <p>High Probability of Flooding</p>	<p>This zone defines areas with a low risk of flooding from rivers and the coast (i.e. less than 0.1% probability or less than 1 in 1000). Development in this zone is appropriate from a flooding perspective (subject to assessment of flood hazard from sources other than rivers and the coast).</p>

Source: Planning System and Flood Risk Management

1.6 Study Area

This Section provides an overview of the study area, on which the impact of flooding will be determined in this SFRA. The study area comprises of the whole of County Louth located to the east of the Border Region. The county is 826 km² (319sq miles). in area and had a population in 2011 of 122,897. The County contains the two largest towns in Ireland which are not classified as cities. Drogheda lies at the southern extremity of the County whilst Dundalk is in the northern portion of the county. Despite being Ireland's smallest County, it is also one of the most densely populated. The landscape is one of contrasts with the south being generally flat with gentle rolling hills whilst the north is characterized by the mountainous landscapes of the Cooley Peninsula with Slieve Foy, the highest mountain reaching a height of 588 metres.



Map 1: Map of Ireland indicating County Louth

1.6.1 Drainage Catchments

The County is defined along its entire eastern edge by the Irish Sea coastline (need length) whilst the northern part of the County is defined by Carlingford Lough, Inland, the Dee, Fane, Glyde and the Boyne Rivers drain the lowlands of the County.

1.6.2 People, Property and Infrastructure

The county has a population of 122,897 people in 2011 with over 60% of the entire population living in either Drogheda or Dundalk. Other significant settlements include Ardee, Dunleer, Clogherhead and Carlingford. In national terms then, the County is relatively urbanized.

Drogheda; 38,578 (of which 8,185 live within the administrative jurisdiction of County Meath)

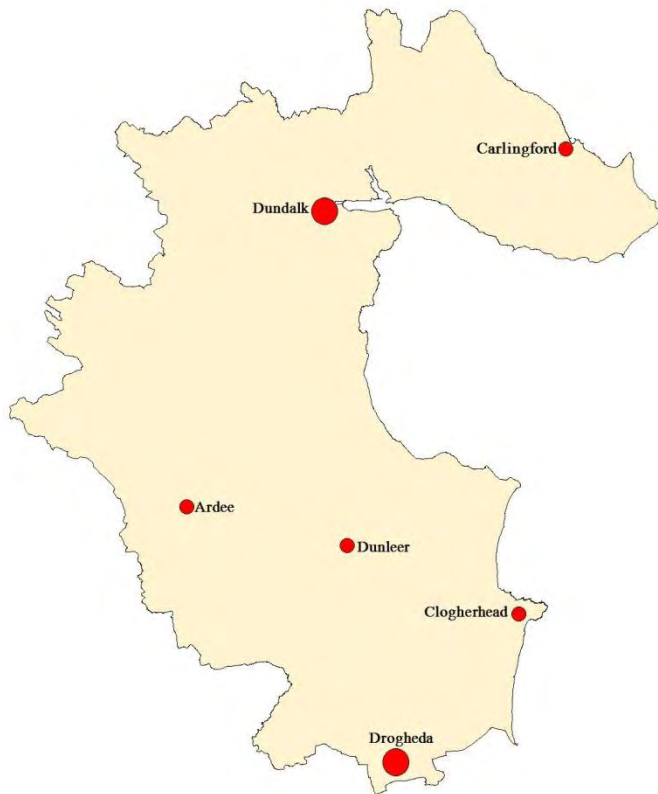
Dundalk; 37,816

Ardee; 4,927

Clogherhead, 1,993

Dunleer; 1,786

Carlingford; 1,045



The infrastructure of the County includes the M1 Motorway (Dublin – Belfast), the N2 (Dublin – Derry) and the Dublin-Dundalk railway with stations in Drogheda and Dundalk. The County also has commercial ports at Drogheda, Greenore, and Dundalk together with a major fishing port at Clogherhead (Port Oriel). The County has two major hospitals in Drogheda and Dundalk with the former acting as a major regional facility. The County has 26 post primary and 70 primary schools together with an Institute of Technology located in Dundalk.

Both Drogheda and Dundalk are major commercial centres incorporating large scale commercial, industrial and service functions together with high end retail offers. Dundalk is also the County Louth capital and administrative centre for the County as a whole.

Map 2: Indicating significant urban settlements County Louth

1.7 Environment

There are four Special Protection Areas in the County including;

Table 1.1: Special Protection Areas (SPA's) in County Louth

Special Protection Areas	Site Code
Carlingford Lough	004078
Dundalk Bay	004026
Stabannan and Braganstown	004091
Boyne Estuary	004080
River Boyne and River Blackwater	004232

Table 1.2: Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) in County Louth

Special Areas of Conservation	Site Code
Carlingford Mountain	000453
Dundalk Bay	000455
Clogherhead	001459
Boyne Coast and Estuary	001957
River Boyne and River Blackwater	002299
Carlingford Shore	002306

Table 1.3: Proposed Natural Heritage Areas in County Louth (pNHA)

Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA)	Site Code
Carlingford Lough pNHA	0452
Stabannan-Braganstown pNHA	0456
Blackhall Woods pNHA	1293
Liscarragh Marsh pNHA	1451
Ardee Bog pNHA	1454
Castlecoo Hill pNHA	1458
Darver Castle pNHA	1461
Drumcah, Toprass & Cortial Loughs pNHA	1462
Mellifont Abbey Woods pNHA	1464
Woodland at Omeath Park pNHA	1465
Trumpet Hill pNHA	1468
Louth Hall and Ardee Woods pNHA	1616
Barmeath Woods pNHA	1801
Stephenstown Pond pNHA	1803
King William's Glen pNHA	1804
Ravensdale Plantation pNHA	1805
Kildemock Marsh pNHA	1806
Reaghstown Marsh pNHA	1828
Dunany Point pNHA	1856

1.8 Regional Planning Guidelines and the SFRA

County Louth lies within the jurisdiction of the Border Regional Authority, and is covered by the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region 2010 – 2022 (RPGs). The RPGs cover the counties of Louth, Monaghan, Cavan, Leitrim, Sligo and Donegal. The RPGs breakdown the overall broad objectives of the NSS to a regional level and thereafter must inform the content of statutory development plans for each individual county. A Regional Flood Risk Appraisal (RFRA) for the Border Region was undertaken as part of the development of the RPG. The findings of the RFRA have been reviewed, and will inform the County SFRA.

1.8.1 Settlement Strategy

The Louth County Development Plan (2015-2021) identifies a hierarchy of settlements within County Louth as detailed in table 5.

Settlement Hierarchy

Table 1.4: Settlement Hierarchy in County Louth

Level	Settlements
1	Dundalk and Drogheda
2	Ardee and Dunleer
3	Annagassan, Baltray Castlebellingham/Kilsaran, Carlingford, Clogherhead, Collon, Dromiskin, Knockbridge, Louth Village, Omeath, Tallanstown, Termonfeckin, , Tullyallen.
4	Ballagan, Ballapousta, Bellurgan, Darver, Dromin, Faughart, Glenmore, Grange, Grangebellew, Greenore, Gyles Quay, Kilcurry, Kilkerry, Lordship, Mountbagnal, Muchgrange, Philipstown, Ravensdale, Reaghstown, Sandpit, Sheelagh, Stabannon, Tinure, Willville

Level 1 Settlements (Dundalk and Drogheda) have their own development plans whilst Level 2 settlements have local area plans. Level 3 settlements have combined settlement plans which are a variation of the County Development Plan. Level 4 settlements have basic mapped development envelopes.

1.8.2 The Planning System and Flood Risk Guidelines Objectives and Principles

The Planning System and Flood Risk Management guidelines describe good flood risk practice in planning and development management. Planning authorities are directed to have regard to the guidelines in the preparation of Development Plans and Local Area Plans, and for development control purposes. The objective of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management guidelines is to integrate flood risk management into the planning process, thereby assisting in the delivery of sustainable development. For this to be achieved, flood risk must be assessed as early as possible in the planning process. Paragraph 1.6 of the Guidelines states that the core objectives are to:

- Avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding;
- Avoid new developments increasing flood risk elsewhere, including that which may arise from surface run-off;
- Ensure effective management of residual risks for development permitted in floodplains;
- Avoid unnecessary restriction of national, regional or local economic and social growth;
- Improve the understanding of flood risk among relevant stakeholders;
- Ensure that the requirements of EU and national law in relation to the natural environment and nature conservation are complied with at all stages of flood risk management.

The guidelines aim to facilitate 'the transparent consideration of flood risk at all levels of the planning process, ensuring a consistency of approach throughout the country.' SFRAs therefore become a key evidence base in meeting these objectives.

The 'Planning System and Flood Risk Management' works on a number of key principles, including:

- Adopting a staged and hierarchical approach to the assessment of flood risk;
- Adopting a sequential approach to the management of flood risk, based on the frequency of flooding (identified through Flood Zones) and the vulnerability of the proposed land use.

1.8.3 The Sequential Approach and the Justification Test

Each stage of the FRA process aims to adopt a sequential approach to management of flood risk in the planning process (Figure 3.1). For the purposes of applying the sequential approach, once flood risk has been identified it can be avoided, or if following the initial assessment the risks are too significant, again avoidance may be the outcome.

Where possible, development in areas identified as being at flood risk should be avoided; this may necessitate de-zoning lands within the development plan. If de-zoning is not possible, then rezoning from a higher vulnerability land use, such as residential, to a less vulnerable use, such as open space may be required.

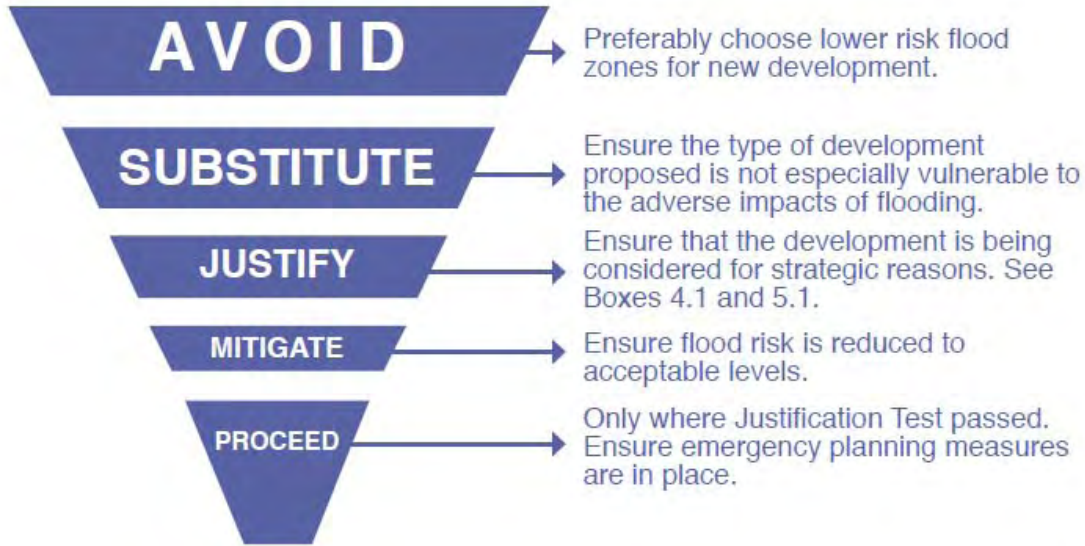


Figure 1.1: Sequential approach to management of flood risk in the planning process

1.8.4 Sequential Approach Principles in Flood Risk Management

Where rezoning is not possible, exceptions to the development restrictions are provided for through the Justification Test. Many towns and cities have central areas that are affected by flood risk and have been targeted for growth. In County Louth, these include the Gateway of Dundalk and the Primary Development Centre of Drogheda, both as defined in the Regional Planning Guidelines. To allow the sustainable and compact development of these urban centres, development in areas of flood risk may be considered necessary. For development in such areas to be allowed, the Justification Test must be passed.

The Justification Test has been designed to rigorously assess the appropriateness, or otherwise, of such developments. The test is comprised of two processes; the Plan-making Justification Test, which is undertaken for zoned settlements, and the Development Management Justification Test. This is used at the planning application stage where it is intended to develop land that is at moderate or high risk of flooding for uses or development vulnerable to flooding that would generally be considered inappropriate for that land.

Table 6 shows which types of development, based on vulnerability to flood risk, are appropriate land uses for each of the Flood Zones. The aim of the SFRA is to guide development zonings to the boxes in the matrix.

Table 1.5: Matrix of Vulnerability versus Flood Zone to illustrate Appropriate Development and that required to meet the Justification Test

	Flood Zone A	Flood Zone B	Flood Zone C
Highly vulnerable development (including essential infrastructure)	Justification Test	Justification Test	Appropriate
Less vulnerable development	Justification Test	Appropriate	Appropriate
Water-compatible development	Appropriate	Appropriate	Appropriate

Source: Planning System and Flood Risk Management

1.8.5 Scales and Stages Of Flood Risk Assessment

Within the hierarchy of regional, strategic and site-specific flood-risk assessments, a tiered approach ensures that the level of information is appropriate to the scale and nature of the flood-risk issues and the location and type of development proposed, avoiding expensive flood modeling and development of mitigation measures where it is not necessary. The stages and scales of flood risk assessment comprise:

Regional Flood Risk Appraisal (RFRA)

This provides a broad overview of flood risk issues across a region to influence spatial allocations for growth in housing and employment as well as to identify where flood risk management measures may be required at a regional level to support the proposed growth. This should be based on readily derivable information and undertaken to inform the Regional Planning Guidelines. In County Louth, flood risk across the county was identified at a broad scale, and for principal towns, through the Border Regional Authority Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 Regional Flood Risk Appraisal.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

This provides an assessment of all types of flood risk informing land use planning decisions. This will enable the Planning Authority to allocate appropriate sites for development, whilst identifying opportunities for reducing flood risk. This SFRA for Louth will revisit the flood risk identification undertaken in the RFRA, and give consideration to a range of potential sources of flooding. An initial flood risk assessment, based on the identification of Flood Zones, will also be carried out for those areas which will be zoned for development. Where the initial flood risk assessment highlights the potential for a significant level of flood risk, or there is conflict with the proposed vulnerability of development, then a SFRA will be recommended for the settlement, which will necessitate a detailed flood risk assessment.

Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)

This involves a site or project specific flood risk assessment to consider all types of flood risk associated with the site and propose appropriate site management and mitigation measures to reduce flood risk to and from the site to an acceptable level. If the previous tiers of study have been undertaken to appropriate levels of detail, it is highly likely that the site specific FRA will require detailed channel and site survey, and hydraulic modeling.

Table 1.6: Flood Risk Assessment Stages Required per Scale of Study Undertaken

	Flood Risk Identification	Initial Flood Risk Assessment	Detailed Flood Risk Assessment
Regional Flood Risk Assessment	R	U	U
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment – County Wide	R	P	U
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, town within County Plan area	R	R	P
Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment	R	R	R

P - Probably need to meet the requirements of the justification test

U - Unlikely to be needed

R - Required to be undertaken

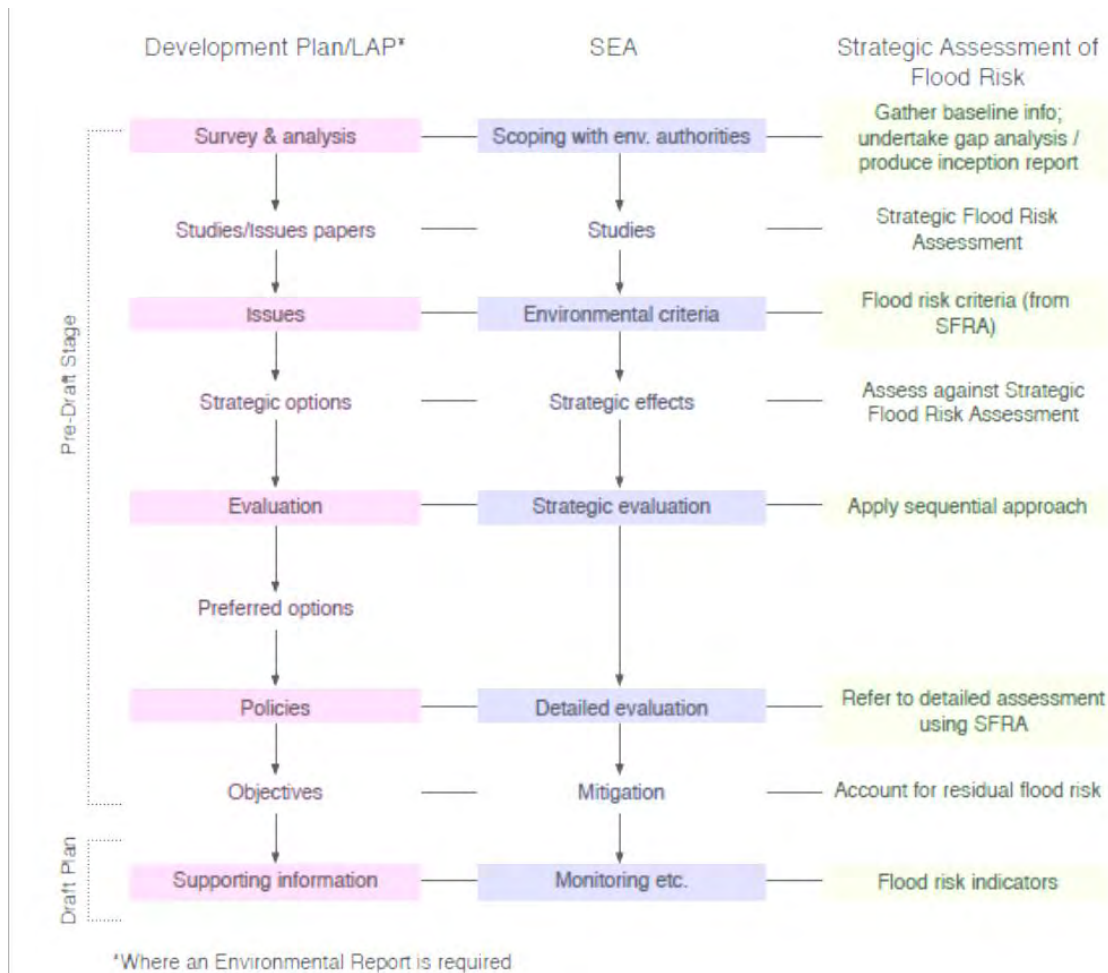
Source: Planning System and Flood Risk Management

1.8.6 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA)

As detailed in the 'Planning System and Flood Risk Management' where development is planned in flood risk areas, a detailed flood risk assessment may have to be carried out within the SFRA, so that the potential for development of the lands and their environmental impact can be assessed. Within the process of preparing the Louth Development Plan, the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) report will consider the environmental effects of the Plan against environmental criteria for the plan area, including mitigation measures and future monitoring of effects.

As with SEA, it will be important to knit flood risk assessment into the development plan structure, and provide a coherent and transparent approach as to how it has been considered in making spatial planning decisions. A summary of the likely effects of the plan on the environment, through exposing new development and their occupants to potential flood risks and any adverse impacts as a result, will be addressed in the SEA process and summarised in the environmental report element of the overall development plan. The integration of the SFRA with the SEA and wider Development Plan process is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 1.2: The integration of the SFRA with the SEA and wider Development Plan process



Source: Planning System and Flood Risk Management

1.9 Compilation of Data

1.9.1 Overview

There are a number of sources of flood data available for County Louth including the following;

Table 1.7: Flood data available for County Louth

Description	Coverage	Confidence	Used
National Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA))	Countywide	Moderate	Yes
2010 Irish Coastal Protection Strategy Study, Phase 3a - North East Coast	Whole Coastline of County	High	Yes
Regional Flood Risk Appraisal	Border Region	Low	Reviewed
Office of Public Works (OPW) National Flood Hazard Mapping Reports – Listed by settlement (Historic Events including photos, aerial photos and reports)) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ardee • Baltray • Blackrock • Carlingford • Clogherhead • Dundalk • Dunleer • Drogheda • Dromiskin 	Countywide (but only for specific sites)	High	Reviewed
River Basin Management Plans and reports (Neagh Bann and Eastern)			

A description of each available dataset is given in the following sections.

1.9.2 National Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment

The Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) is an important first step in determining how flood risk will be assessed and managed in the future; both at the County Louth level and nationally. The purpose of the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) is to identify areas at risk of significant flooding. The PFRA has been arrived at by:

- Reviewing records of floods that have happened in the past
- Undertaking analysis to determine which areas might flood in the future, and what the impacts might be
- Extensive consultation with each Council , as principal partners in this stage of the CFRAM Programme as well as with other Government departments and agencies

This assessment has considered all types of flooding, including that which can occur from rivers, the sea and estuaries, heavy rain, groundwater, the failure of infrastructure, and so on. It also considered the impacts flooding can have on people, property, businesses, the environment and cultural assets. Areas where on-site inspections were required to investigate the issues more closely were identified and these investigations formed part of the CFRAM Studies.

The PFRA is only a preliminary assessment, based on available or readily derivable information. Analysis has been undertaken to identify areas prone to flooding, and the risks associated with such flooding, but it should be stressed that the PFRAM analysis is purely indicative and undertaken for the purpose of completing the PFRA.

1.9.3 Irish Coastal Protection Strategy Study 2013

The Irish Coastal Protection Strategy Study (ICPSS) is a national study that was commissioned in 2003 with the objective of providing information to support decision making about how best to manage risks associated with coastal flooding and coastal erosion. The Study was completed in 2013 and provides strategic current scenario and future scenario (up to 2100) coastal flood hazard maps and strategic coastal erosion maps for the national coastline. This major study provides invaluable and essential information required to inform policy in this area, particularly for local authorities in relation to the proper planning and development of coastal areas. County Louth was examined under Phase 3 of the study (North East and South Coast). The ICPSS is considered to be one of the more robust studies carried out to date into flooding potential and is invaluable in relation to County Louth given the County's extensive coastline.

1.9.4 Border Region Regional Flood Risk Assessment 2010 (RFRA)

The Border Region Regional Flood Risk Assessment 2010 was undertaken as part of the development of the Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG) for the Border Region which includes the counties of Louth, Monaghan, Cavan, Leitrim, Sligo and Donegal. It is anticipated that during the course of this plan County Louth will be transferred into a new Eastern Region centered on Greater Dublin. Table 9 shows the towns in County Louth which are identified in the RPG settlement hierarchy.

Table 1.8: RPG Settlement Hierarchy for County Louth

Hierarchy	Locations
Gateway	Dundalk
Primary Development Centre	Drogheda (County Louth portion only)

The RFRA lists the following datasets which should be used to inform flood risk management in County Louth;

- Existing individual area/catchment flood studies;
- Historical recording of spatial information from www.floodmaps.ie prepared by the OPW
- Benefiting land maps where arterial drainage works have taken place (layer on Flood maps) which is a surrogate indicator of flood risk;
- Mapping of extents of historical flooding, including O.S historical mapping;
- Soils maps of the Region from the Geological Survey of Ireland;
- Topographical mapping including Lidar mapping. (Local contour data.);
- Coastal Flooding Studies pertaining to defences, including information pertaining to Irish Coastal Protection Strategy studies
- Urban Drainage studies undertaken by Local Authorities.

THE RFRA notes that the key towns in County Louth outlined above are at risk of flooding as detailed in Table 10.

Table 1.9: Key towns in County Louth at risk of flooding

Coastal Fluvial	Dundalk		
		Area to East of town protected by Ramparts and land adjacent to Castletown River.	Incorporation of recommendations in CFRAM study as variation into local area plans for Dundalk and Environs local area plan.
		Lands adjacent urban Streams.	Implement appropriate improvement works and condition appropriate catchment based SUDS provisions for new developments.
			OPW undertaking CFRAM for Dundalk area.

Carlingford	1995 12 February 2013	Market Street, flooding of public house due to flash flood. Grove Road, Carlingford. Road closed due to flooding caused by runoff from adjacent lands following prolonged, heavy periods of rain.
Clogherhead	02 nd November 2000	Flooding at Port Oriel Caravan Park
Dundalk	02 nd November 2000	Fatima (North West Dundalk) Major flooding incidence in residential area. Ardee Road (West Dundalk) major flooding incidence in residential area. Dundalk Brewery, flooding of commercial premises

Office of Public Works (OPW) National Flood Hazard Mapping Reports

2.1 Sources of Flooding

This SFRA has reviewed flood risk from fluvial, coastal/estuarine, pluvial and groundwater sources. It also considers flooding from drainage systems, reservoirs and canals and other artificial or man-made systems. The focus of the study is on risk from fluvial and tidal (coastal/estuarine) flooding. There are two main reasons for this decision. Firstly, the review of historical flooding shows these to be the most common, and most damaging, sources of flooding. Secondly, Flood Zones in the 'Planning System and Flood Risk Management' are defined on the basis of fluvial, and where appropriate, tidal flood risk. In addition, the SFRA should be based on readily derivable information, and records and indicators for fluvial and coastal flood risk are generally more abundant than for other sources of flooding. With climate change, the frequency, pattern and severity of flooding are expected to change and become more damaging so the likely impact of climate change on fluvial and coastal flood extents has also been appraised.

2.2. Fluvial Flooding

Flooding of watercourses is associated with the exceedance of channel capacity during higher flows. The process of flooding on watercourses depends on a number of characteristics associated with the catchment including; geographical location and variation in rainfall, steepness of the channel and surrounding floodplain and infiltration and rate of runoff associated with urban and rural catchments. Generally there are

two main types of catchments; large and relatively flat or small and steep, the two giving two very different responses during large rainfall events.

In a large, relatively flat catchment, flood levels will rise slowly and natural floodplains may remain flooded for several days, acting as the natural regulator of the flow. In small, steep catchments, local intense rainfall can result in the rapid onset of deep and fast-flowing flooding with little warning. Such “flash” flooding, which may only last a few hours, can cause considerable damage and possible threat to life.

The form of the floodplain, either natural or urbanised, can influence flooding along watercourses. The location of buildings and roads can significantly influence flood depths and velocities by altering flow directions and reducing the volume of storage within the floodplain. Critical structures such as bridges and culverts can also significantly reduce capacity creating pinch points within the floodplain. These structures are also vulnerable to blockage by natural debris within the channel or by fly tipping and waste.

Flood risk to specific settlements is discussed in Section 6 and has been used to inform the zoning objectives for the towns and villages. Outside the zoned settlements there is the potential for developments which must also be allocated according to the principles of the 'Planning System and Flood Risk Management'. Where development is proposed within Flood Zones A or B, the Justification Test must be applied, and passed.

2.3 Coastal / Estuarine Flooding

Coastal flooding is caused by higher sea levels than normal, largely as a result of storm surges, resulting in the sea overflowing onto the land. Coastal flooding is influenced by the following three factors, which often work in combination:

- High tide level
- Storm surges caused by low barometric pressure exacerbated by high winds (the highest surges can develop from hurricanes);
- Wave action, which is dependent on wind speed and direction, local topography and exposure.

Estuarial flooding may occur due to a combination of tidal and fluvial flood mechanisms, i.e. interaction between rivers and the sea, with tide levels being dominant in most cases. A combination of high flow in rivers and a high tide will prevent water flowing out to sea, causing increase in water levels inland, which may flood over river banks.

Significant tracts of coastal lands in Louth are considered to be at risk from flooding as are areas adjacent to rivers and streams. Some areas located upstream of constrained open channels where streams have been culverted or outfalls tide locked, may be at risk of flooding. Equally, development of these areas also may pose a significant risk to downstream lands. Both Drogheda and Dundalk are at risk of Coastal / Estuarine Flooding with inundation occurring, most notably in 2014.

Coastal erosion of the foreshore and the shoreline is intimately linked with coastal flooding. The loss of natural coastal defences, such as sand due to erosion (or mechanical removal of sand) can increase the risk of flooding in coastal areas. The Planning Guidelines state that coastal erosion should therefore be considered in coastal areas within the planning process.

2.4 Pluvial Flooding

Flooding of land from surface water runoff is usually caused by intense rainfall that may only last a few hours. The resulting water follows natural valley lines, creating flow paths along roads and through and around developments and ponding in low spots, which often coincide with fluvial floodplains in low lying areas. Any areas at risk from fluvial flooding will almost certainly be at risk from surface water flooding. SFRA's require a strategic assessment of the likelihood of surface water flooding for which overland routing is suitable and appropriate. This includes consideration of the following:

- Are there zoned lands which may need to accommodate and retain surface water flow routes?
- Are there zoned lands which might discharge upstream of an area vulnerable to surface water flooding?

Whilst the potential for surface water flow paths or ponding should not necessarily impede or restrict development, applications in such areas need to consider drainage thoroughly so as to ensure risks do not increase in the future. A detailed drainage assessment should be undertaken for specific applications.

2.5 Groundwater Flooding

Groundwater flooding is caused by the emergence of water originating from underground, and is particularly common in karstic landscapes which are prevalent in the Cooley Peninsula area of County Louth. This can emerge from either point or diffuse locations. The occurrence of groundwater flooding is usually very local and unlike flooding from rivers and the sea, does not generally pose a significant risk to life due to the slow rate at which the water level rises. However, groundwater flooding can cause significant damage to property, especial in urban areas and pose further risks to the environment and ground stability. Groundwater flooding can persist over a number of weeks and poses a significant but localised issue that has attracted an increasing amount of public concern in recent years. In most cases groundwater flooding cannot be easily managed or lasting solutions engineered, although the impact on buildings can be mitigated through various measures.

2.6 Flooding from Drainage Systems

Flooding from artificial drainage systems occurs when flow entering a system, such as an urban storm water drainage system, exceeds its discharge capacity, it becomes blocked or it cannot discharge due to a high water level in the receiving watercourse. Flooding in urban areas can also be attributed to sewers. Sewers have a finite capacity which, during certain load conditions, will be exceeded. In addition, design standards vary and changes within the catchment areas draining to the system, in particular planned growth and urban creep, will reduce the level of service provided by the asset. Sewer flooding problems will often be associated with regularly occurring storm events during which sewers and associated

infrastructure can become blocked or fail. This problem is exacerbated in areas with under-capacity systems. In the larger events that are less frequent but have a higher consequence, surface water will exceed the capacity of the sewer system and flow across the surface of the land, often following the same flow paths and ponding in the same areas as overland flow.

Foul sewers and surface water drainage systems are spread extensively across the urban areas with various interconnected systems discharging to treatment works and into local watercourses.

There are limited records of flooding from drainage systems in Louth. Whilst information on such incidents can give an idea of those areas with limited drainage capacity, it is only a record of the hydraulic inadequacies of the sewer systems, not properties at risk of flooding. Therefore it has limiting usefulness in predicting future flooding.

2.7 Flooding from Reservoirs and other Artificial Sources

Reservoirs can be a major source of flood risk, as demonstrated in the 2009 flooding, when waters from the Inniscarra dam flooded significant sections of Cork. Whilst the probability of dam failure or breach occurring is very small, the consequences of such an event can be devastating thereby presenting a risk of flooding which has to be considered.

Water supply to County Louth comes in two forms. Much of the north of the County including Dundalk receives water from Lough Muckno in County Monaghan via the Cavan Hill treatment plant, whilst parts of the south of the County, including Drogheda is supplied from the River Boyne in County Meath via the Staleen treatment plant. This supply is augmented by small reservoirs, north of Drogheda in the Balgatharan area. These sources of water supply are augmented by additional abstraction from the rivers Dee, Glyde, Lislea, Fane and Mattock and from boreholes across the County. As such, there are no major artificial waterbodies such as large reservoirs or canals which could contribute to flood risk if overwhelmed

2.8 Flooding Impacts

Flood impacts may be direct or indirect, immediate or long term and may affect households and communities, individuals as well as the environment, infrastructure and economy of an area. In the following sections, the impacts of flooding to people, property, infrastructure and the environment is discussed, and assessed in the context of County Louth.

2.9 Flooding Impacts on People

Flooding has a wide range of social impacts which may be difficult to delineate as they are interconnected, cumulative and often not quantifiable.

In small urban or steep upland catchments which have a very rapid response to rainfall, or with flooding due to infrastructure failure, flood waters can rise very quickly and put life at risk. Even shallow water

flowing at 2m/s can knock children and many adults off their feet and vehicles can be moved by water of 300mm depth. The risks rise if the flood water is carrying debris.

The impact on people as a result of the stress and trauma of being flooded, or even of being under the threat of flooding, can be immense. Long-term impacts can arise due to chronic illnesses and stress. Flood water contaminated by sewage or other pollutants (e.g. chemicals stored in garages or commercial properties) is particularly likely to cause such illnesses, either directly as a result of contact with the polluted flood water or indirectly as a result of sediments left behind.

The degree to which populations are at risk from flooding is not solely dependent upon proximity to the source of the threat or the physical nature of the flooding. Social factors also play a significant role in determining risk. Although people may experience the same flood, in the same area, at the same time, their levels of suffering are likely to differ greatly as a result of basic social differences. These differences will affect vulnerability in a variety of ways, including an individual or community's response to risk communication (flood warning) and physical and psychological recovery in the aftermath of a flood. How individuals and communities experience the impact will also vary depending on their awareness of the risk of flooding, preparedness for the flood event and the existence or lack of coping strategies. Impacts of flooding on people are difficult to measure and quantify. There is currently no spatially referenced dataset of social vulnerability, although, in time, the census could be adapted into the format of the Social Flood Vulnerability Index, as used in the UK.

2.10 Flooding Impacts on Property and Infrastructure

Flooding can cause severe property damage. Flood water is likely to damage internal finishes, contents, electrical and other services and possibly cause structural damage. The physical effects can have significant long-term impacts, with re-occupation sometimes not possible for over a year. The costs of flooding are increasing, partly due to increasing amounts of electrical and other sophisticated equipment within developments.

The damage flooding can cause to businesses and infrastructure, such as transport or utilities like electricity and water supply, can have significant detrimental impacts on local and regional economies. The long term closure of businesses, for example, can lead to job losses and other economic impact

The vulnerability of buildings is important to understand in terms of their occupants and their type. For example, it is much more difficult to evacuate the old and ill from hospitals and care homes than people working in offices or industrial areas. Building types that need to be operational during- and post-flood, such as ambulance stations and emergency response centres are also vulnerable as if the services they provide are disrupted by flooding it will place the immediate community at greater risk. Transport and strategic utilities infrastructure can be particularly vulnerable to flooding because interruption of their function can have widespread effects well beyond the area of flooding. For example, flooding of primary roads or railways can deny access to areas for the duration of the flooding, as well as causing damage to the road or railway. Flooding of water distribution infrastructure, such as pumping stations, or of electricity sub-stations can result in loss of water or power over large areas. This can magnify the impact of flooding beyond the immediate community and reinforces why decisions to locate development in floodplain should be taken very carefully.

Placing new development or regenerating in flood risk areas has additional short and long term costs. The need to build resistant and resilient properties could significantly increase overall costs of development, whilst ongoing maintenance and insurance increase future expenditure.

2.11 Flooding Impacts on the Environment

Environmental impacts can be significant and include soil erosion, bank erosion, land sliding and damage to vegetation as well as the impacts on water quality, habitats and flora and fauna caused by bacteria and other pollutants carried by floodwater.

Flooding can have a beneficial role in natural habitats. Many wetland habitats are dependent on annual flooding for their sustainability and can contribute to the storing of flood waters to reduce flood risk elsewhere. It is important to recognise the value of maintenance or restoration of natural riparian zones such as grasslands which protect the soils from erosion and „natural“ meadows which can tolerate flood inundation. The use of Green Infrastructure throughout the river centre can also play a vital role in enhancing the river environment as well as safeguarding land from future development, protecting people and buildings from flooding and reducing flood risk downstream.

A natural floodplain can help accommodate climate change and improve the quality of rivers and associated wetlands to help achieve good status by 2015 under the Water Framework Directive. Meeting WFD objectives involves not only ecosystems, water quality, drought and flood impact considerations but also the physical characteristics and morphology of the river channel, floodplain and associated structures.

In County Louth, Carlingford Shore SAC, Dundalk Bay SAC and Boyne Coast / Estuary SAC all lie within PFRA modeled Flood Zones A and B. Furthermore, Carlingford Lough SPA, Dundalk Bay SPA and Boyne Estuary SPA lie within the same zones. Development in the designated sites will be constrained by the SAC and SPA objectives, but would also be required to pass the Justification Test if proposed in the vicinity of the watercourses.

2.12 Climate Change

The 'Planning System and Flood Risk Management' recommends that a precautionary approach to climate change is adopted due to the level of uncertainty involved in the potential effects. A significant amount of research into climate change has been undertaken on both a national and international front. This section will briefly examine some of the key findings of the research to date.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was established in 1988 and its first report in 1990 justified concern about the effects of climate change on a scientific basis. The more recent IPCC Fourth Assessment Report 2007 concludes that climate change is unequivocal. It projects a global average sea level rise of between 0.18m and 0.59m for different SRES emissions scenarios, up to the end of the century.

More specific advice on the expected impacts of climate change and the allowances to be provided for future flood risk management in Ireland is given in the OPW guidance.

Two climate change scenarios are considered. These are the Mid-Range Future Scenario (MRFS) and the High-End Future Scenario (HEFS). The MRFS is intended to represent a "likely" future scenario based on

the wide range of future predictions available. The HEFS represents a more "extreme" future scenario at the upper boundaries of future projections. Based on these two scenarios the OPW recommends allowances for climate change as detailed in Table 12:

Table 2.0: Climate Change Scenarios

Criteria	Mid-Range Future Scenario (MRFS)	High-End Future Scenario (HEFS)
Extreme Rainfall Depths	+20%	+30%
Flood Flows	+20%	+30%
Mean Sea Level Rise	+500mm	+1,000mm
Land Movement	-0.5mm per year Note; Applicable to southern part of Country only ie; Dublin to Galway and south of this line	-0.5mm per year Note; Applicable to southern part of Country only ie; Dublin to Galway and south of this line
Urbanisation	No general allowance – Review on a case by case basis	No general allowance – Review on a case by case basis
Forestation	-1/6 TP	-1/3 TP

2.13 Climate Change and Flood Risk Assessment

The Flood Zones are determined based on readily available information and their purpose is to be used as a tool to avoid inappropriate development in areas of flood risk. Where development is proposed, within an area of potential flood risk (Flood Zone A or B), a flood risk assessment of appropriate scale will be required and this assessment must take into account climate change and associated impacts. Under the National CFRAM programme, the detailed modeling and assessment stage of each study will include for climate change effects.

Consideration of climate change is particularly important where flood alleviation measures are proposed as the design standard of the proposal may reduce significantly in future years due to increased rainfall, river flows and sea levels. As recommended by the Planning Guidelines, a precautionary approach should be adopted. Climate change may result in increased flood extents and therefore caution should be taken when zoning lands in transitional areas. In general, Flood Zone B, which represents the 0.1% AEP extent, can be taken as an indication of the extent of the 1% AEP flood event with climate change. In steep valleys an increase in water level will relate to a very small increase in extent, however in flatter low-lying basins a small increase in water level can result in a significant increase in flood extent. In the design of flood

alleviation measures, climate change should be taken into account and design levels of structures, such as flood walls or embankments, must be sufficient to cope with the effects of climate change over the lifetime of the structure or where circumstances permit, be capable of adaption.

Following the Planning Guidelines, development should always be located in areas of lowest flood risk first, and only when it has been established that there are no suitable alternative options should development (of the lowest vulnerability) proceed. In such instances, consideration of suitable flood risk mitigation and management measures is necessary. It may be technically feasible to mitigate or manage flood risk at site level, however the potential impacts on the surrounding community must also be considered.

A strategic approach to the management of flood risk is required to consider the impact of flooding on a catchment wide basis. Under the CFRAM programme, detailed modelling will be undertaken that will lead to the publication of flood hazard maps for a number of settlements that have been identified as an Area for Further Assessment (AFA). The CFRAM will also result in the publication of a Flood Risk Management Plan that will include management and mitigation options to deal with flood risk in the future.

2.14 Management of Flood Risk from a Planning Perspective

The Planning Guidelines recommend a sequential approach. This works well where there are no constraints to development and there is an ample source of developable land. In some areas, development may be constrained due to its location adjacent to the river and natural flood plain. Spatial planning objectives for the area must coincide with the overall flood management strategy. Flood risk management policies must allow a sustainable approach to development without increasing exposure to flood risk whilst considering the mitigation and management of flood risk to existing communities.

2.15 Flood Risk Policies and Objectives

The policies and objective of the Planning Authority will include consideration of the following:

- The Planning System and Flood Risk Management, Guidelines for Planning Authorities.
- The content of this SFRA; the Flood Zones and their use as a planning tool.
- The recommendations of the Neagh-Bann and Eastern CFRAM studies upon completion in 2016. These studies will result in recommended mitigation and management measures.

2.16 Specific Development Planning Applications

The following outlines the key requirements relating to the management of development in areas at risk of flooding:

- All development at potential risk of flooding will require an appropriately detailed Flood Risk Assessment. As a minimum this will include;
 - "Stage 1 - Identification of Flood Risk"; where flood risk is identified
 - "Stage 2 - Initial FRA" will be required and depending on the scale and nature of the risk
 - "Stage 3 - Detailed FRA" may be required.

All development proposals, within or incorporating areas at moderate to high flood risk, that are vulnerable to flooding will require the application of the development management justification test in accordance with Box 5.1 of the Planning Guidelines, The Planning System and Flood Risk Management.

The planning authority will explore opportunities to include flood alleviation proposals and upgrades that benefit the county and / or local area as a whole, as part of specific development applications.

Any proposal that is considered acceptable in principle shall demonstrate the use of the sequential approach in terms of the site layout and design and, in satisfying the Justification Test, the proposal will demonstrate that appropriate mitigation and management measures are put in place.

2.17 Flood Management Action Plan

There are various levels of flood management plans and these include the overall strategy for the river catchment, the emergency response plan of the Council and the flood risk management plan at a site specific level.

2.18 Strategic Flood Risk Management Plan

This will be informed by the detailed assessment of areas at significant flood risk, upon completion of the CFRAM programme. A Strategic Countywide FRMP will pull together the recommendations from each CFRAM in the Eastern and Neagh-Bann river basin districts, including the FEM FRAMS. The formulation of a management plan is particularly important in any areas reliant on protection from flood defences.

The management plan must consider residual risk and an effective emergency response should the defences fail due to overtopping or breach. Under the CFRAM programme, flood risk management options will be explored for all areas that will undergo detailed modelling i.e. Areas for Further Assessment (AFA). Under the EU Floods Directive, the CFRAM programme is due for completion by 2016

2.19 Site Specific Flood Risk Management Plan (FRMP)

This will be specific to the development and associated activities. A site specific FRMP, which may include an emergency plan, will be required for any development proposal that is granted approval in an area of flood risk.

2.20 Development Relating To Management of Surface Water

Development has the potential to cause an increase in impermeable area and an associated increase in surface water runoff rates and volumes. This can lead to potential increase in flood risk downstream due to overloading of existing drainage infrastructure. Managing surface water discharges from new development is crucial in managing and reducing flood risk to other development downstream. The management of surface water is an important concern for all development sites.

3.1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Level 3 Settlements; Walk Over Surveys

Data / Mapping Derived from Office of Public Works (OPW), Areas for Further Assessment (AFAs) and Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment

Introduction

The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines, Guidelines for Planning Authorities emphasises the importance of including robust flood risk policies in the development plan. The SFRA is an area-wide study and the level of detail is commensurate with its strategic nature. It does not provide suitably detailed site-specific information, such as design flood levels. A site-specific flood risk assessment is still required to cover in more detail all sources of flood risk for individual developments. The level of detail required for a site-specific flood risk assessment depends on the scale and nature of the development and the risks involved.

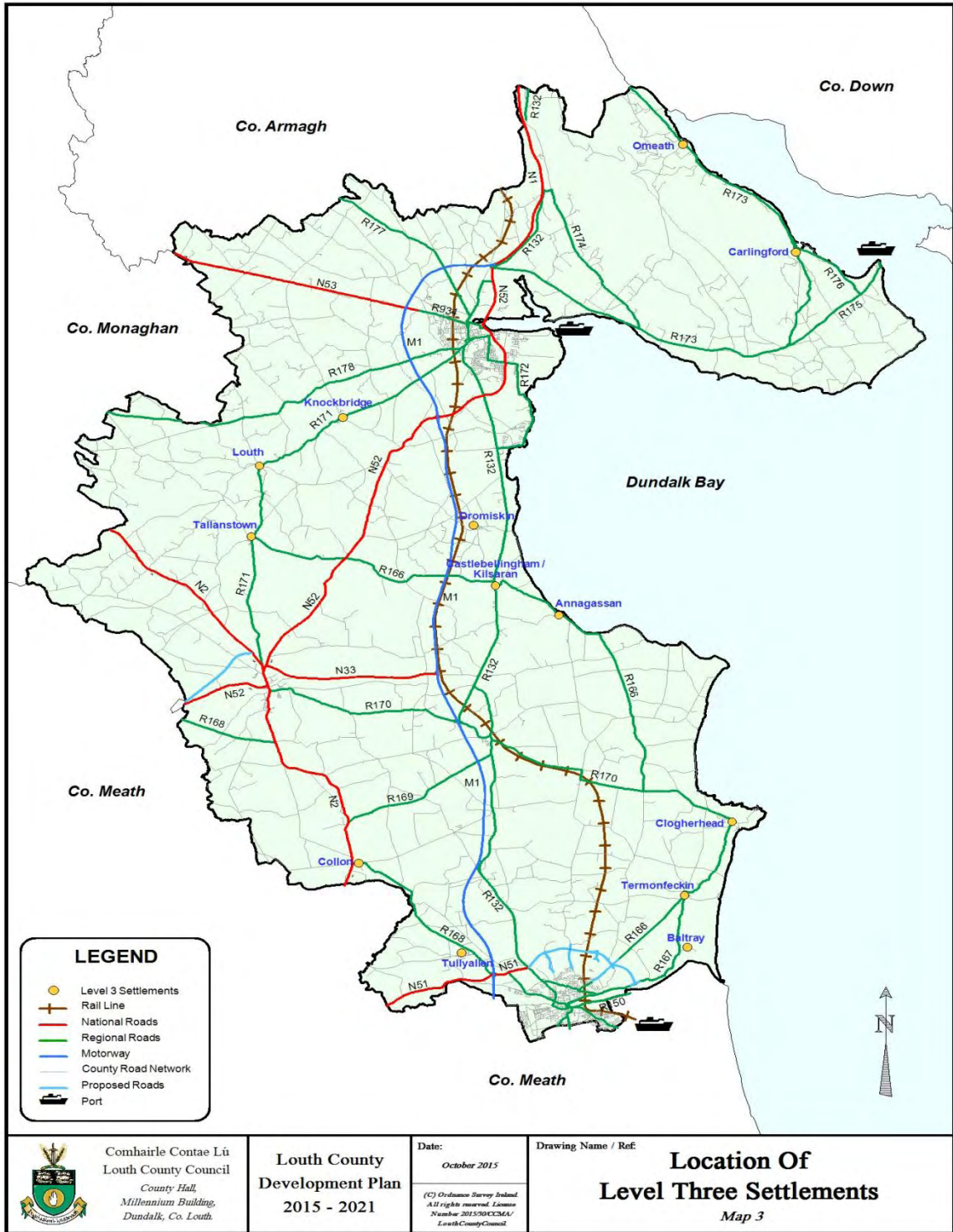
This section of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the Louth County Development Plan 2015 – 2021 contains a series of maps detailing potential flood risk for the County as a whole, including rural areas and settlements. It also contains detailed maps illustrating an evaluation of the potential flood risk for each of the Level 3 Settlements as set out in Chapter 2 of the Louth County Development Plan 2015 – 2021 and the associated Appendix 2 (Settlements Maps). The County Development Plan does not propose the designation of any new settlements within County Louth.

It should also be noted that the Level 1 and Level 2 settlements in the County, namely Dundalk, Drogheda (Level 1) Ardee and Dunleer (Level 2) will be the subject of Local Area Plans subsequent to the adoption of the County Development Plan and as such, will have individual Strategic Flood Risk Assessments prepared for each.

3.2 Impact of Strategic Flood Risk Assessment on the Louth County Core Strategy

The Preferred Development Strategy for County Louth as contained within Chapter Two (2) of the Louth County Development Plan (Settlement Strategy and Core Strategy) states that the focus of the strategy is on achieving inter-alia, critical mass in the Large Growth Towns of Dundalk and Drogheda, at the moderate sustainable growth towns of Ardee and Dunleer and at key small towns and villages namely Annagasson, Baltray, Carlingford, Castlebellingham / Kilsaran, Clogherhead, Collon, Dromiskin, Knockbridge, Louth Village, Omeath, Tallanstown, Termonfeckin, and Tullyallen (Level 3 Settlements). Growth will be directed towards strong urban centres while protecting the rural hinterlands. It will therefore be vital to ensure that flood risk will not be a major constraint for this planned growth.

Map 3: Level Three Settlement Locations



3.3: ANNAGASSAN

Sources of Flooding

The CFRAM AFA Draft flood mapping shows a significant area within Annagassan village as being vulnerable to coastal flooding.

The River Dee flows into the River Glyde which flows through the village of Annagassan to the coast. The CFRAM AFA Draft flood map shows a corridor along both rivers as being vulnerable to fluvial flooding.

The PFRA flood mapping also indicates a small number of areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Annagassan.

Zoning in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risk in the village of Annagassan is Coastal flooding with affected lands being zoned as “Open Space, Amenity and Recreation”, “Village Centre”, “Residential”, “Strategic Reserve” and “Community Facilities”, where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management.

There is also a significant risk from Fluvial flooding within the corridor along the River Glyde with the affected lands within the corridor zoned as “Strategic Reserve”. Again a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management.

With regard to the areas of Pluvial flooding identified, a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

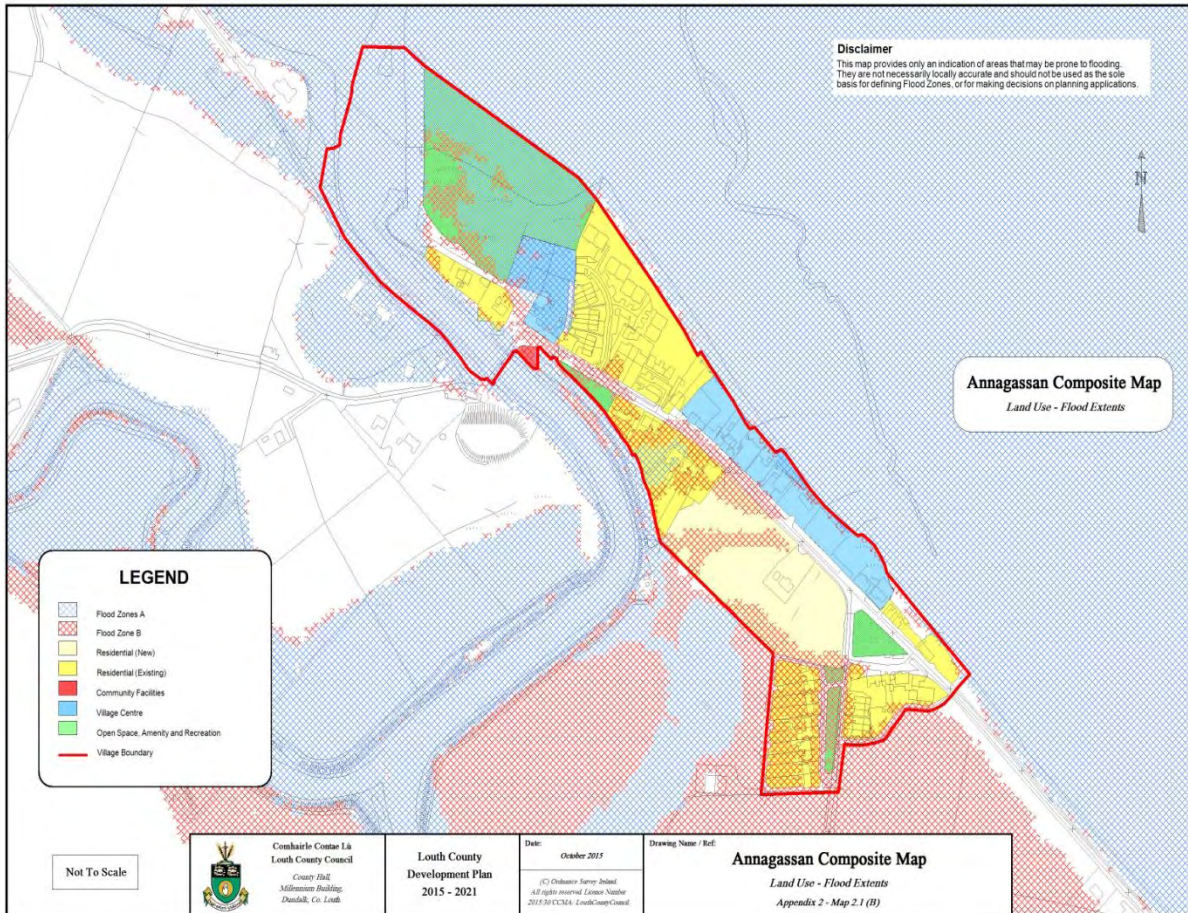
Note

Annagassan has been identified as an “Area for Further Assessment”, (AFA), within the Neagh Bann Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study. Stage 2 Flood Risk Hazard Mapping has been prepared up to Draft Final Stage and is currently undergoing a validation process within the CFRAM Study through both Public Consultation Days and a National Consultation Period. Final Stage 2 Flood Risk Hazard Mapping will then become available in mid 2015 and CFRAM Stage 3 Flood Risk Management Plans will become available in 2016. This additional information will be used in assessing proposed development in areas of flood risk.

Appendix 13 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Annagassan AFA	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 14th August 2014	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Site 1 Road bridge over River Glyde on approach from Kilsaran. River level almost up to full extent of parapets approx 0.3m below commencement of arch.</p> <p><u>Zoning; Strategic Reserve – South east and south west vulnerable where adjacent to river, should be open space in any development proposal.</u></p>	<p>E707943 N793843</p>
<p>Site 2 Seafront at The Saltings housing development. Dwellings do not have raised FFL. Seawall and extensive rock armouring in situ. Open space in front of dwellings may provide some attenuation.</p> <p><u>Zoning; Village Centre with Open Space, Amenity and Recreation to north east. Less vulnerable but not suitable for residential</u></p>	<p>E708860 N794003</p>
<p>Site 3 Road exiting village towards Castlebellingham 300m south east of village boundary. Estuary / river comes within 0.5 m of adjacent road. Defence provided by low wall approx 0.5 m height. Houses on land side of road appear to be at or below water level and therefore most at risk of inundation in storm surge events.</p> <p><u>Zoning; Strategic Reserve however existing one off residential in situ (2no.) Existing dwellings vulnerable. No further residential advisable.</u></p>	<p>E708417 N794143</p>
Conclusion	Accurate

Map 4: Annagassan Composite Map



3.4: BALTRAY

Sources of Flooding

The CFRAM AFA Draft flood mapping shows a small area within Baltray village as being vulnerable to Coastal flooding.

The Beaulieu Stream flows along the Regional Road, R167, before flowing into the Boyne Estuary at Braghan Bridge. The CFRAM AFA Draft flood mapping shows a corridor along the Beaulieu Stream as being vulnerable to fluvial flooding.

The PFRA flood mapping also indicates a small number of areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Baltray.

Zoning in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risk in the village of Baltray is Coastal flooding with affected lands being zoned as “Open Space, Amenity and Recreation”, “Village Centre”, and “Residential”, where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management.

There is also a risk from Fluvial flooding within the corridor along the Beaulieu Stream. Most of this corridor is zoned appropriately as “Open Space, Amenity and Recreation”, however there are also small areas of affected lands within the corridor zoned as “Village Centre”, and “Residential” where a site specific FRA would also be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management.

With regard to the areas of Pluvial flooding identified, a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

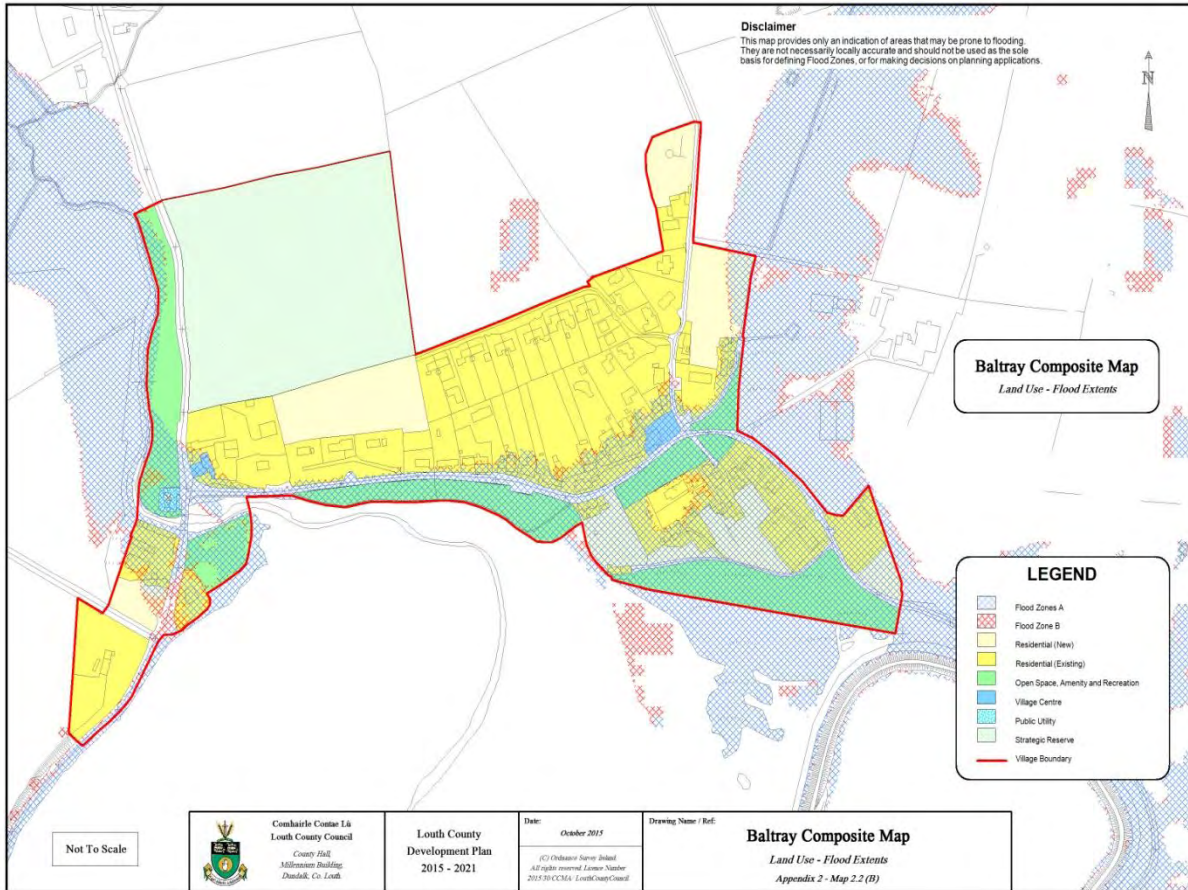
Note

Baltray has been identified as an “Area for Further Assessment”, (AFA), within the Eastern Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study. Stage 2 Flood Risk Hazard Mapping has been prepared up to Draft Final Stage and is currently undergoing a validation process within the CFRAM Study through both Public Consultation Days and a National Consultation Period. Final Stage 2 Flood Risk Hazard Mapping will then become available in mid 2015 and CFRAM Stage 3 Flood Risk Management Plans will become available in 2016. This additional information will be used in assessing proposed development in areas of flood risk.

Appendix 13 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Baltray	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 18th August 2014	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Site 1 Seafront / Strand. Largely comprised of single storey or 1 ½ storey dwellings all level with adjacent roadway. Across public road there is an extensive maintained grassed area which should provide good attenuation as is illustrated on the map. Beyond this a well maintained sea wall provides further defence. Tidal debris on sea side of wall indicates tidal extent is well below base of seawall – approximately 1.0m.</p> <p>Zoning; Open Space, Amenity and Recreation – Water Compatible</p>	<p>E714066 N777752</p>
<p>Sites 2 Village centre and eastern portion of village. Map indicates inundation by coastal waters for much of this area. All properties in this area are at roadway level and sea defences appear in poor condition in comparison to the wall outlined above. Further to the south of this area there were no defences evident. To the east however a very extensive dune system provides defence towards the open sea.</p> <p>Zoning; Residential And open space to south and north. Residential largely built up but there are gap sites which may be subject to residential applications. Would not recommend any further development in this area as highly vulnerable for such development. Open space is water compatible</p>	<p>E714329 N777998</p>
<p>Site 3 North of the village the landform rises gradually. The map indicates extensive flooding potential in this area. The site visit noted that whilst the land is rising in this area, there is an extensive natural hollow to the immediate east.</p> <p>Zoning; Residential. Each portion of this zoned area is vulnerable and should be utilised at application stage for open space / attenuation</p>	<p>E714534 N777658</p>
<p>Site 4 West of village, flooding is indicated adjacent (east) the road to Termonfeckin. This area contains a number of small river tributaries all of which are flowing south towards the sea.</p> <p>Zoning; Open Space – Water Compatible, Community Facility; Sewerage Pump Station, highly vulnerable</p>	
<p>Conclusion</p>	<p>Accurate</p>

Map 5 : Baltray Composite Map



3.5: CARLINGFORD

Sources of Flooding

The CFRAM AFA Draft flood mapping shows a significant area within Carlingford village as being vulnerable to both coastal and fluvial flooding. There are a number of mountain streams which flow through Carlingford village to the Harbour and the CFRAM AFA Draft flood mapping shows an area in the south of the village as being vulnerable to flooding where two of these mountain streams flatten out before flowing into the Harbour.

The PFRA flood mapping for also indicates a small number of areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Carlingford.

Zoning in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risk in the village of Carlingford is Coastal flooding with affected lands being zoned as “Open Space, Amenity and Recreation”, “Village Centre”, “Community Facilities” “Strategic Reserve” and “Residential”, where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management.

There is also a risk from Fluvial flooding especially in the area in the south of the village where two of these mountain streams flatten out before flowing into the Harbour. Most of this area is zoned appropriately as “Open Space, Amenity and Recreation”, however there are also small areas of affected lands within the corridor zoned as “Village Centre”, and “Community Facilities” where a site specific FRA would also be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management.

With regard to the areas of Pluvial flooding identified, a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

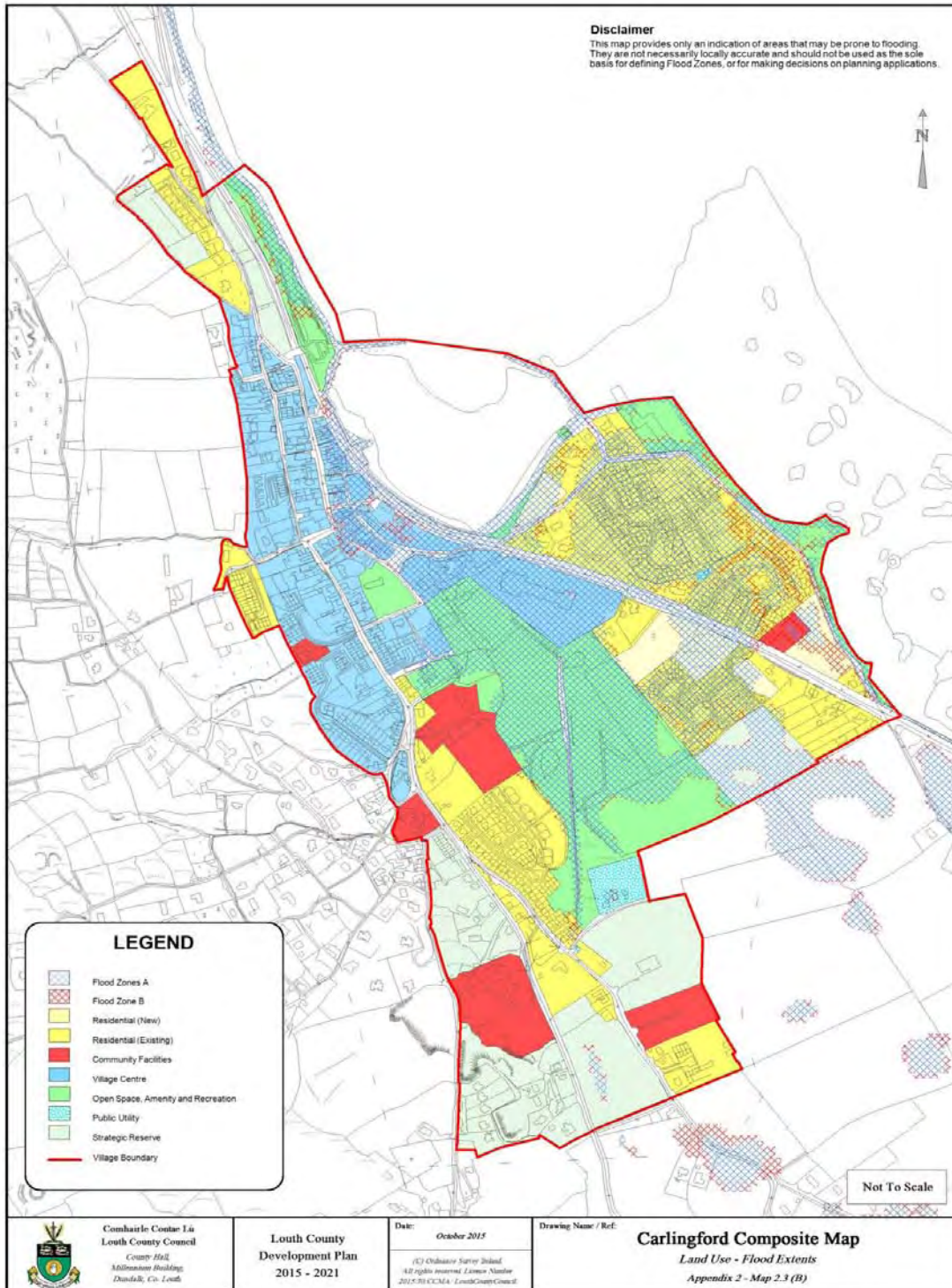
Note

Carlingford has been identified as an “Area for Further Assessment”, (AFA), within the Neagh Bann Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study. Stage 2 Flood Risk Hazard Mapping has been prepared up to Draft Final Stage and is currently undergoing a validation process within the CFRAM Study through both Public Consultation Days and a National Consultation Period. Final Stage 2 Flood Risk Hazard Mapping will then become available in mid 2015 and CFRAM Stage 3 Flood Risk Management Plans will become available in 2016. This additional information will be used in assessing proposed development in areas of flood risk.

Appendix 13 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Carlingford AFA	
Survey Date 18th August 2014	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Site 1 Foy Centre (Community Centre), east of Dundalk Street (R 173), north of Cuchulain Heights. Landform falls sharply to east, rear of Community Centre and adjacent school. Land consists of low lying rough. Community centre has playing field immediately to south east. Both buildings in equivalent to Zone C, however flood map indicates that egress points to both buildings would be at risk.</p> <p><u>Zoning: Community Facility (School, Community Centre) Not at risk</u></p>	<p>E719045 N811292</p>
<p>Site 2 Both the tidal and pluvial AEP maps indicate flooding potential on and in the vicinity of the R173 immediately west of the Foy Centre. At this point the land is actually steadily falling towards the town centre therefore I would question the accuracy of this modelling.</p> <p><u>Zoning: Village Centre (in residential use) Highly Vulnerable, but would question accuracy of flood maps</u></p>	<p>E718865 N811397</p>
<p>Site 3 Four Seasons hotel. Built on a mound 3-4 above surrounding ground level. Mapping indicates no risk to hotel itself however local knowledge hotel basement was extensively flooded in recent years.</p> <p><u>Zoning: Village Centre, Nature of hotel makes it less vulnerable</u></p>	<p>E719092 N811489</p>
<p>Site 4 Market Street , River Lane/Street. River falls continuously from mountain to east towards town centre. Stream is contained in a twin bore block built culvert across Market Street and beyond to a harbour outflow. There have been two (2) flood events in this area and the flood map indicates potential flooding of much of this central area. However Flood map also indicates the river located some 40m north of its actual location.</p> <p><u>Zoning: Village Centre, suitable for less vulnerable development</u></p>	<p>E718725 N811631</p>
<p>Site 5 Eastern edge of harbour. Low lying partially grassed area, running into water. Remainder of harbour protected by quay walls, this area is vulnerable due to its topography, proximity to the water. North east of this area is zoned residential. It would be prudent to request a site specific FRA for any proposal in this area.</p> <p><u>Zoning: Open Space in immediate vicinity of water – Water Compatible Residential to north east however protected by sea wall - Request site specific FRA for development in this area.</u></p>	<p>E719047 N811654</p>
<p>Conclusion</p>	<p>Questionable</p>

Map 6 : Carlingford Composite Map



3.6: CASTLEBELLINGHAM / KILSARAN

Sources of Flooding

The River Glyde flows through the village of Castlebellingham from west to east. The Annagassan AFA Draft Flood Mapping* shows a corridor along the River Glyde being vulnerable to both Coastal and Fluvial flooding.

The PFRA flood mapping also indicates a number of areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within both Castlebellingham and Kilsaran.

Zoning in Flood Risk Areas

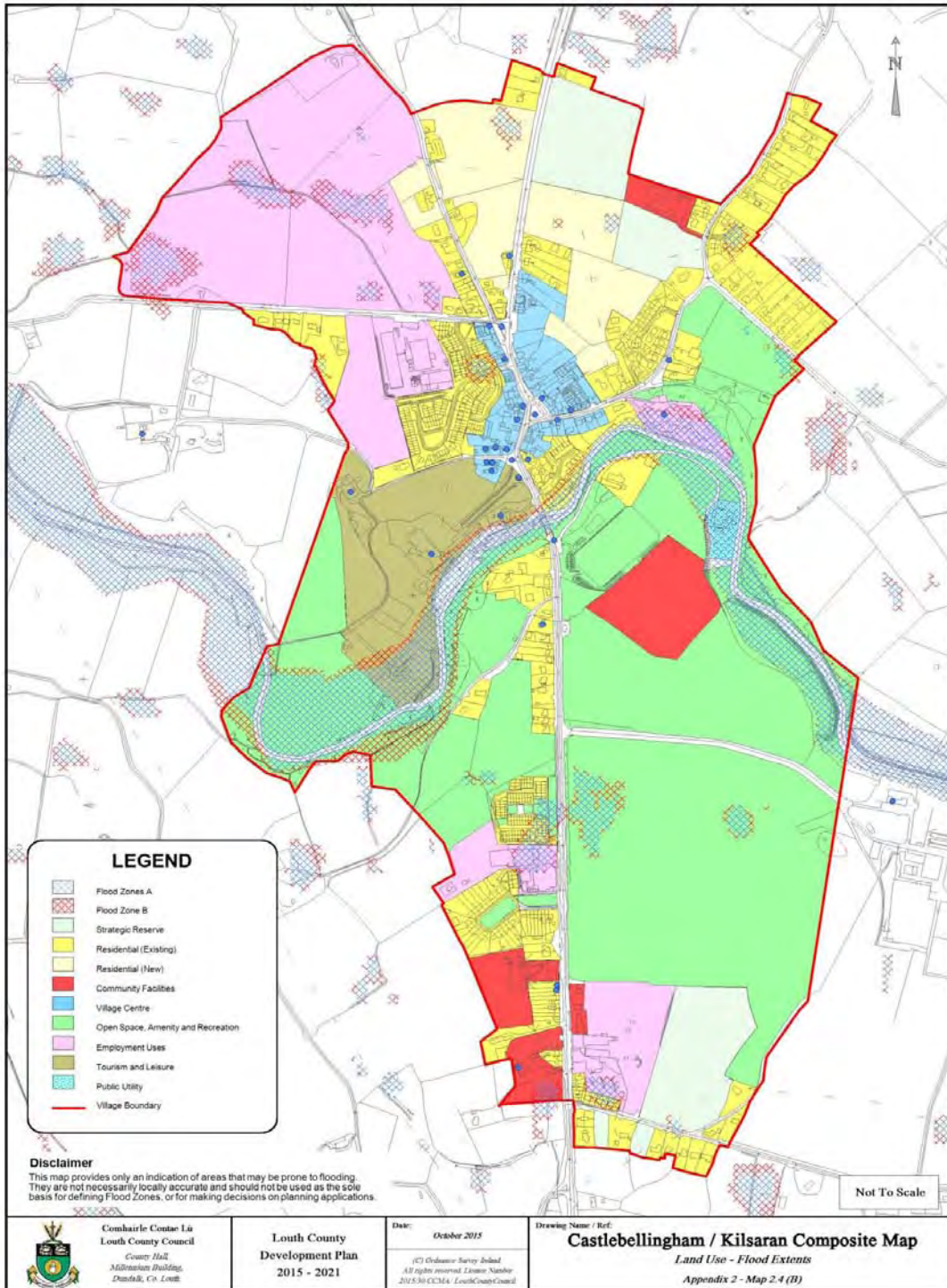
The main flood risks in the village of Castlebellingham are from Fluvial and Coastal flooding within the corridor along the River Glyde. The majority of this corridor is zoned appropriately as “Open Space, Amenity and Recreation”. However there are a number of locations zoned as “Tourism and Leisure”, “Residential”, “Public Utility” and “Employment Uses” where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management.

With regard to the areas of Pluvial flooding identified, a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

** Note*

The adjacent village of Annagassan has been identified as an “Area for Further Assessment”, (AFA), within the Neagh Bann Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study. Stage 2 Flood Risk Hazard Mapping for Annagassan has been prepared up to Draft Final Stage, including reaches of the River Glyde flowing through Castlebellingham. The Stage 2 Flood Risk Hazard Mapping is currently undergoing a validation process within the CFRAM Study through both Public Consultation Days and a National Consultation Period. Final Stage 2 Flood Risk Hazard Mapping will then become available in mid 2015 and CFRAM Stage 3 Flood Risk Management Plans will become available in 2016. This additional information will be used in assessing proposed development in areas of flood risk.

Map 7: Castlebellingham/ Kilsaran Composite Map



3.7: CLOGHERHEAD

Sources of Flooding

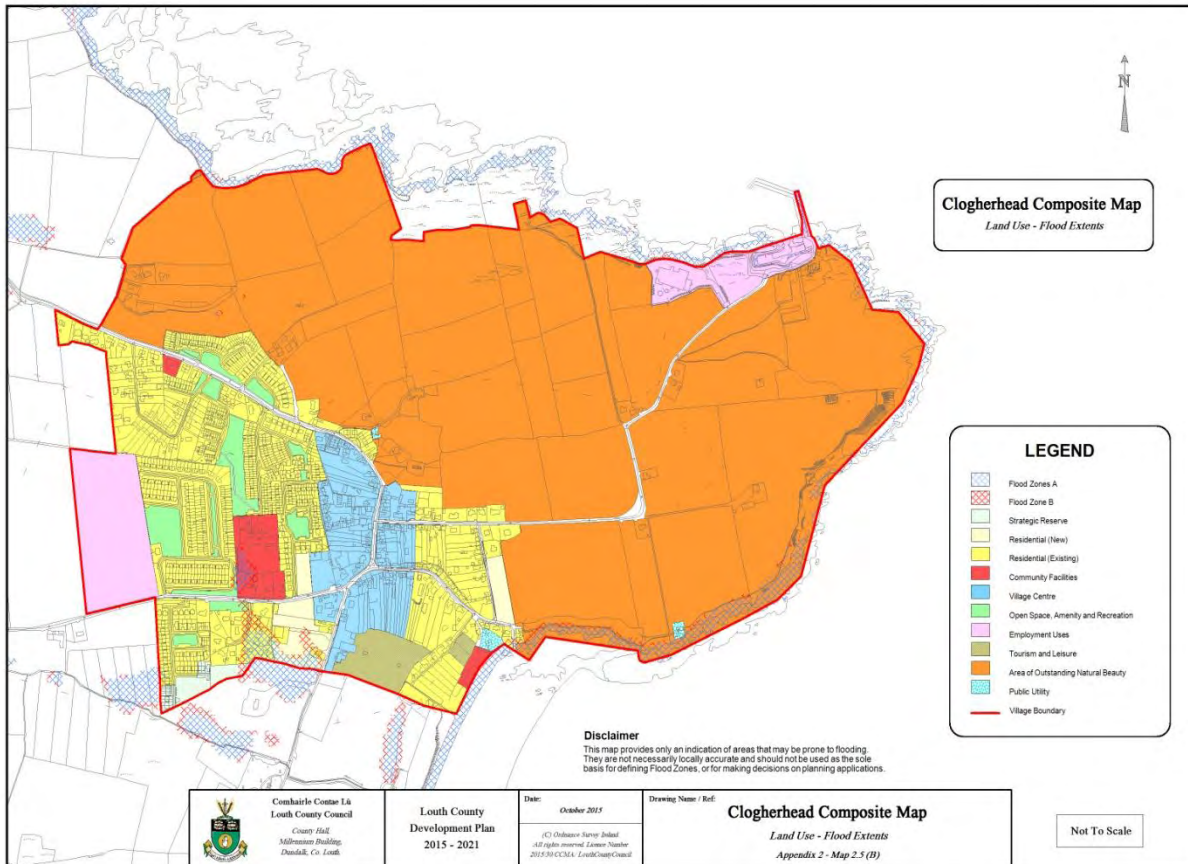
The PFRA flood mapping for Clogherhead indicates a number of relatively small areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding with Coastal Flooding restricted to along the shoreline.

Zoning in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risks in the village of Clogherhead arise from Pluvial Flooding in locations zoned as “Residential” and “Community Facilities” where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach. Along the shoreline, where the predominant zoning is “Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty” with a smaller area around Port Oriel Harbour zoned as “Employment Uses”, a site specific FRA would also be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management.

Clogherhead	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 19th August 2014	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Site 1 Port Oriel, west of harbour. Map indicates extremely limited extent of flooding along this rocky coastline with the exception of a single recorded flood event immediately south of the harbour. The road way and surrounding land forms a natural hollow at this point with no immediate escape pathway evident. East of the Red Sail commercial premises, which itself sits well proud of the waterline, seawater almost level with the shoreline. The possibility of flooding at this point is noted on the map. Elsewhere all land in vicinity is rising sharply towards the head itself.</p> <p><u>Zoning: Employment Uses, Water Compatible due to nature of operations in port and ancillary activities.</u></p> <p>Site 2 Clogherhead Village. Map indicates sea flooding risk confined to immediate shoreline. Inspected at midday, low tide with extensive beach exposed. Examination of sea debris (seaweed etc) would indicate that under normal conditions sea comes to within approximately 5.0m of the shoreline.</p> <p><u>Zoning: Community Facilities, covers beachfront car park area, lifeguard station and RNLI station. – Water Compatible</u> <u>Residential to south of this – No indication of flood risk on flood map or site inspection</u></p> <p>Site 3 Inland along the road to Termonfeckin, a further area of potential flooding has been identified. This partially affects the eastern portion of the hillcrest housing development which consists primarily of single and 1 ½ storey detached dwellings set on spacious sites. The identified land itself is very overgrown level pasture with a small stream forming the eastern rear boundary to the housing development.</p> <p><u>Zoning: Residential, Flood map indicates that approximately 50% of this area is at risk, however there are no recorded flood events. Flooding if it occurs will be pluvial indicative and extreme arising from periods of intense rainfall. As such it would be recommended that a SUDS approach be taken to any residential development proposal in this area.</u></p>	<p>E716980 N784588</p> <p>E716308 N783549</p> <p>E715923 N783635</p>
Conclusion	Accurate

Map 8 : Clogherhead Composite Map



3.8: COLLON

Sources of Flooding

The River Mattock flows through the village of Collon from west to east as does an unnamed tributary south of the village. The PFRA flood mapping shows a corridor along both the River Glyde and the unnamed tributary being vulnerable to fluvial flooding.

The PFRA flood mapping also indicates a relatively small area south west of the Doire Beag housing development as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding.

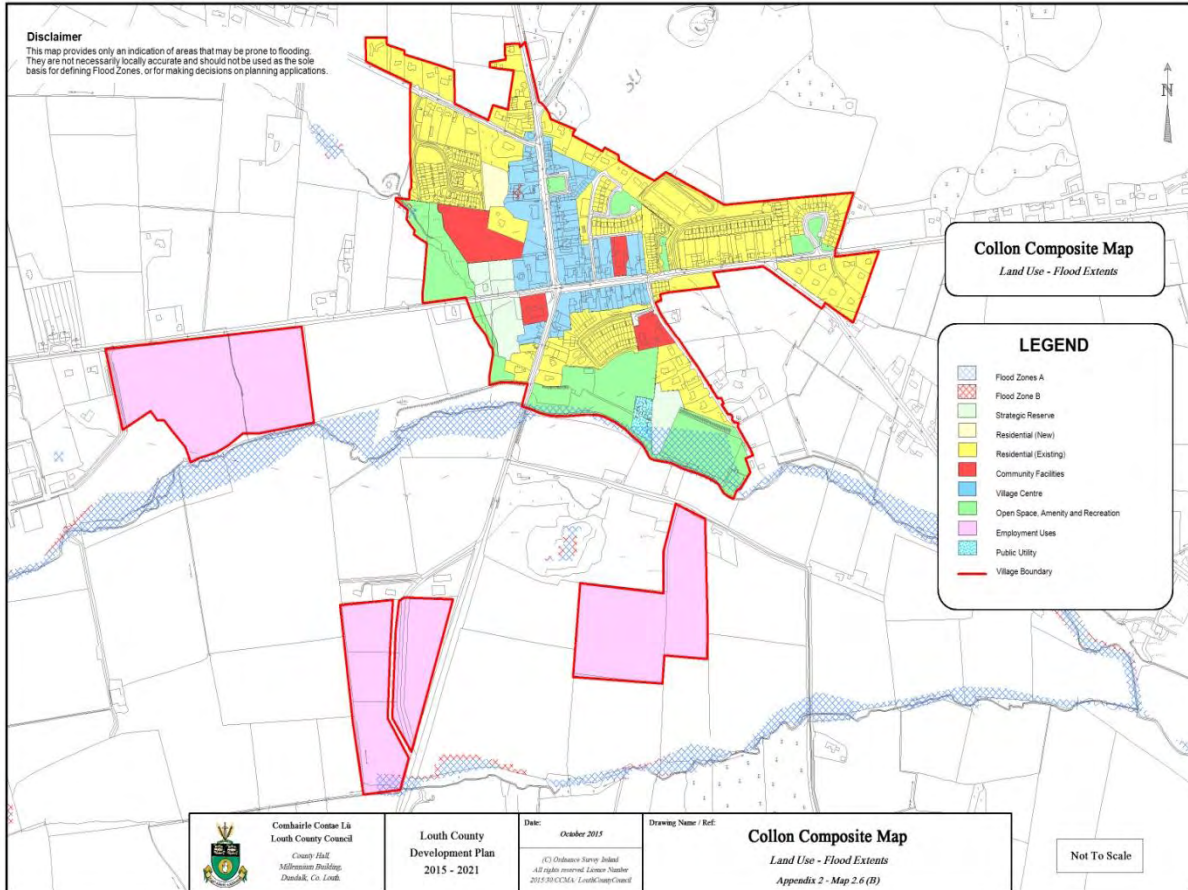
Zoning in Flood Risk Areas

Collon	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 18th August 2014	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Site 1 Principle flooding concern in the village lies along the southern boundary of the settlement which is largely along the line of the Mattock River. The bulk of the village lies at a considerable elevation above this area with the landform falling almost continuously south wards into the valley formed by the river. No residential properties are affected by the potential floodzone, the only major development in the area being the Mattock Rangers Community Centre.</p> <p><u>Zoning: Open Space, Amenity and Recreation with the exception of a small Strategic Reserve and Public Utility (WWTP) to the east of School Lane. The floodmap indicates that only the extreme southern portions of these zones being at risk. Current uses of these lands are water compatible. (football pitches etc)</u></p>	<p>E700146 N781610</p>
Conclusion	Accurate

The main flood risks in the village of Collon are from Fluvial flooding within the corridor along the River Mattock and the unnamed tributary south of the village. The majority of this corridor is zoned appropriately as “Open Space, Amenity and Recreation”. However there are a number of locations zoned as “Strategic Reserve”, “Public Utility” and “Employment Uses” where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management.

With regard to the area of Pluvial flooding identified, which is zoned appropriately as “Open Space, Amenity and Recreation”, a site specific FRA would be required to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigations. As recommended by the Sequential Approach.

Map 9: Collon Composite Map



3.9: DROMISKIN

Sources of Flooding

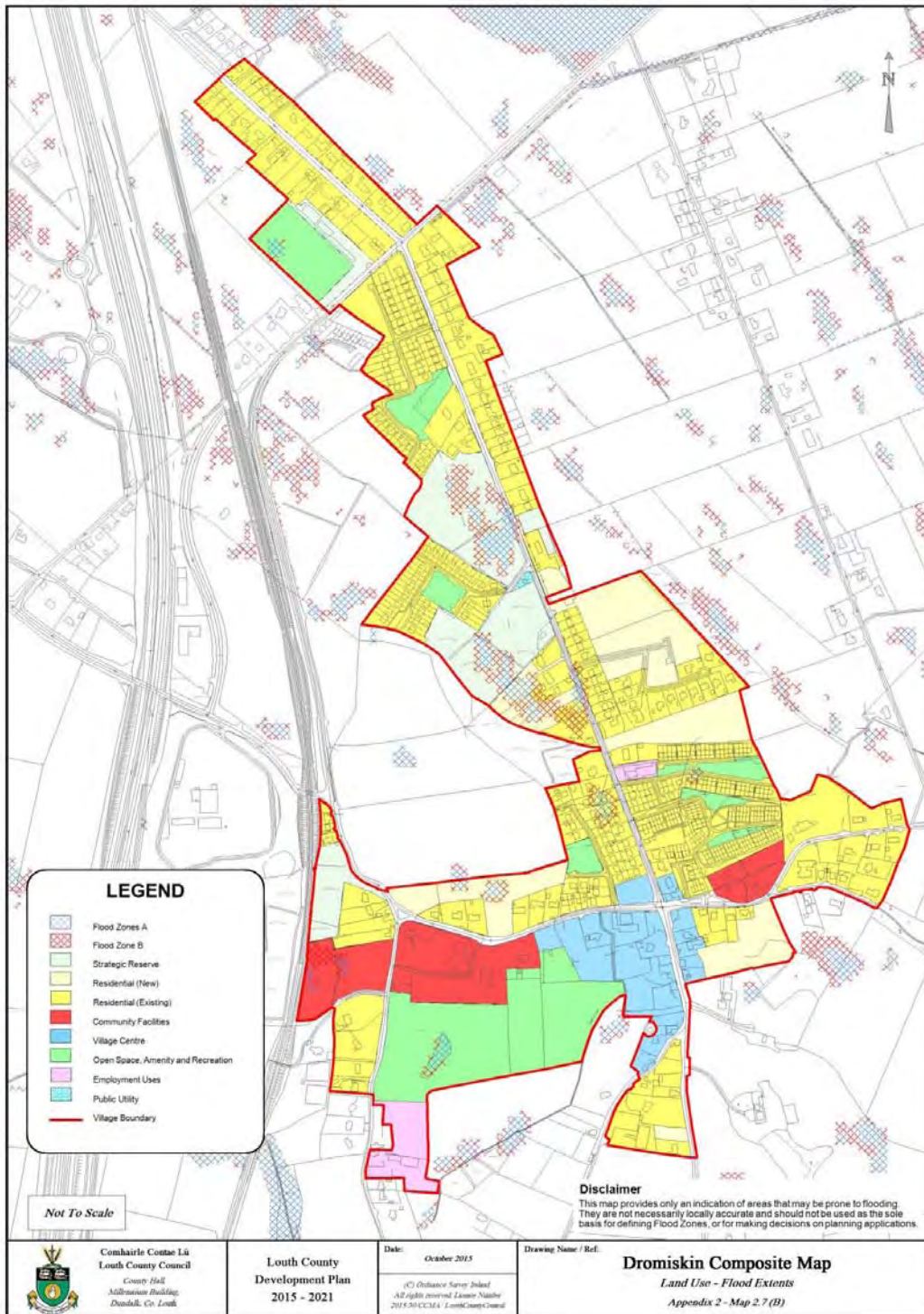
The PFRA flood mapping indicates numerous areas within Dromiskin are vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding.

Zoning in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risks in the village of Dromiskin are from Pluvial flooding with a number of zoning categories affected, “Open Space, Amenity and Recreation”, “Residential”, “Community Facilities” and “Strategic Reserve”, where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

Dromiskin	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 21st August 2014	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Site 1 Rough grazing pasture west of north south spine road through ribbon residential area of village. Generally flat in common with surrounding lands but marginally below road level. Slight fall to north as indicated on floodmap.</p> <p><u>Zoning: Strategic Reserve - May be vulnerable depending on proposal</u></p>	<p>E704822 N798810</p>
<p>Site 2 Rough grazing pasture west of north south spine road through ribbon residential area of village, just south of Site 1, similar ground conditions to Site 1. Generally level but rising slightly to west.</p> <p><u>Zoning: Residential on lands to rear of row of detached dwellings north of East West section of Commons Road Zoned land can be accessed directly from Commons Road. I would recommend a site specific FRA at this location.</u></p>	<p>E704834 N798676</p>
<p>Site 3 Monastery site. Flood event recorded despite the fact that this land sits proud of surrounding development</p> <p><u>Zoning: Community Facilities, Less Vulnerable</u></p>	<p>E705208 N798156</p>
<p>All other sites located in Strategic Reserve or Open Space</p>	
<p>Conclusion</p>	<p>Accurate</p>

Map 10: Dromiskin Composite Map



3.10: KNOCKBRIDGE

Sources of Flooding

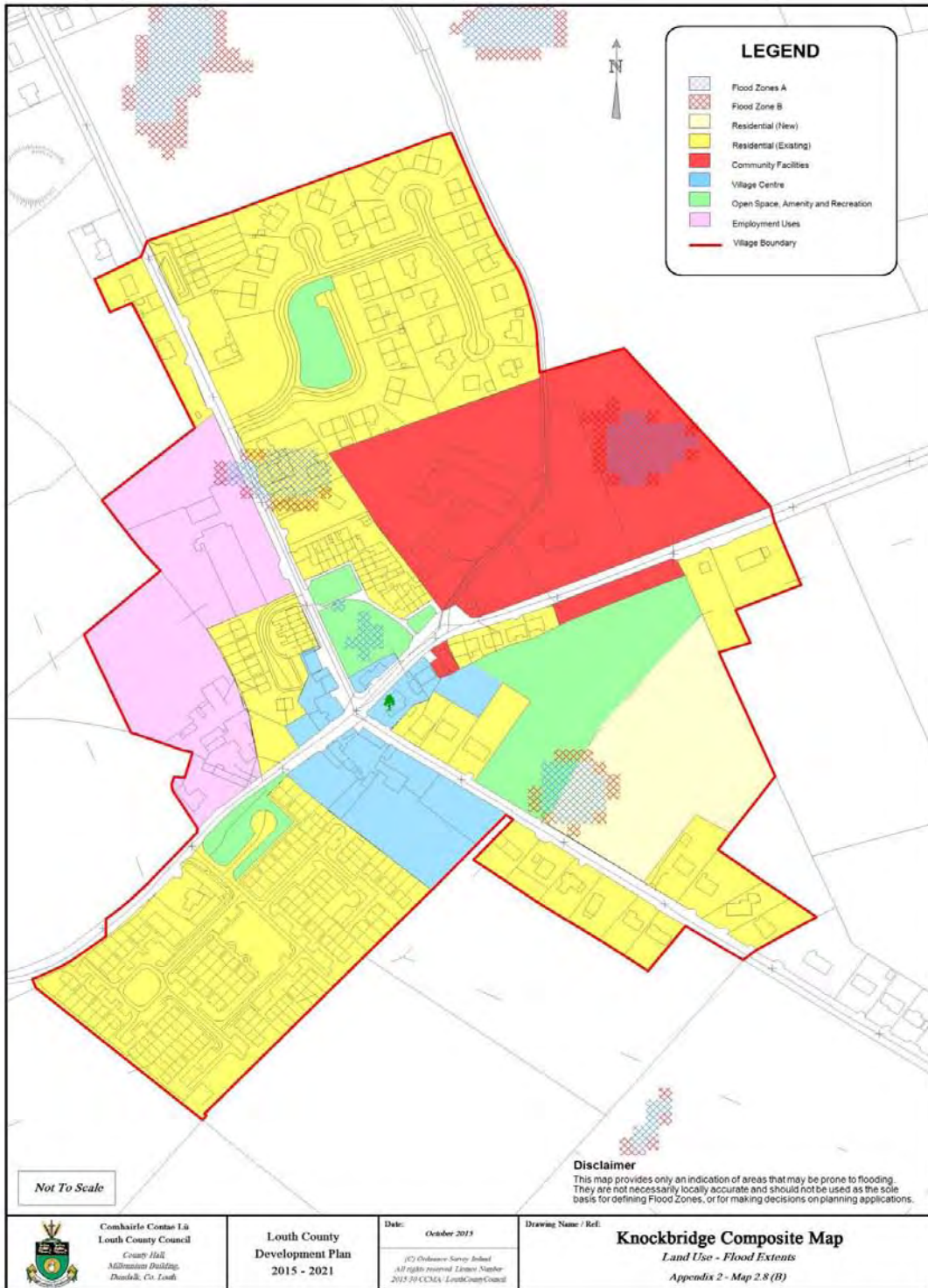
The PFRA flood mapping indicates several areas within Knockbridge are vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding.

Zoning in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risks in the village of Knockbridge are from Pluvial flooding with a number of zoning categories affected, “Open Space, Amenity and Recreation”, “Residential”, and “Community Facilities” where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

Knockbridge	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 21st August 2014	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Site 1 North of Dundalk Road. Low undulating low drumlin farmland in tillage. Falls eastward to hedgeline. Highpoint to south adjacent road.</p> <p><u>Zoning; Community Facilities – May be vulnerable depending on proposal</u></p>	<p>E699200 N803712</p>
<p>Site 2 Public open space in village centre. Falls very gently to south west. Likely to act as attenuation area for surrounding housing developments.</p> <p><u>Zoning; Open Space, Amenity and Recreation – Water Compatible</u></p>	<p>E699443 N803708</p>
<p>Site 3 Lands south of Lisroland View (off road to Hackballscross). Prominent hill to northwest, adjacent road falling south towards site. Flood site level. All existing residential</p> <p><u>Zoning; Residential – Highly vulnerable</u></p>	<p>E699400 N803441</p>
<p>Site 4 Field off road to Stephenstown Pond. Townland marker stone at entrance to field (Ballinlough) Field falls north east to south west. Low point adjacent road as indicated on floodmap.</p> <p><u>Zoning; Open Space, Amenity and Recreation – Water Compatible</u></p>	<p>E699400 N803441</p>
<p>Conclusion</p>	<p>Accurate</p>

Map 11: Knockbridge Composite Map



3.11: LOUTH

Sources of Flooding

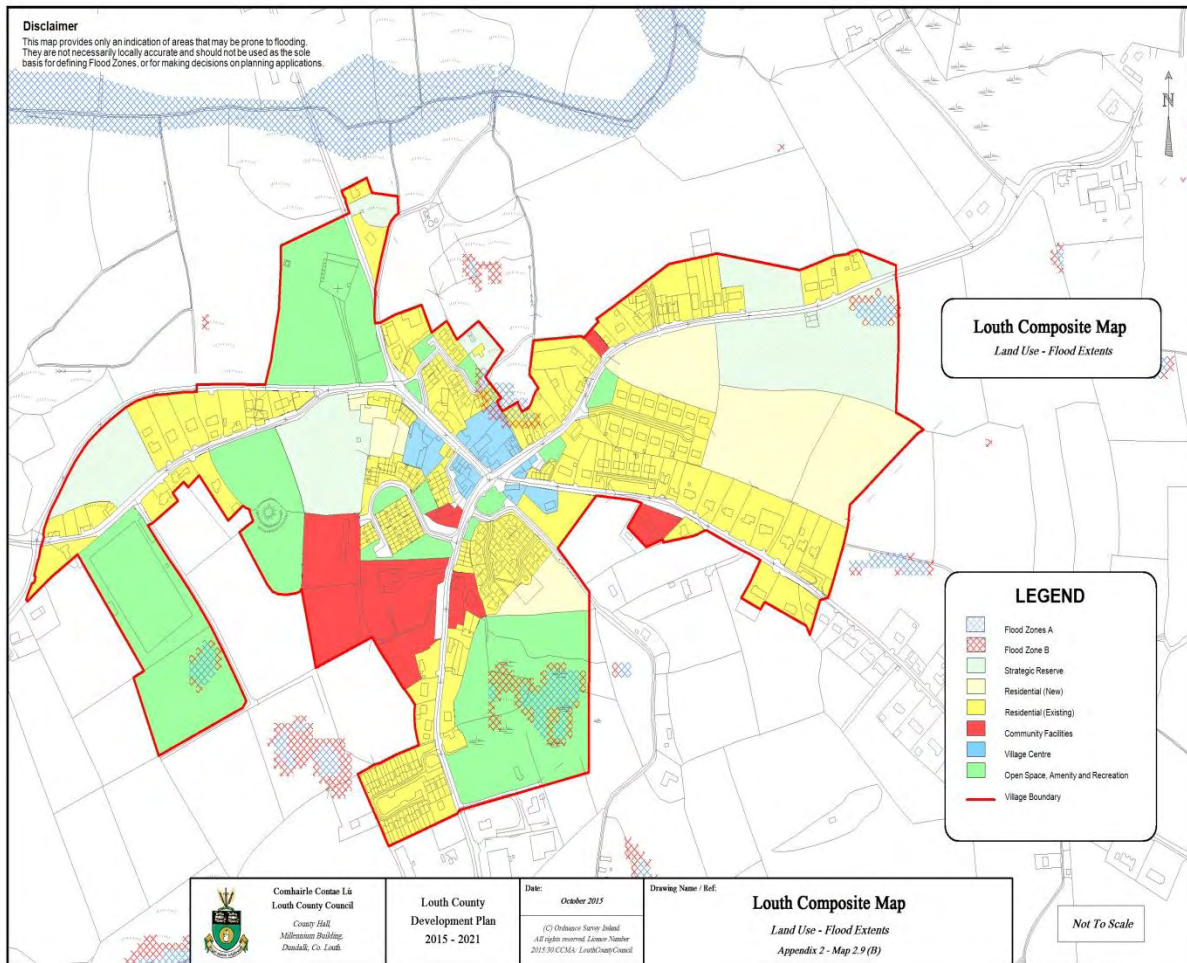
The PFRA flood mapping indicates several areas within Louth are vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding.

Zoning in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risks in the village of Louth are from Pluvial flooding with a number of zoning categories affected, “Open Space, Amenity and Recreation”, “Strategic Reserve”, and “Residential” where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the sequential approach.

Louth Village	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 21st August 2014	Coordinates
<p>Site 1 Isolated pockets of potential flood risk around village envelope. Three (3) residential properties affected in Abbey Court housing development off road exiting the village northwards, Commons townland. To the rear of the properties is a flat marshy area in a natural hollow which falls and rises north to south. The hollow also has a drain running to its southern extremity partially explaining the damp conditions in the area.</p> <p>The risk to these properties may be lessened by a large public open space area immediately to the northwest which is likely to act as an attenuation area. The properties also have gardens front and rear.</p> <p><u>Zoning; Village Centre – Residential, existing built development Strategic Reserve to East of Abbey Court, any future development in this area should utilise the portion of land liable to flood as Open Space, Amenity and Recreation</u></p>	<p>E695770 N801281</p>
<p>Site 2 West of the Chapel View housing development on the southern edge of the village, there is a further area of flooding potential consisting of rough pasture falling gently west to east. No residential properties are affected.</p> <p><u>Zoning; Strategic Reserve, I recommend that any future development in this area be subject to a site specific Flood Risk Assessment due to the extent of the flooding potential indicated.</u></p>	<p>E695605 N800719</p>
<p>Site 3 East of the Chapel View housing development is a large marshy hollow surround by woodland and identified as likely to flood.</p> <p><u>Zoning; Open Space, Amenity and Recreation – Water Compatible</u></p>	<p>E695959 N800971</p>
<p>Conclusion</p>	<p>Accurate</p>

Map 12: Louth Composite Map



3.12: OMEATH

Sources of Flooding

The PFRA flood mapping for Omeath indicates a number of areas along or adjacent to the shoreline south of Station Road as vulnerable to Coastal Flooding with a small land corridor vulnerable to Fluvial Flooding where the Ryland River crosses under the Regional Road, R173 south of the village.

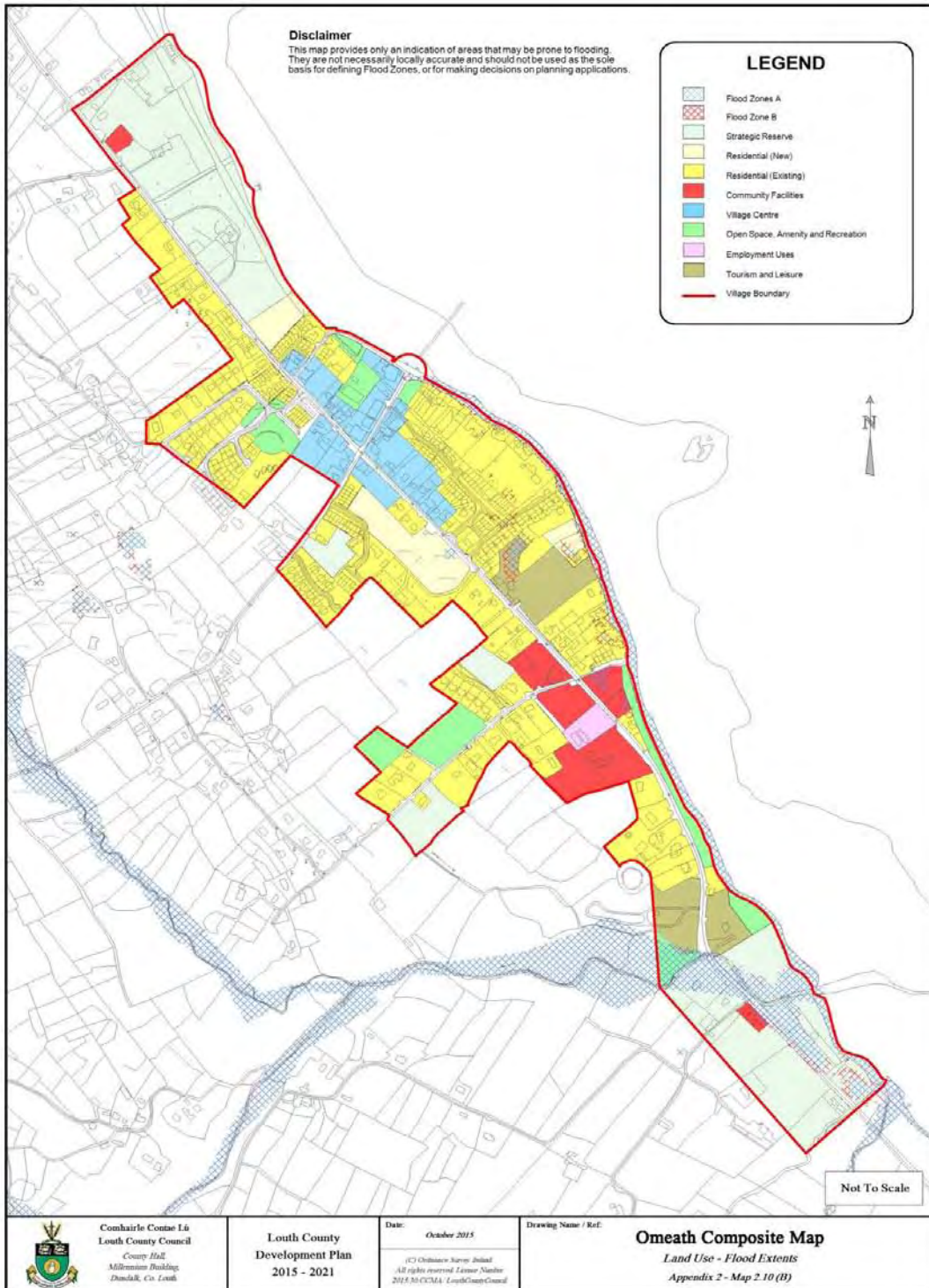
Zoning in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risks in the village of Omeath arise from Coastal Flooding along or adjacent to the shoreline south of Station Road, in locations zoned as “Residential”, “Tourism and Leisure”, “Strategic Reserve” and “Community Facilities” where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management. South of the village, where a small land corridor is indicated as vulnerable to Fluvial Flooding where the Ryland River crosses under the Regional Road, R173, and is zoned as “Strategic Reserve” a site specific FRA would also be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management. An adjacent area of this corridor is zoned appropriately as “Open Space, Amenity and Recreation”.

Appendix 13 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Omeath AFA	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 28th August 2014	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Site 1 Flooding primarily associated with tidal and fluvial with the latter of greater concern. Inspection of low wall fronting seafront commencing from north at pier / seating area. Tidal debris evident at base of wall for entire length, approximately 226.0 m. At southern end of wall, there is no defence excepting some ad-hoc rock armouring, however tidal debris does not appear to come closer than approx 2.0 on the seaward side. Wall recommences after short distance for approx 223.0 m. Where tidal debris observed at distance of approx 2.0 short of wall, seaward.</p>	<p>E714047 N816939</p>
<p>Site 2 South of village centre at Esmore Bridge. Esmore Bridge consists of former railway bridge, only abutments remain, deck removed. A small river flows through the abutments out to Carlingford Lough. Map indicates flood risk to regional road and residential properties to the south west of the road. The regional road and surrounding lands fall north west to south east at this point forming a hollow. The Ryland River runs parallel to the road at the flood point before exiting eastwards to the Lough. Local knowledge suggests that there is history of flooding in this area with high tides forcing the river to back up.</p> <p><u>Zoning: Strategic Reserve to South – Highly Vulnerable if residential permitted in flood area. Residential might also increase run off, I would recommend that any development permitted should site the public open space in the flood area to act as attenuation and possibly utilise SUDS in the remaining built development</u></p> <p><u>Open Space, Amenity and Recreation to North - Water Compatible</u></p>	<p>E714540 N815861</p>
<p>Conclusion</p>	<p>Accurate</p>

Map 13: Omeath Composite Map



3.13: TALLANSTOWN

Sources of Flooding

The River Glyde flows through the village of Tallanstown from north to south with an unnamed tributary also flowing into the River Glyde from the northwest in the centre of the village. The PFRA flood mapping shows a corridor along the River Glyde and the unnamed tributary being vulnerable to Fluvial flooding.

The PFRA flood mapping for also indicates a small number of areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Tallanstown.

Zoning in Flood Risk Areas

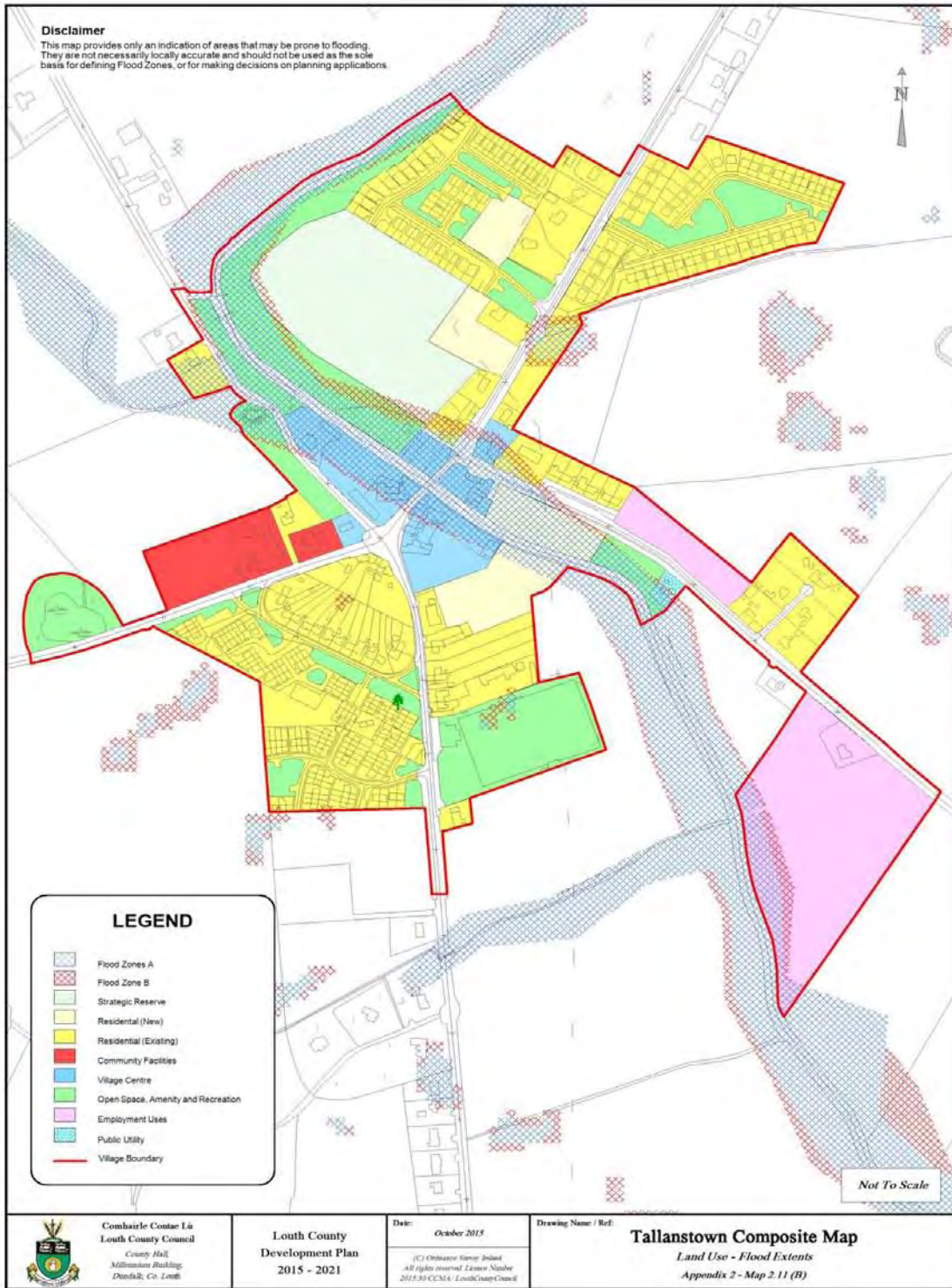
The main flood risks in the village of Tallanstown are from Fluvial flooding within the corridor along the River Glyde and an unnamed tributary. A section of this corridor is zoned appropriately as “Open Space, Amenity and Recreation”. However there are a number of locations zoned as “Village Centre”, “Residential”, “Strategic Reserve”, “Public Utility” and “Employment Uses” where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management.

With regard to the areas of Pluvial flooding identified, a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

Appendix 13 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Tallanstown	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 21st August 2014	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Site 1 River Glyde flows through centre of village. Fast flowing with some armouring and high banks. Relatively few residential properties affected according to Flood Map. Properties immediately backing onto river at village bridge are approx 3.0m above water level with rear gardens providing attenuation if necessary.</p>	<p>E695437 N797731</p>
<p>Site 2 The exception to this may be a single storey dwelling in the Glydeview housing development. However even in this instance, a small rear garden provides some attenuation capacity.</p>	<p>E695488 N798154</p>
<p><u>Zoning; Village Centre – Less Vulnerable Development recommended</u></p>	
<p><u>Zoning; Residential (Glydeview Housing Development)</u> <u>Open Space (Northwest of Glydeview Housing Development)</u></p>	
<p>Conclusion</p>	<p>Accurate</p>

Map 14: Tallanstown Composite Map



3.14: TERMONFECKIN

Sources of Flooding

The Ballywater River flows through the village of Termonfeckin from west to east towards the coast. The CFRAM AFA Draft flood mapping shows a corridor along the Ballywater River being vulnerable to fluvial flooding.

The PFRA flood mapping for also indicates a small number of areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Termonfeckin.

Zoning in Flood Risk Areas The main flood risks in the village of Termonfeckin are from Fluvial flooding within the corridor along the Ballywater River. A section of this corridor is zoned appropriately as “Open Space, Amenity and Recreation”. However there are a number of locations zoned as “Village Centre”, “Residential” and “Strategic Reserve” where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management.

With regard to the areas of Pluvial flooding identified, a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

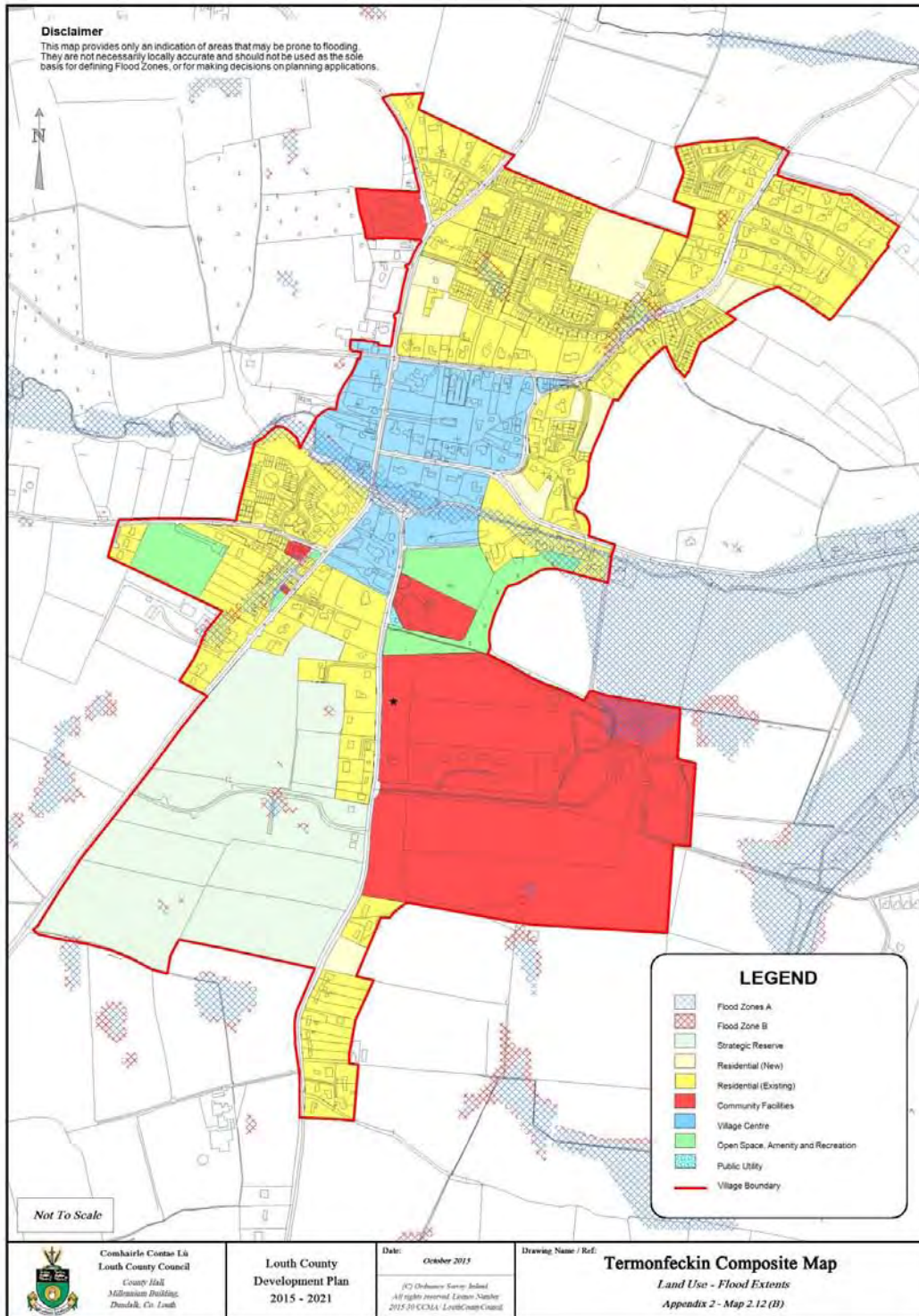
Note

Termonfeckin has been identified as an “Area for Further Assessment”, (AFA), within the Neagh Bann Catchment-based Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study and Stage 2 Flood Risk Hazard Mapping has been prepared up to Draft Final Stage and is currently undergoing a validation process within the CFRAM Study through both Public Consultation Days and a National Consultation Period. Final Stage 2 Flood Risk Hazard Mapping will then become available in mid 2015 and CFRAM Stage 3 Flood Risk Management Plans will become available in 2016. This additional information will be used in assessing proposed development in areas of flood risk.

Appendix 13 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Termonfeekin	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 18th August 2014	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Village Centre at pedestrian bridge. River flows over weir immediately after passing eastwards under bridge. At this point LCC have placed rock armouring to the south bank of the river. The northside has a small portion of rock armour running westwards towards the old bridge. Elsewhere on the north bank, there is no armouring and the defence consists of a gentle bank rising into a private garden.</p> <p><u>Zoning; Village Centre despite this zoning there are numerous residential properties in the village centre however very few properties are likely to be affected by flooding. Area adjacent north bank of river unsuitable for further residential development , however less vunerable development will be permissible.</u></p>	<p>E713945 N780332</p>
<p>Travelling to various points along the road to Seapoint, the river becomes progressively more overgrown and clogged. This may be a reflection of debris becoming wedged under the numerous bridges that have been built over the river to access private residences to the south of the river. A floodpoint is recorded on the river at the very eastern edge of the settlement boundary. The river reappears in full flow at the entrance to Seapoint golf club beyond the settlement boundary.</p> <p><u>Zoning; Residential, 3no. existing dwellings in situ within flood zone and map indicates previous flood event in this location. Further new residential development not recommended but this is unlikely as existing houses sit on large mature sites.</u></p>	<p>E714333 N780236</p>
<p>Drogheda Road. Map indicates potential flooding to properties on the laneway to the rear of the Drogheda Road. However the land is generally rising to the west at this point and I would question the map on this point.</p>	<p>E713797 N780201</p>
Conclusion	Questionable

Map 15: Termonfeckin Composite Map



3.15: TULLYALLEN

Sources of Flooding

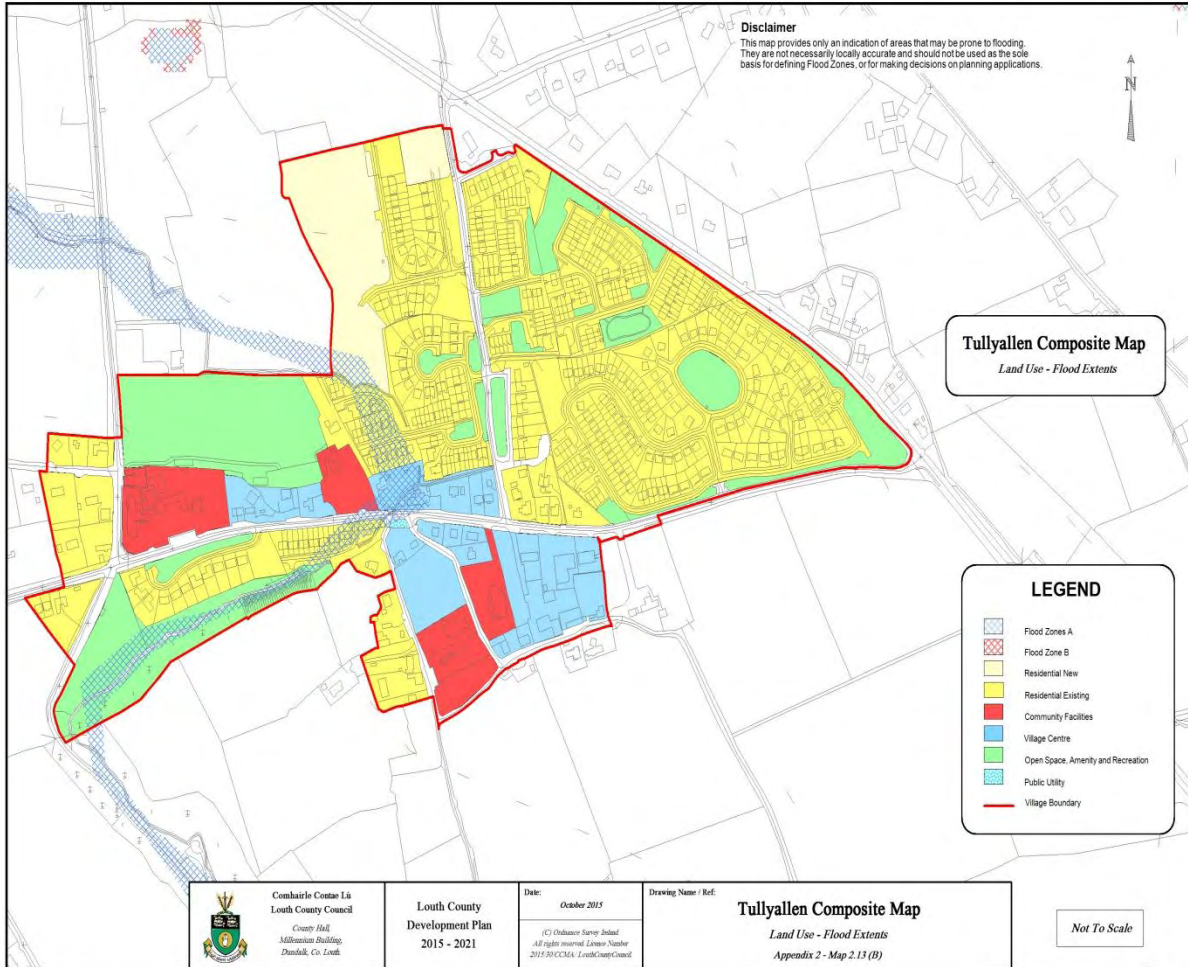
An existing stream flows through the village of Tullyallen, from north to south, through the Townley Manor housing development, under the Main Street in the centre of the village, and south through the Burton Hall housing development towards King William’s Glen. The PFRA flood mapping shows a corridor along this stream being vulnerable to Fluvial flooding.

Zoning in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risks in the village of Tallanstown are from Fluvial flooding within the corridor along the existing stream. A section of this corridor is zoned appropriately as “Open Space, Amenity and Recreation”. However there are a number of locations zoned as “Village Centre” and “Residential” where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management.

Tullyallen	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 18th August 2014	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Site 1 Townley Manor. First major residential development proceeding north along Watery Lane. Main area of flooding concern affects the extreme east of this development. The north of the development is bounded by a small stream which is open along much of its length before crossing into the development on a north to south basis in culvert. The land on which the open portion of the stream lies falls gently north to south and the stream lies at the lowest portion of this open land.</p> <p><u>Zoning; Residential – Partially developed and relatively mature. The next development to the immediate north (Allenwood) contains a stub road which is obviously intended for future development. Any permitted development should avoid building on the southern portion of this site and reserving it instead as public open space.</u></p>	<p>E704244 N777645</p>
<p>Site 2 Elsewhere in the village flooding potential exists south of The Glen residential development however the stream here is beginning its sharp descent down King William’s Glen and therefore should not pose a problem.</p> <p><u>Zoning; Open Space, - Water Compatible</u></p>	<p>E704320 N777601</p> <p>E704257 N777746</p>
<p>Conclusion</p>	<p>Accurate but care will be required as detailed above</p>

Map 16: Tullyallen Composite Map



4.1: Level 4 Settlements

Level 4 Settlements are the smallest form of settlement in County Louth. The purpose of the settlements is to provide an alternative to scattered one off housing in satisfying rural generated housing needs in a low density form. In total there are twenty four Level 4 Settlements. These comprise Ballagan, Ballapousta, Bellurgan, Darver, Dromin, Faugart, Glenmore, Grange, Grangebellew, Greenore, Gyles Quay, Kilcurry, Kilkerley, Lordship, Mountbagnall, Muchgrange Philipstown, Ravensdale, Reaghstown, Sanpit, Sheelagh, Stabannan, Tinure and Willville. Walkover surveys have been carried out for the majority of these settlements dependant on the level of potential flood risk as indicated on the flood mapping for each. The following illustrates the results of each survey together with Stage 2 SFRA results, a map of each illustrating Flood Zone A, Flood Zone B, the development boundary of each and relevant features including development areas within the boundaries, civic / community areas, amenity areas, commercial and industrial areas where appropriate. The location of each of these settlements is illustrated on the map below. As is illustrated, the settlements are spread across the County.

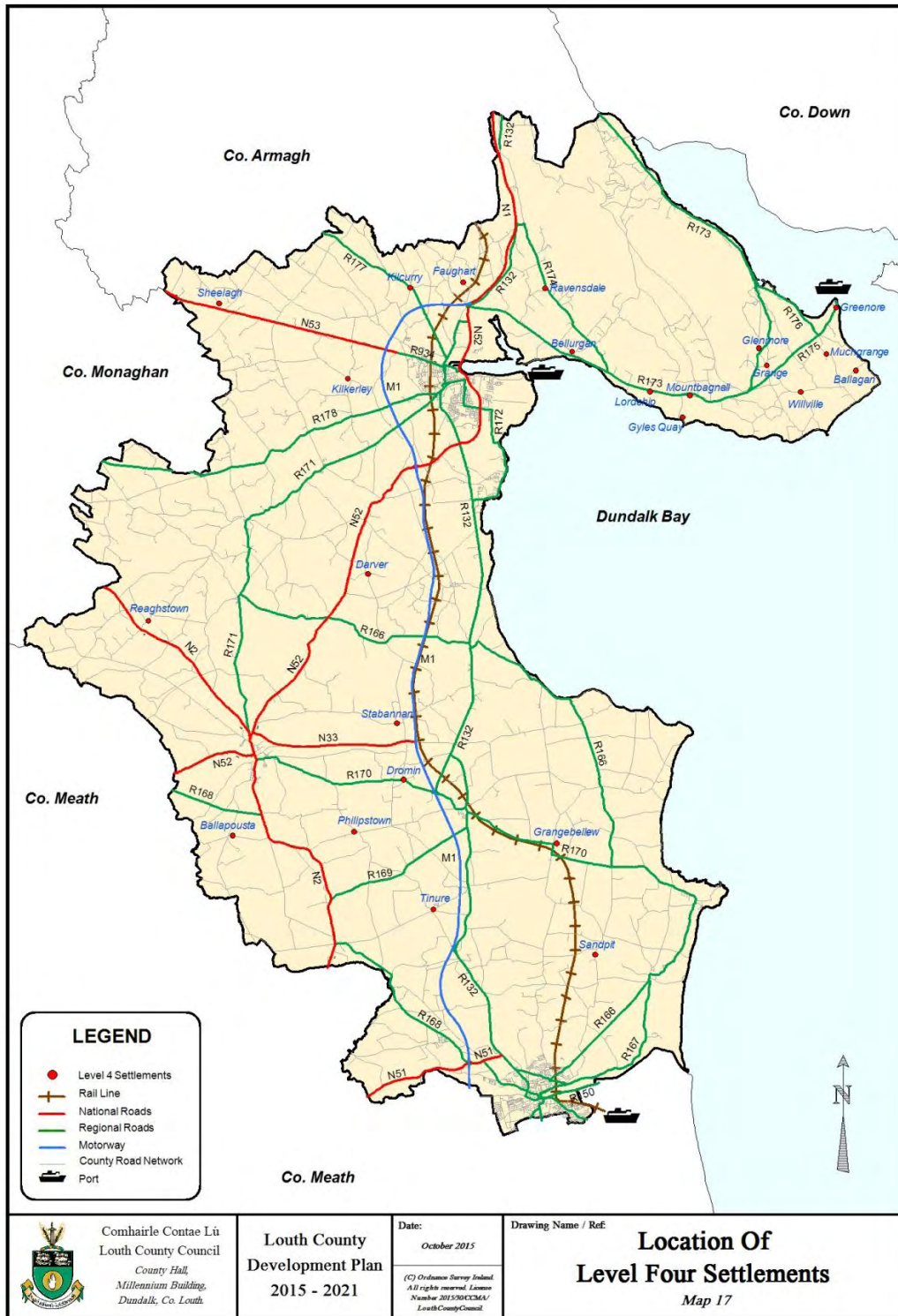
Settlements Surveyed

Ballagan
Darver
Ballapousta
Bellurgan
Glenmore
Grange
Grangebellew
Greenore
Gyles Quay
Kilkerley
Lordship
Mountbagnal
Muchgrange
Ravensdale
Reaghstown
Sandpit
Stabannon

Settlements Not Surveyed

Dromin
Faugart
Kilcurry
Philipstown
Sheelagh
Tinure
Willville

Map 17: Level 4 Settlement Locations



4.2: BALLAGAN

Sources of Flooding

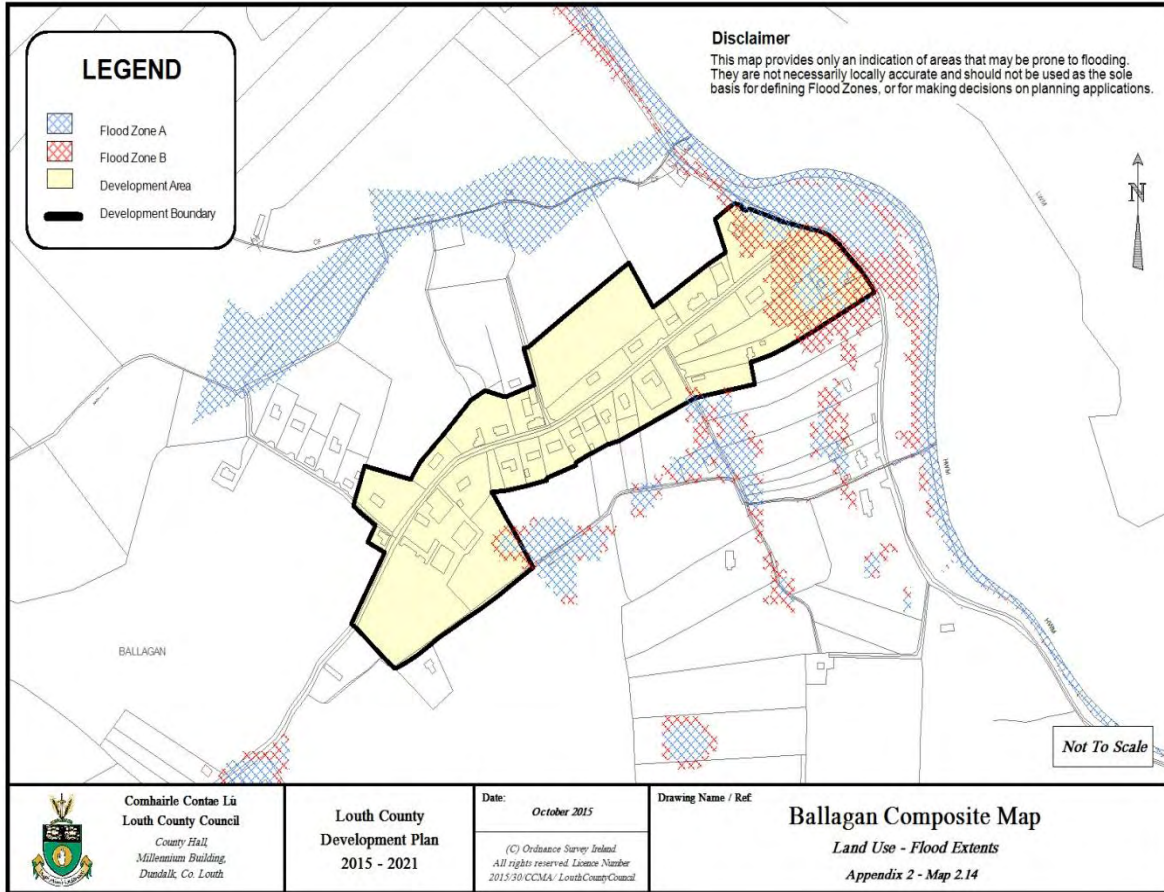
The PFRA flood mapping for Ballagan indicates a number of relatively small areas are vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding with Coastal Flooding restricted to a number of small areas along the shoreline.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risks in Ballagan arise from Pluvial Flooding in a small number of locations, where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach. Along the shoreline where a small number of areas are indicated as vulnerable to coastal flooding, a site specific FRA would also be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management.

Ballagan	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 14th April 2015	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Flood risk in the settlement is concentrated along a low lying strip to the east of the settlement consisting of a rough grazing area on the foreshore merging into a pebble beach beyond. There is risk to a number of properties in the immediate vicinity of this area. These include a relatively new detached one and a half storey dwelling and an older S/S dwelling. These dwellings have extensive potential development lands to the rear (west) and care should be taken to avoid and highly vulnerable development in the flood risk areas as indicated.</p>	<p>E 723781 N 808210</p>
Conclusion	Accurate

Map 18: Ballagan Composite Map



4.3: BALLAPOUSTA

Sources of Flooding

An existing watercourse, a tributary of the River Dee, flows through Ballapousta from south to north. The PFRA Flood Mapping shows a corridor along this tributary being vulnerable to fluvial flooding.

The PFRA flood mapping for also indicates a number of areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Ballapousta.

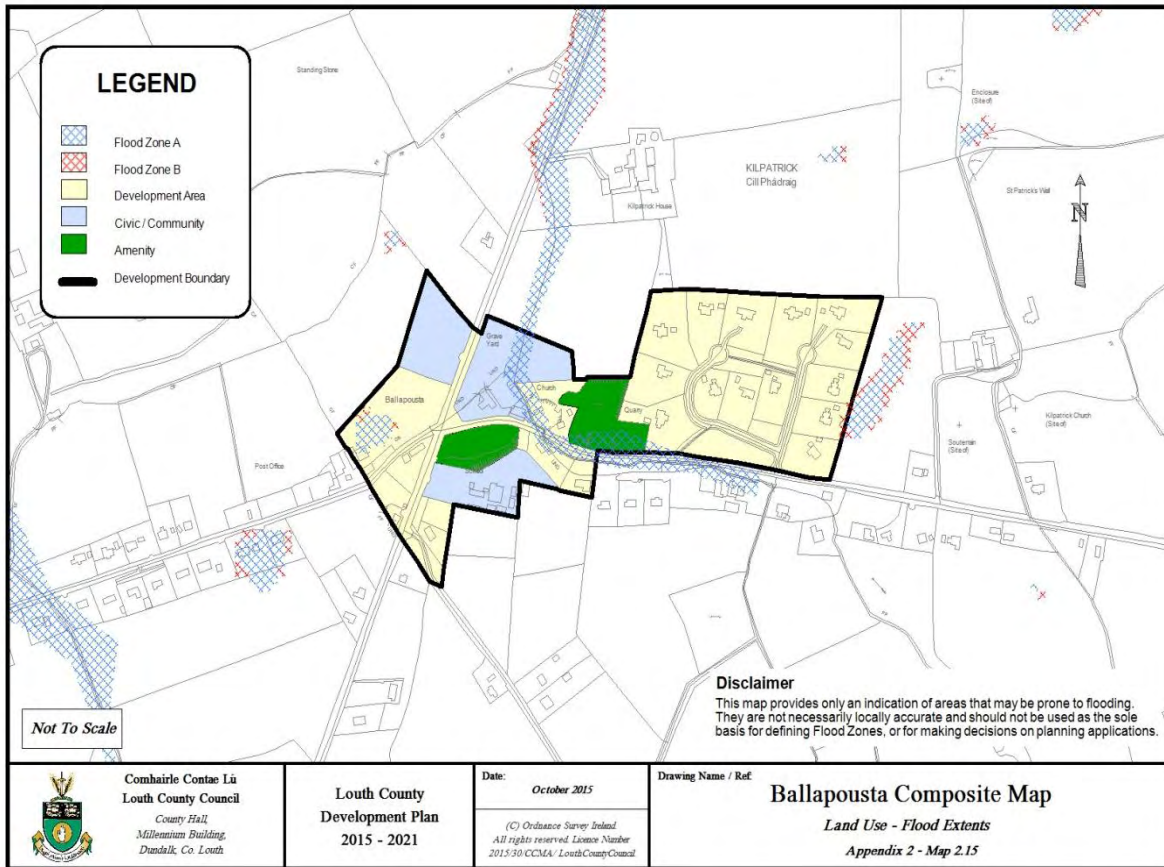
Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risks in Ballapousta are from fluvial flooding within the corridor along the existing watercourse, where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management.

With regard to the areas of Pluvial flooding identified, a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

Ballapousta	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 30th March 2015	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Flood risk in the settlement is concentrated along the line of a drain /stream which partially follows the road from the east entering the village before veering of through the church grounds to the north and adjacent graveyard. The graveyard itself lies within a natural hollow with the drain / stream flowing through the graveyard site in a manmade channel.</p> <p>The uses here are water compatible.</p>	<p>E 694963 N 786949</p>
Conclusion	Accurate

Map 19: Ballapousta Composite Map



4.4: BELLURGAN

Sources of Flooding

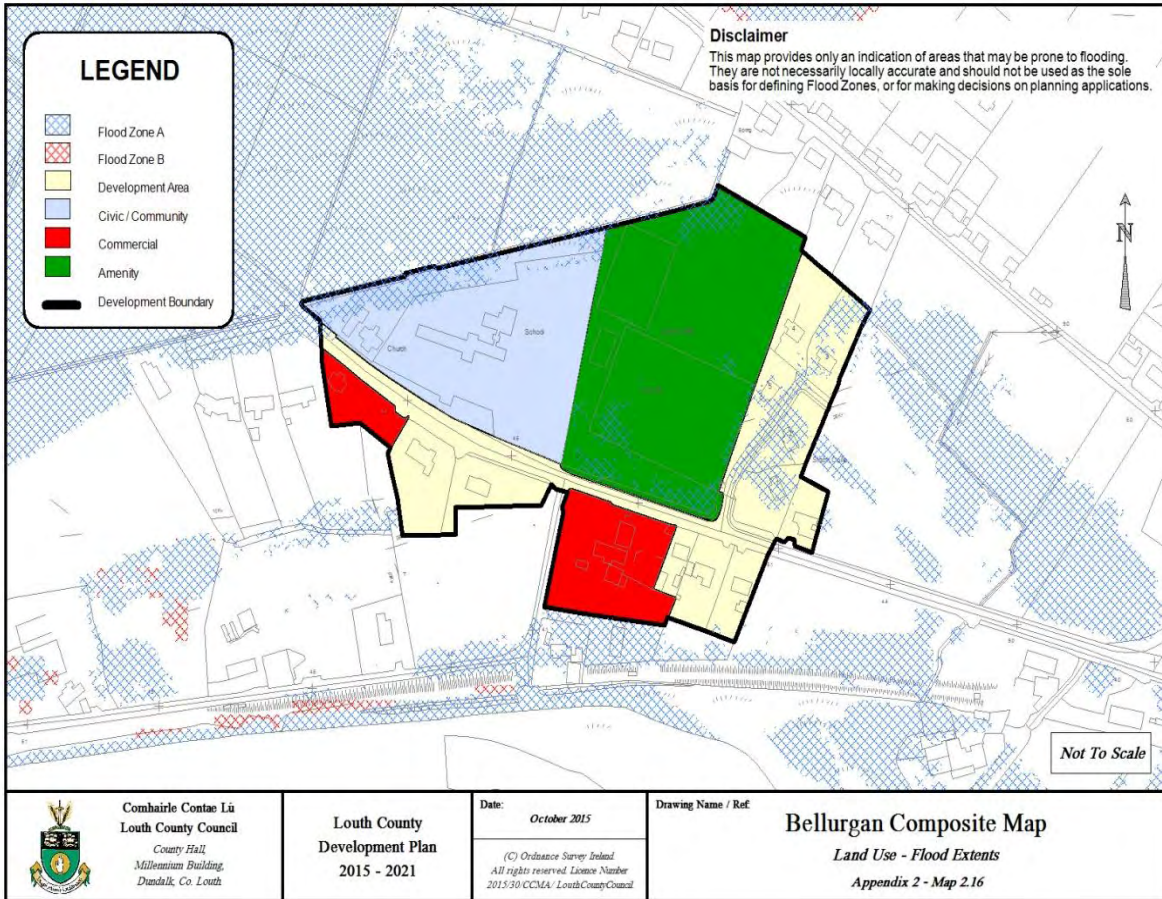
The PFRA flood mapping for Bellurgan indicates a significant area is vulnerable to Coastal Flooding, i.e. Flynn Park playing fields and the adjacent Sliabh Coille housing development.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risks in Bellurgan arise from coastal flooding, a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management. However the existing use of the Flynn Park playing fields, which make up most of the vulnerable area within Bellurgan, is appropriate.

Bellurgan	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 30th March 2015	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Flat topography throughout settlement. Large playing field in centre provide attenuation. Housing development consisting of large detached 2-storey dwellings to east of settlement within boundary susceptible to road flooding however the surrounding gardens should provide ample attenuation for dwellings.</p> <p><u>Zoning</u> Remaining undeveloped areas not susceptible</p> <p>Marginal risk to north of school in wooded area.</p> <p><u>Zoning</u> Civic / Community. No discernible risk to school or church site.</p> <p><u>Zoning; Open Space, - Water Compatible</u></p>	<p>E 710171 N 808695</p>
Conclusion	Accurate

Map 20: Bellurgan Composite Map



4.5: DARVER

Sources of Flooding

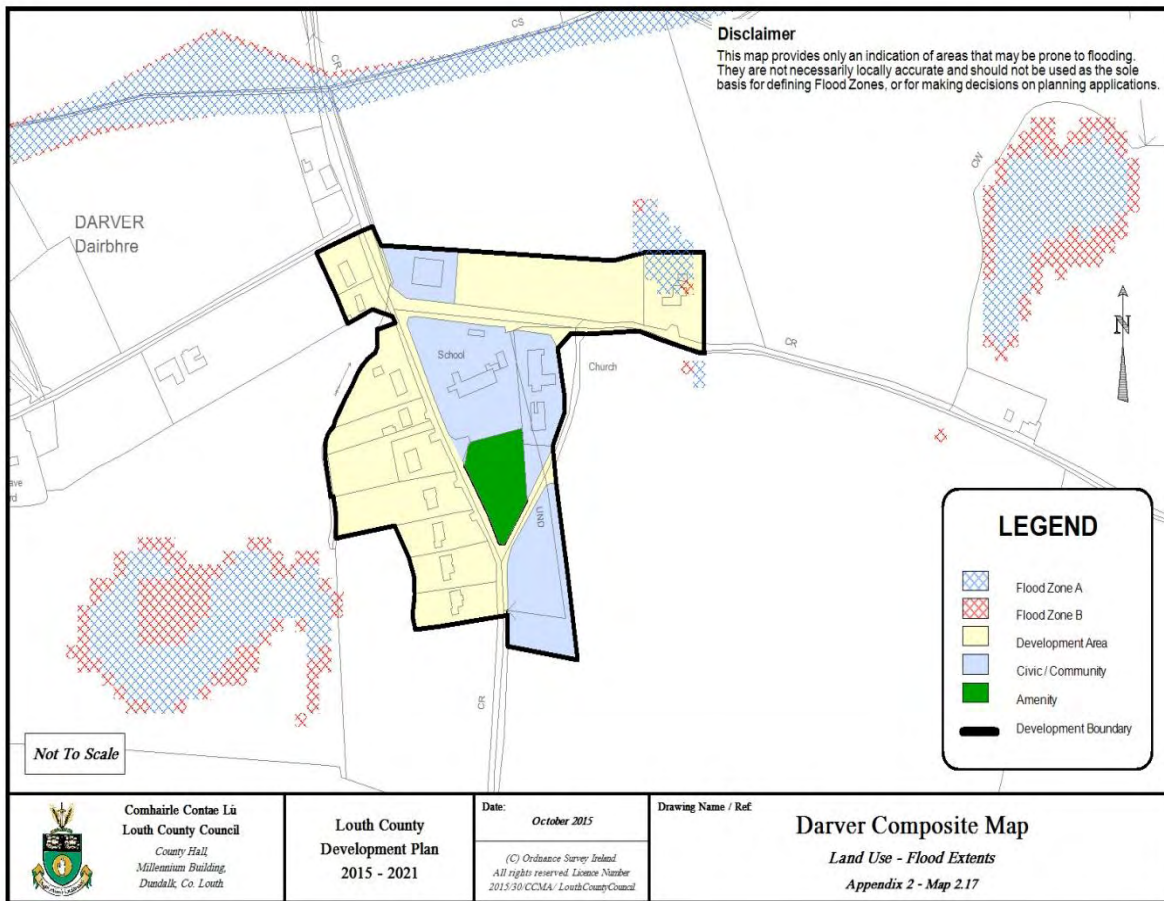
The PFRA flood mapping for indicates a small area as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Darver.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risk in Darver is from a small area of pluvial flooding where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

Darver	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 14th April 2015	Coordinates
Site	
Only potential flood risk lies to the rear of a large newbuild detached dwelling set in level pasture.	E 701427 N 798698
Conclusion	Accurate

Map 21: Darver Composite Map



4.6: DROMIN

Sources of Flooding

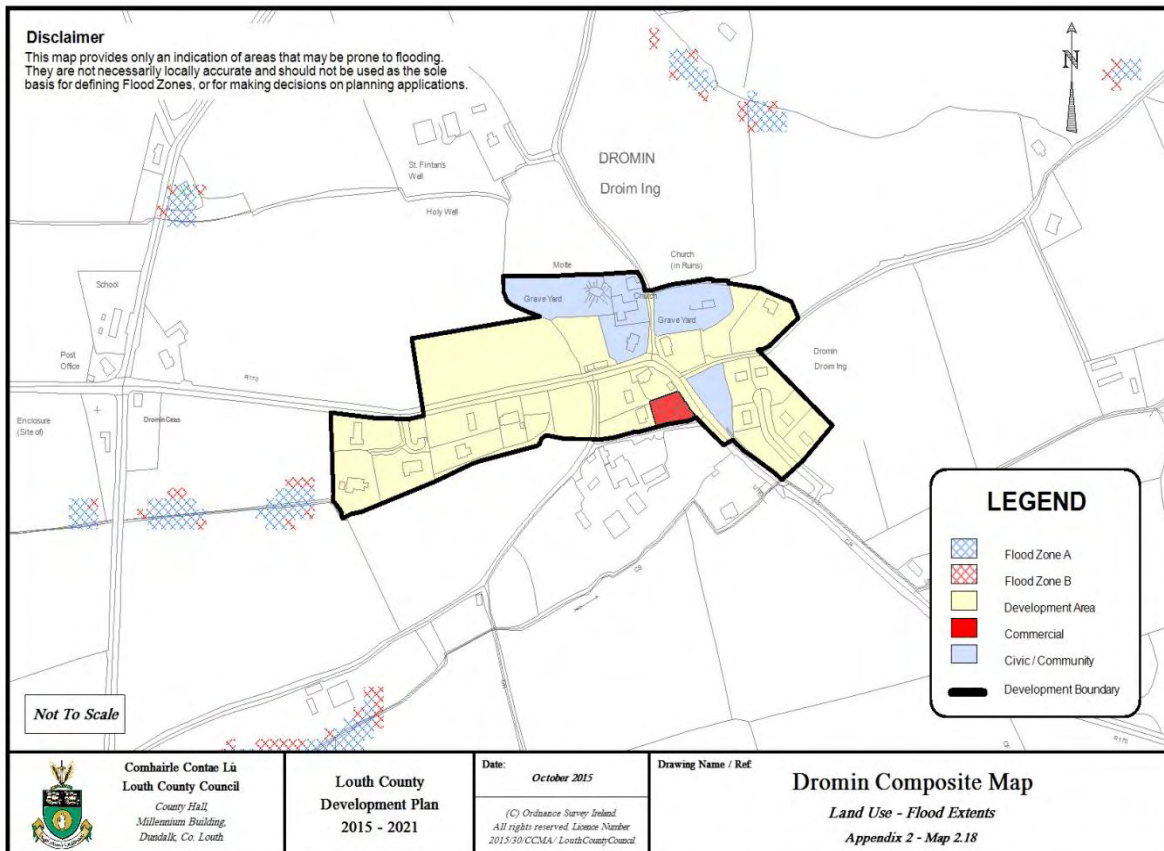
The PFRA flood mapping does not indicate any area as being vulnerable to Flooding within Dromin.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

None.

Walkover Survey not carried out

Map 22 : Dromin_Composite Map



4.7: FAUGHART

Sources of Flooding

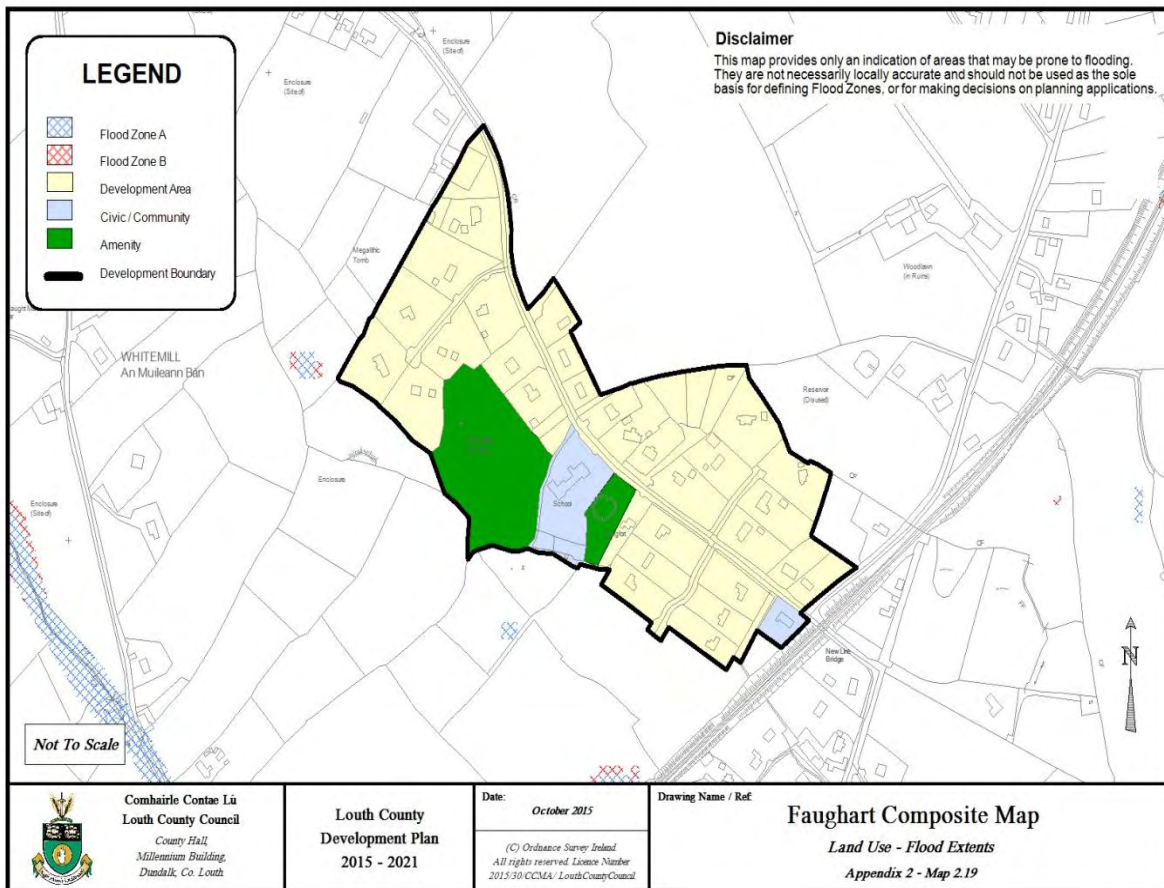
The PFRA flood mapping does not indicate any area as being vulnerable to Flooding within Faughart.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

None.

Walkover Survey not carried out

Map 23 : Faughart Composite Map



4.8: GLENMORE

Sources of Flooding

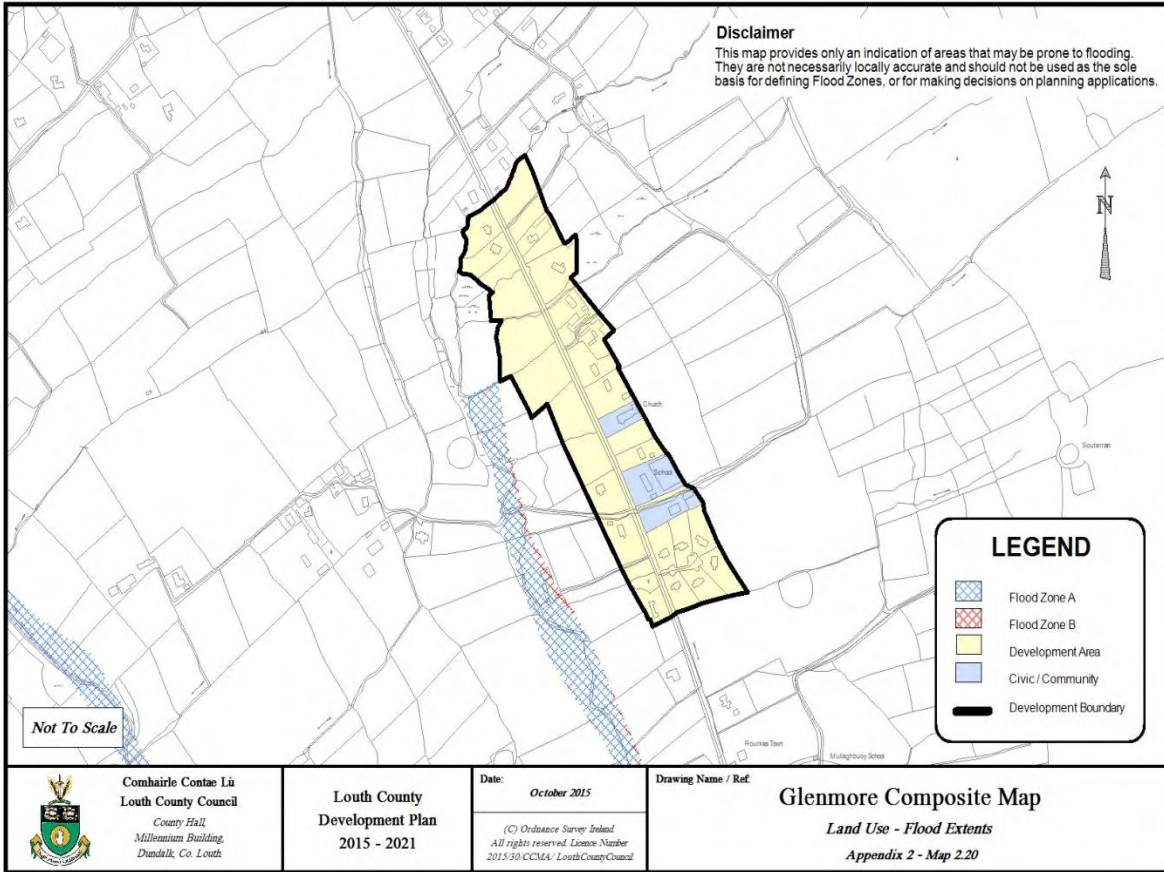
The PFRA flood mapping does not indicate any area as being vulnerable to Flooding within Glenmore.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

None.

Glenmore	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 30th March 2015	Coordinates
Site	
Settlement sits on ridge with the vast majority of residential and Civic / Community sites on the higher ground to north east. To the south west flooding is concentrated in lands falling south west away from settlement. <u>Zoning (residentially zoned lands to south west of road)</u> Unaffected	E 716555 N 809407
Conclusion	Accurate

Map 24 : Glenmore Composite Map



4.9: GRANGE

Sources of Flooding

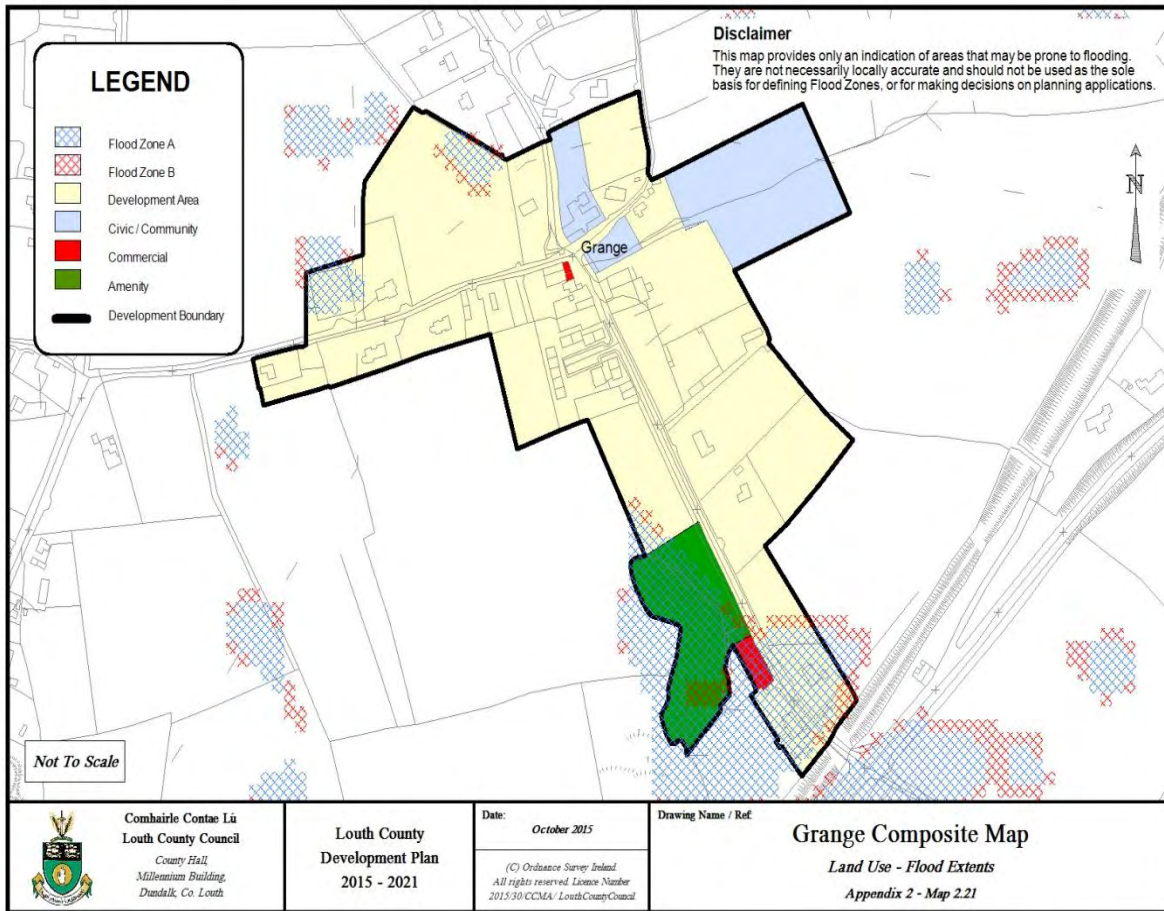
The PFRA flood mapping indicates a number of areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Grange.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risk in Grange is from a number of areas of pluvial flooding where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

Grange	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 30th March 2015	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Major flood area indicated on mapping to rear of local shop (Barry’s) and on adjacent open space to northwest.</p> <p style="color: red;">Site inspection revealed the creation of a large, constructed pond covering virtually the full flood extent of this area.</p> <p>Residential area opposite shop across road to east also liable. This may in part be explained by the presence of the old Dundalk to Greenore railway embankment.</p> <p><u>Zoning</u> Residential, further development in this area should be treated with caution</p> <p>Further area to northwest extremity of settlement (Rath Abbey) prone. Area appears to former industrial area, possible shallow quarry.</p> <p><u>Zoning</u> Residential, further development in this area should be treated with caution</p>	<p>E 719324 N 807923</p>
Conclusion	Accurate

Map 25: Grange Composite Map



4.10: GRANGEBELLEW

Sources of Flooding

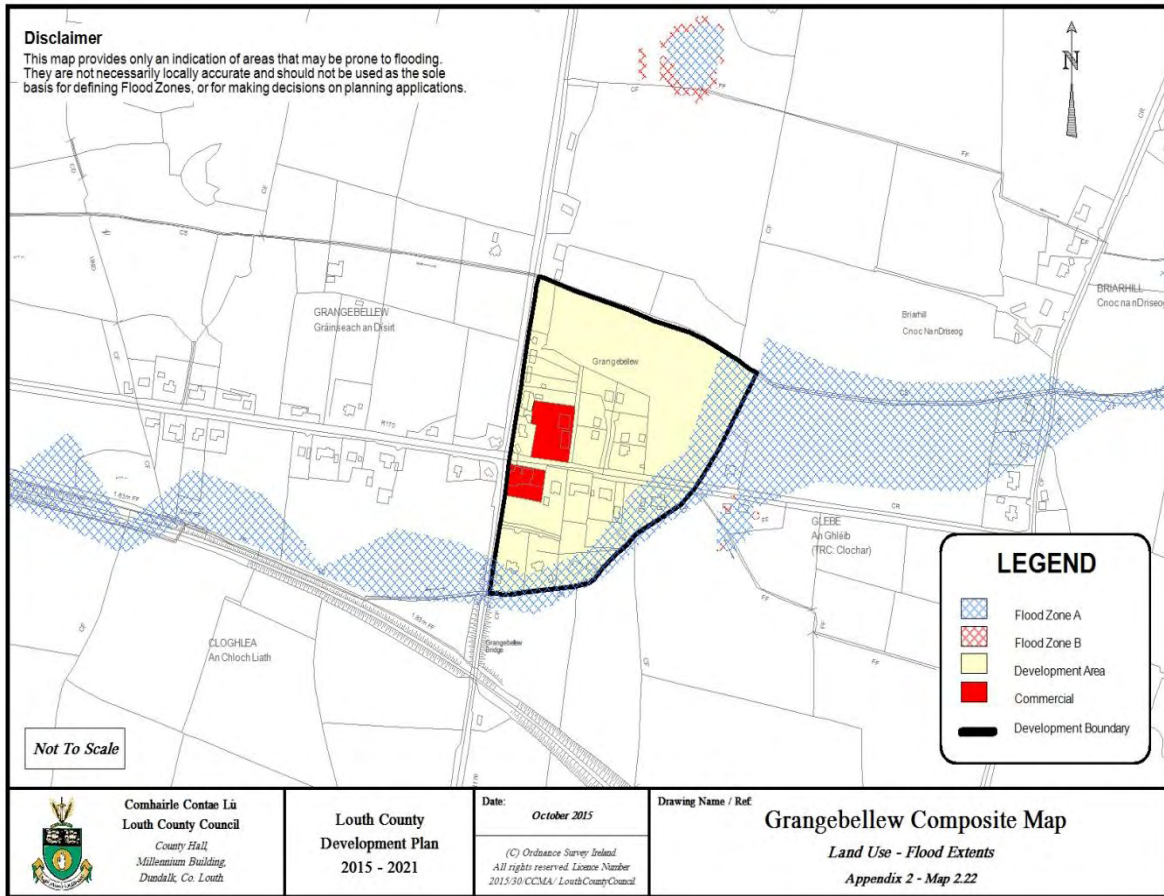
An existing watercourse flows through Grangebellew from west to east. The PFRA Flood Mapping shows a corridor along this tributary being vulnerable to fluvial flooding.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risks in Grangebellew are from fluvial flooding within the corridor along the existing watercourse, where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management.

Grangebellew	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 14th April 2015	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Flood risk in the settlement is concentrated to the eastern boundary of the settlement in the immediate vicinity of an open drain / stream which lies in a deep cut. Several existing properties are at risk however the only area capable of further development is a field adjacent an existing commercial premises.</p> <p>It would be prudent that less vulnerable development only be permitted in this location.</p>	<p>E709582 N786310</p>
Conclusion	Accurate

Map 26 : Grangebellew Composite Map



4.11: GREENORE

Stage 2 SFRA

Sources of Flooding

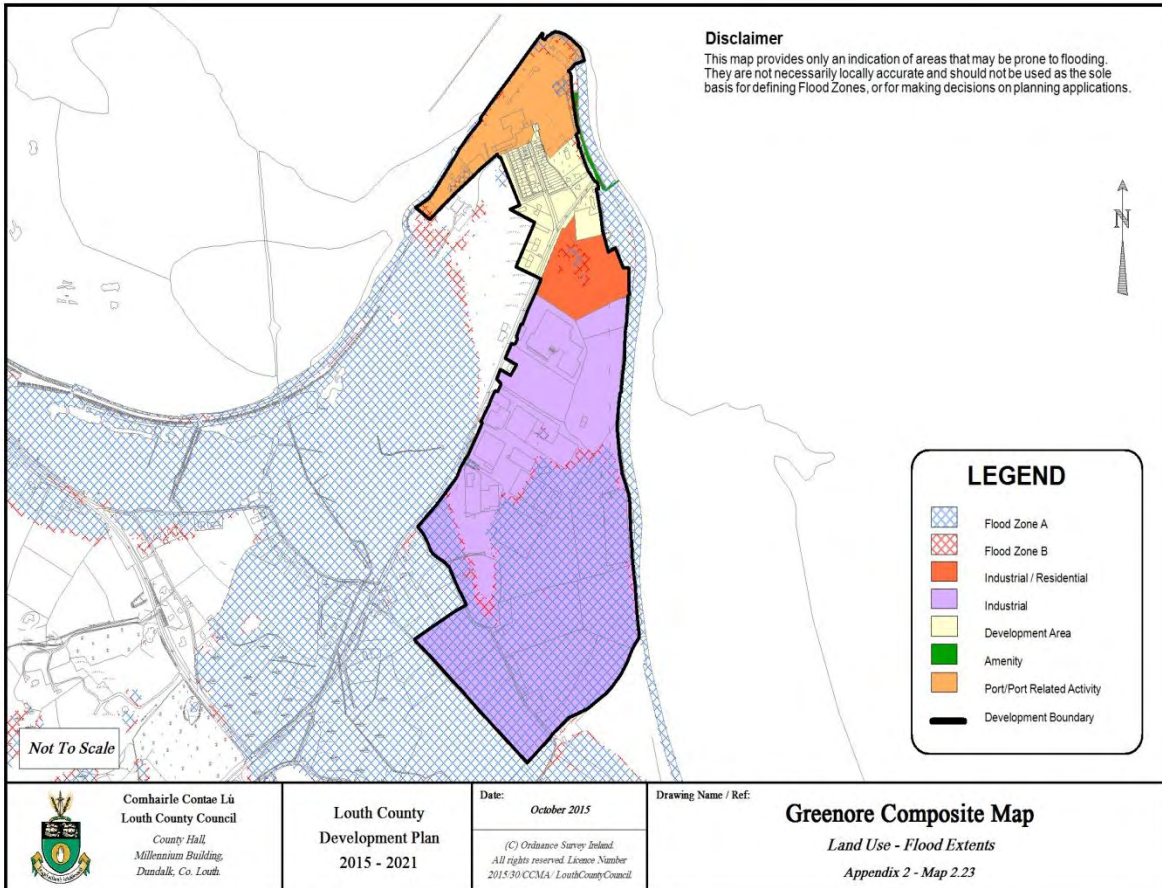
The PFRA flood mapping for Greenore indicates a number of relatively small areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding with Coastal Flooding restricted to along the shoreline.

Zoning in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risks in the village of Greenore arise along the shoreline from Coastal Flooding in locations zoned as “Industrial/Residential”, where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management.

Greenore	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 30th March 2015	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Flood risk in the settlement is generally coastal with an elongated strip stretching from within the port complex along the shore southwards but not threatening the settlement boundary. Innundation is indicated only along the access route to the port and on the coastal amenity green area. Entire area protected by low seawall, fronted by rock armour with gently sloping shingle beach beyond</p> <p>With the area zoned for industrial residential there is an area of existing industrial / warehousing development at risk. However this falls into the less vulnerable category of the guidelines</p>	<p>E 722487 N 810782</p>
Conclusion	Accurate

Map 27: Greenore Composite Map



4.12: GYLES QUAY

Sources of Flooding

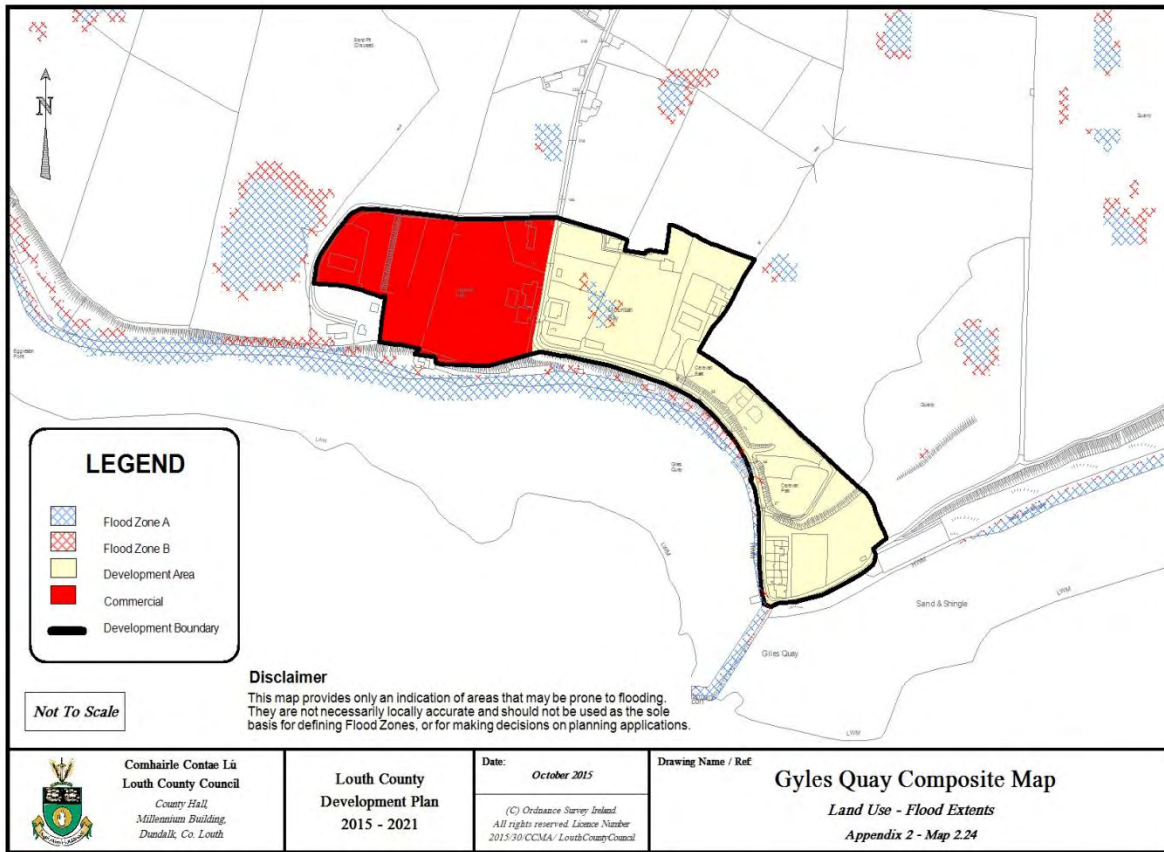
The PFRA flood mapping for Giles Quay indicates a relatively small area as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding with Coastal Flooding restricted to along the shoreline.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risks in Giles Quay arise from pluvial flooding where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach. Along the shoreline, in the areas shown to be vulnerable to coastal flooding, a site specific FRA would also be required for any development to demonstrate compliance with all the criteria of the Justification Test for Development Management.

Gyles Quay	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 30th March 2015	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Flood risk primarily emanating from coastal flooding with the quayside dwellings appearing to be most at risk, however map indicates little risk.</p> <p>Further area on high ground above quayside in vicinity of caravan park at risk, however this area is utilised for visiting tents at present. Any development proposals should utilise this area for open space provision.</p>	<p>E 715266 N 805777</p>
Conclusion	Accurate

Map 28: Gyles Quay Composite Map



4.13: KILCURRY

Sources of Flooding

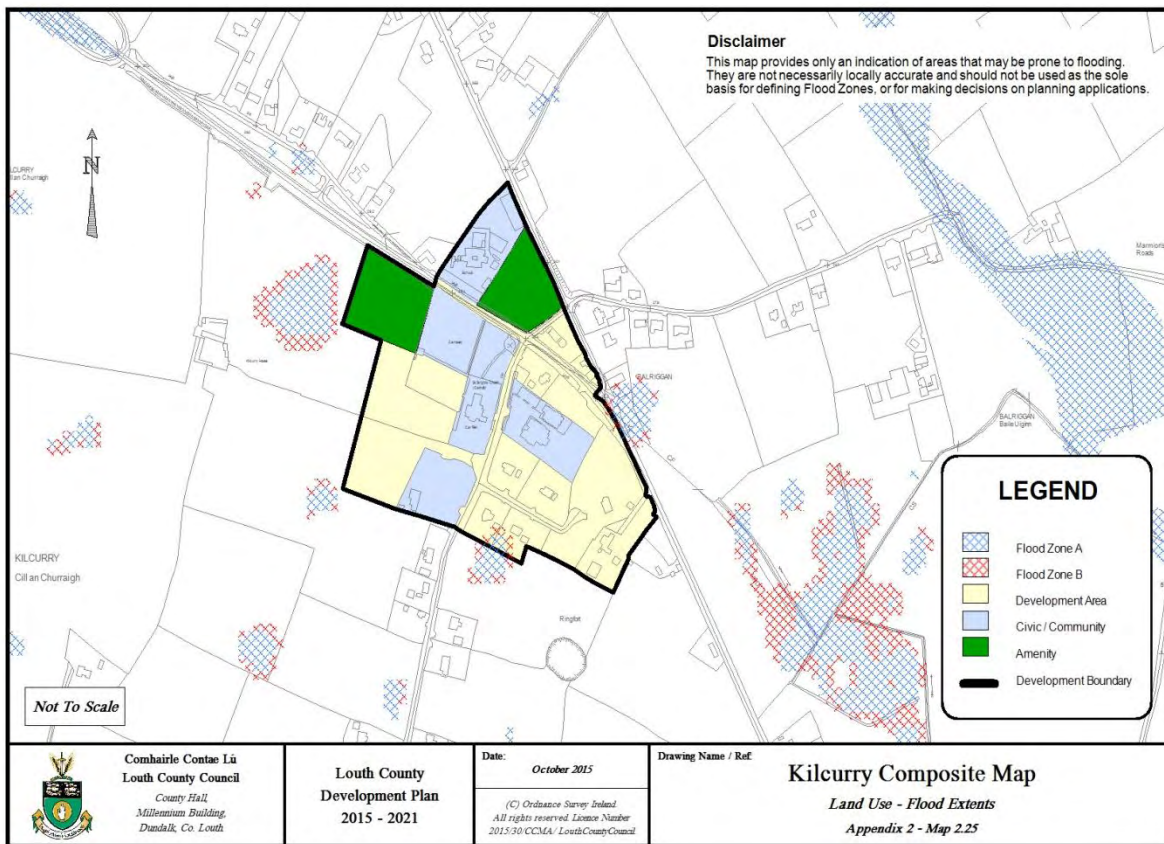
The PFRA flood mapping for indicates a small area as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Kilcurry.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risk in Kilcurry is from a small area of pluvial flooding where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

Walkover Survey not carried out

Map 29 : Kilcurry Composite Map



4.14: KILKERLEY

Sources of Flooding

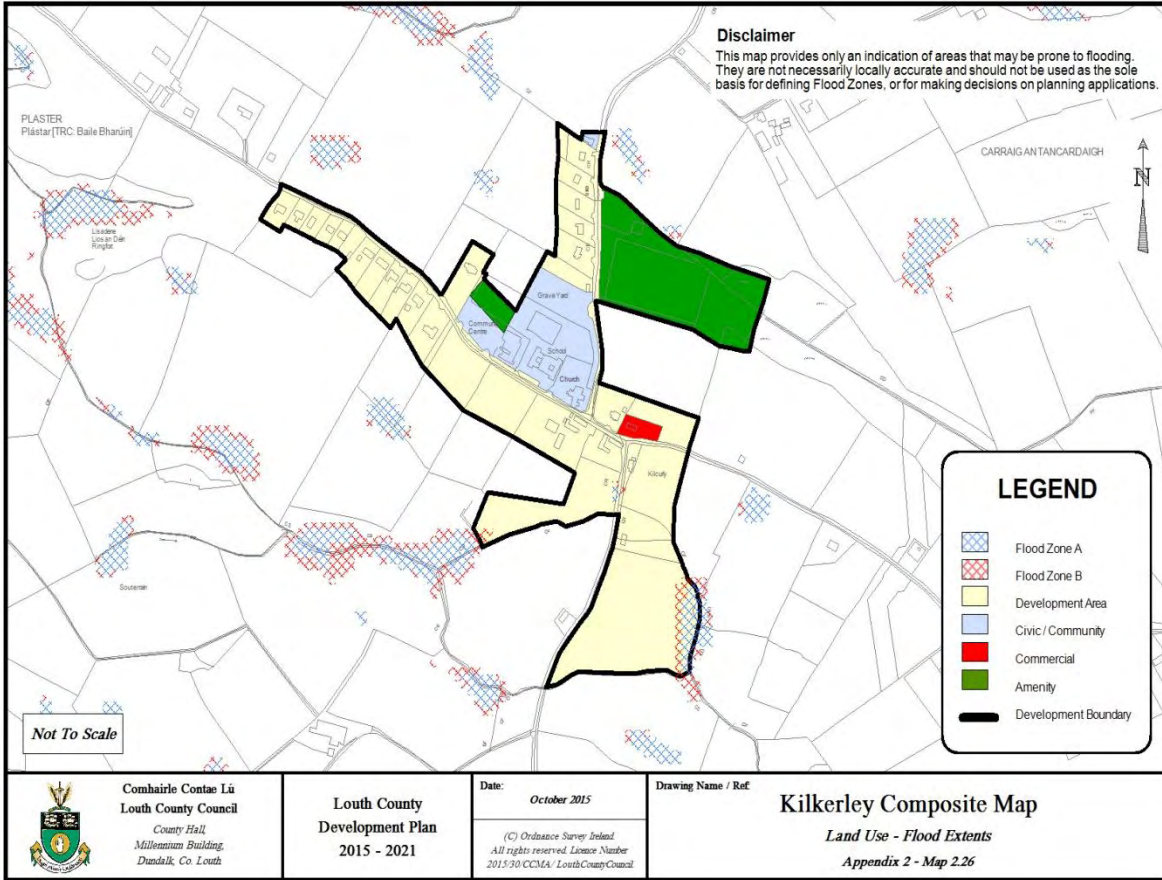
The PFRA flood mapping for indicates a small number of areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Kilkerry.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risk in Kilkerry is from a small number of areas of pluvial flooding where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

Kilkerry	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 14th April 2015	Coordinates
Site	
Flood risk in the settlement is concentrated to the south eastern boundary of the settlement at the edge of a large agricultural field falling to the southeast. Given the size of the undeveloped field and the small area of floodrisk contained therein, it is recommended that this area be designated open space within any future development.	E 700552 N 807422
Conclusion	Accurate

Map 30 : Kilkерley Composite Map



4.15: LORDSHIP

Sources of Flooding

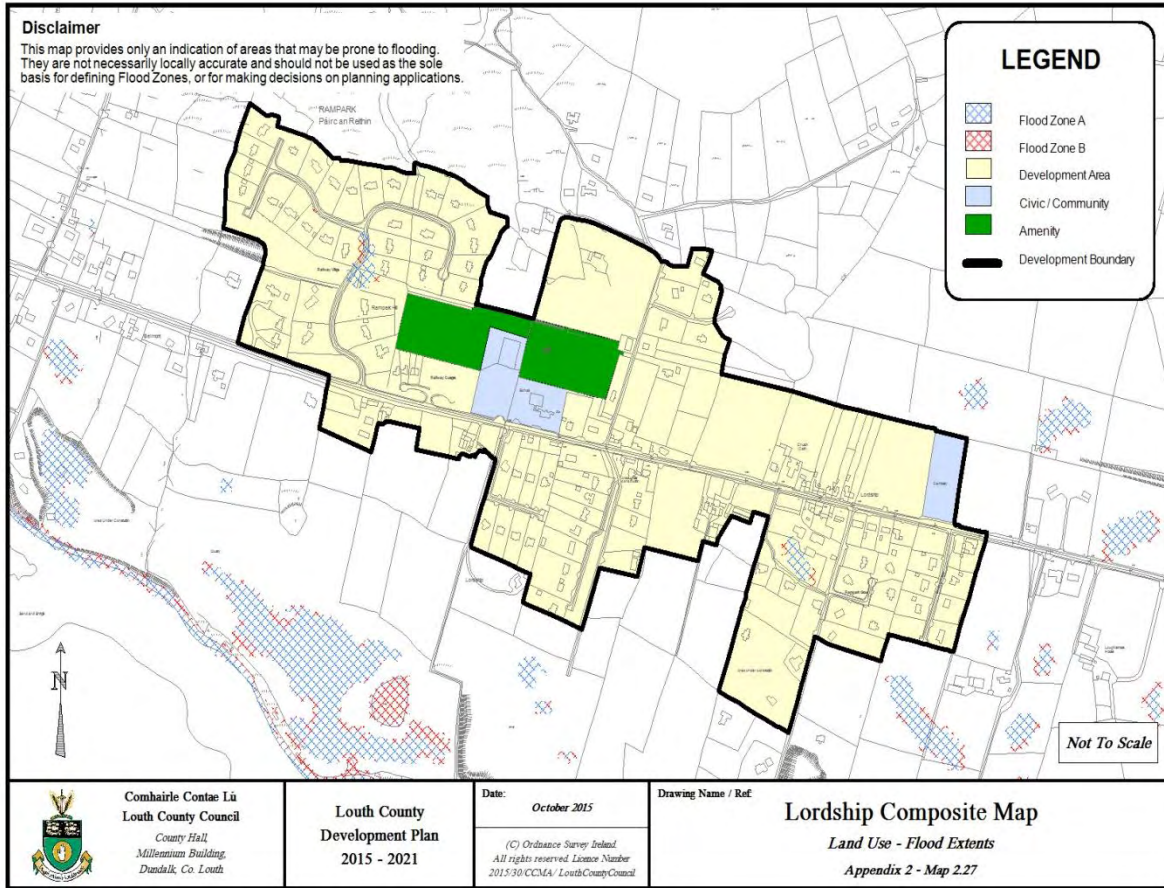
The PFRA flood mapping indicates a small number of areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Lordship.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risk in Lordship is from a small number of areas of pluvial flooding where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach

Lordship	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 30th March 2015	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Only problems appear minor in nature. The Railway Village housing development to the north of the regional (R 173) has minor internal road flooding together with adjacent gardens of these large detached dwellings set in generous plots.</p> <p>A further area in the vicinity of O'Connor Roofing Supplies is liable to flood.</p> <p>Residential proposals in this small area should be treated with caution.</p>	<p>E 711395 N 781232</p>
Conclusion	Accurate

Map 31: Lordship Composite Map



4.16: MOUNTBAGNALL

Sources of Flooding

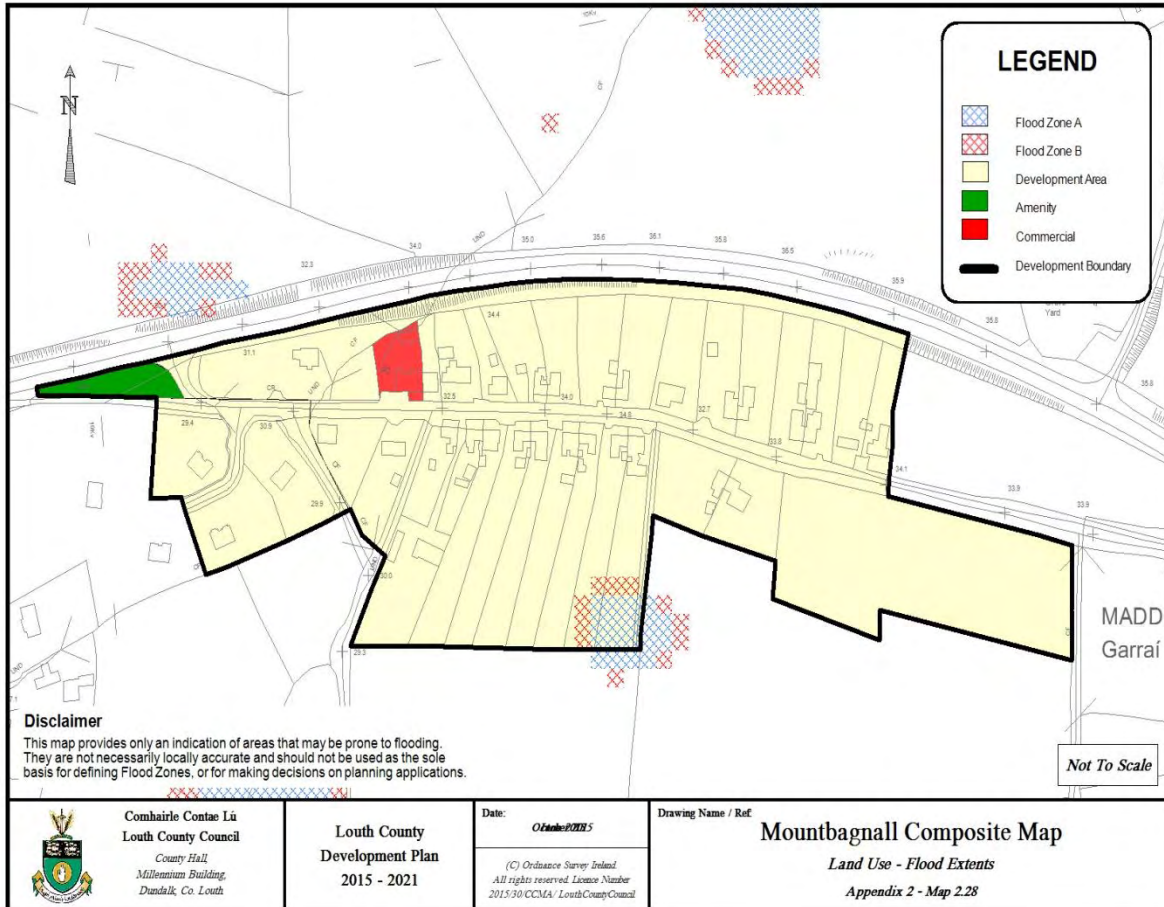
The PFRA flood mapping indicates a small number of areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Mountbagnall.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risk in Mountbagnall is from a small number of areas of pluvial flooding where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

Mountbagnall	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 30th March 2015	Coordinates
Site	
Only floodrisk is to the southern extremity of a long rear garden associated with a series of S/S cottages in the southern portion of the settlement.	E 715835 N 806746
Water Compatible	
Conclusion	Accurate

Map 32 : Mountbagnall Composite Map



4.17: MUCHGRANGE

Sources of Flooding

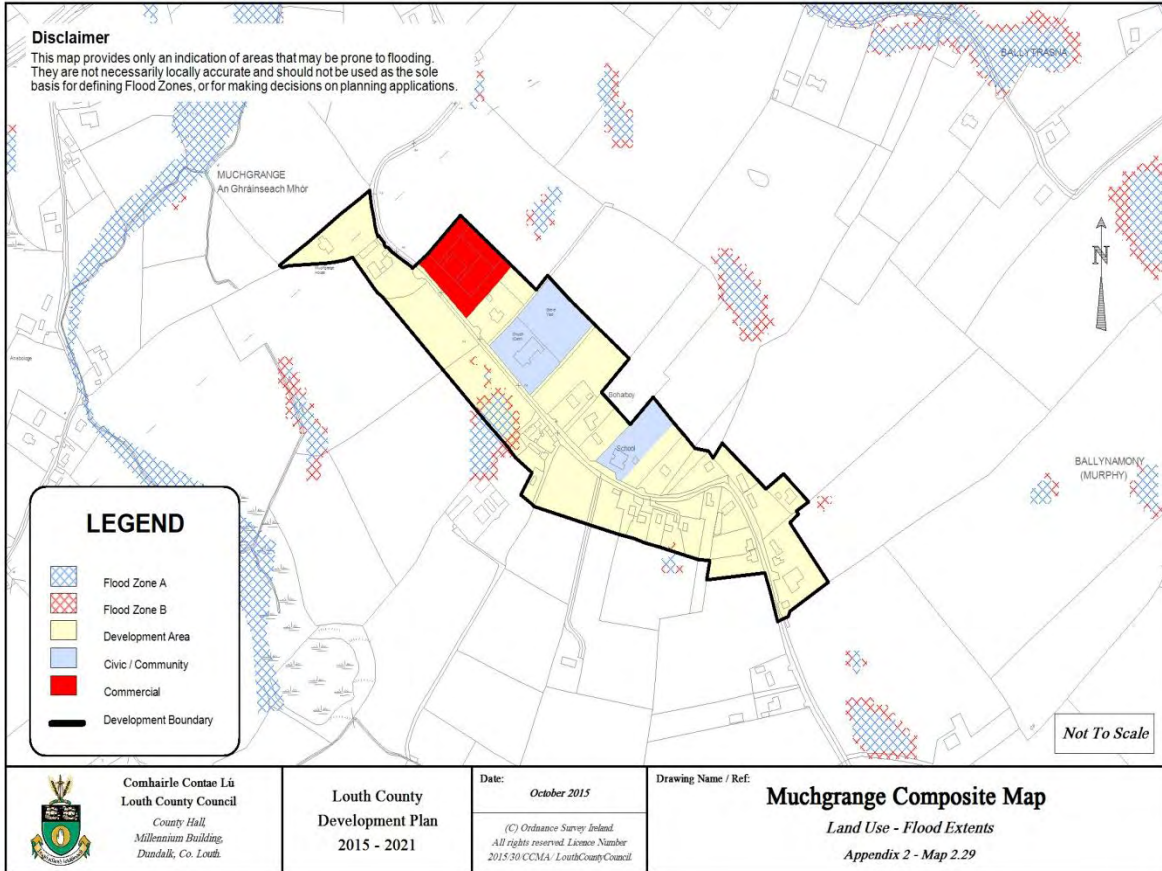
The PFRA flood mapping indicates a small number of areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Muchgrange.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risk in Muchgrange is from a small number of areas of pluvial flooding where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

Muchgrange	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 30th March 2015	Coordinates
Site	
Within settlement flood risk indicated west of local secondary road (LS 7067) on land sloping gently east to west. Flood prone land partially lies within a farm complex opposite church. Any development proposals in the area should avoid this portion of land	E 721985 N 808576
Conclusion	Accurate

Map 33: Muchgrange Composite Map



4.18: PHILIPSTOWN

Sources of Flooding

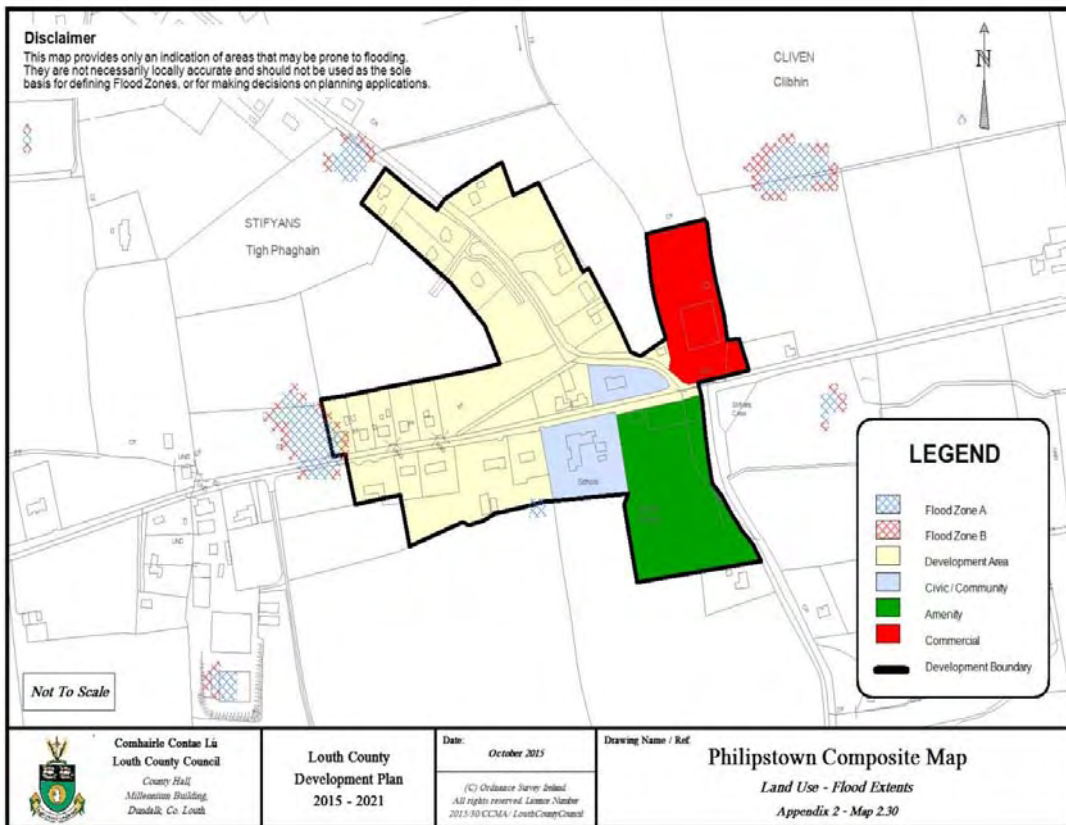
The PFRA flood mapping indicates a small number of areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Philipstown.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risk in Philipstown is from a small number of areas of pluvial flooding where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

Walkover Survey not carried out

Map 34: Philipstown Composite Map



4.19: RAVENSDALE

Sources of Flooding

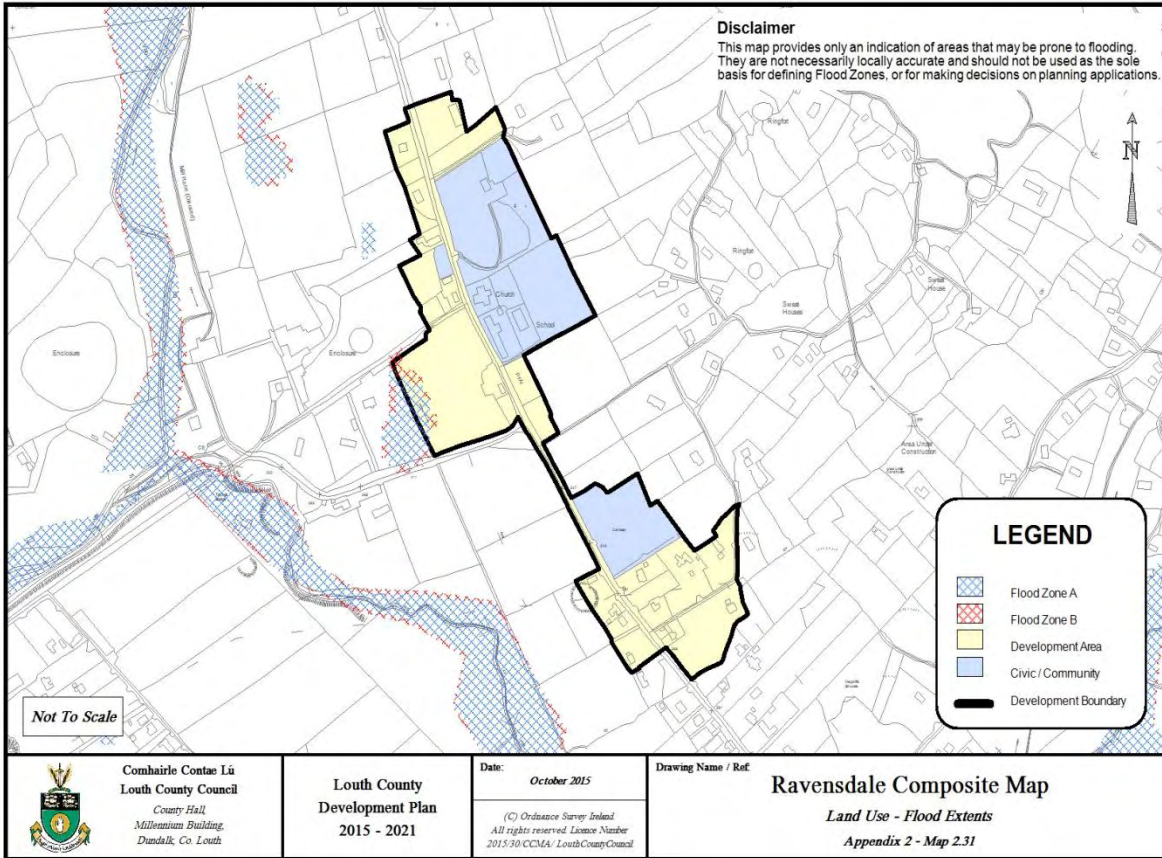
The PFRA flood mapping indicates a small number of areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Ravensdale.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risk in Ravensdale is from a small number of areas of pluvial flooding where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

Ravensdale	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 30th March 2015	Coordinates
Site	
Ravensdale sits on relatively high ground overlooking, in part, Dundalk Bay and generally falling towards same. Flood risk is limited to a small strip at the western extremity of the settlement accessed via a narrow laneway falling westwards.	E 709280 N 811673
Conclusion	Accurate

Map: 35 Ravensdale Composite Map



4.20: REAGHSTOWN

Sources of Flooding

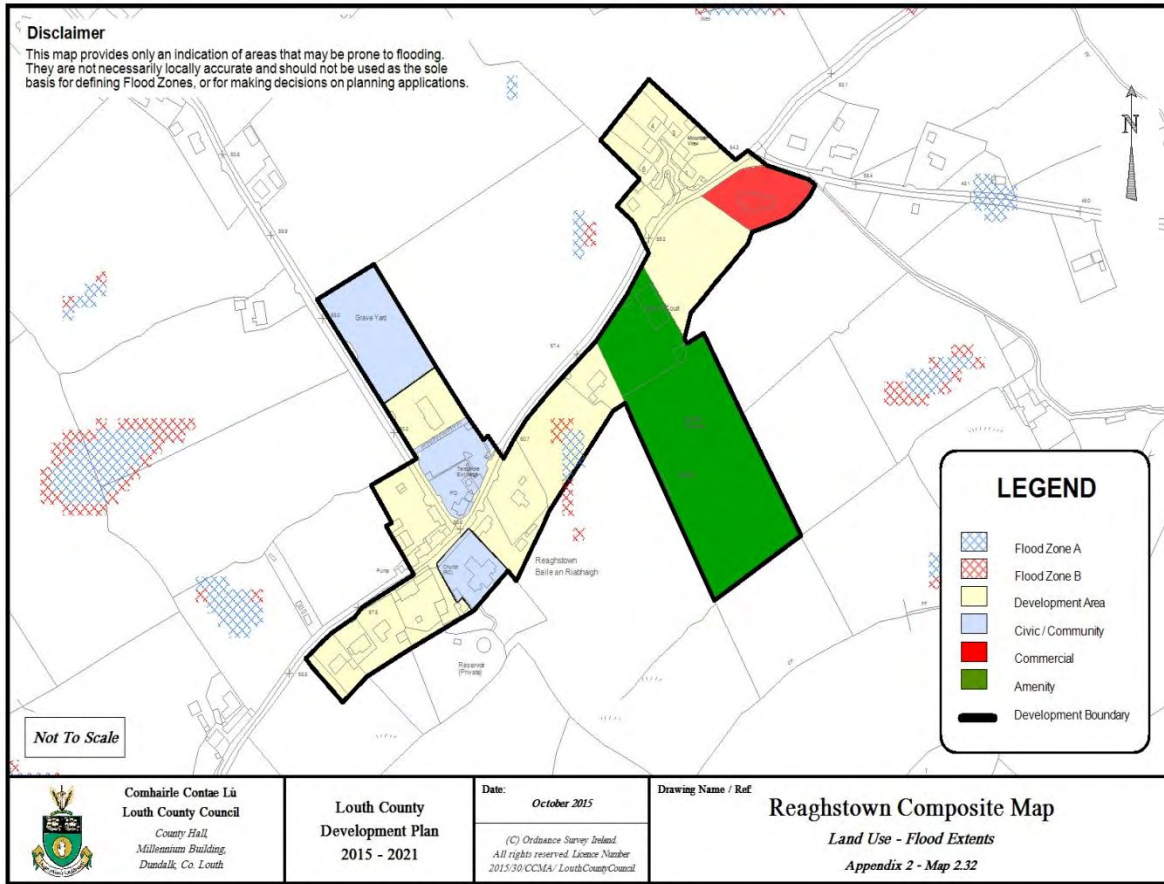
The PFRA flood mapping indicates a small number of areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Reaghstown.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risk in Reaghstown is from a small number of areas of pluvial flooding where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

Reaghstown	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 14th April 2015	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Flood risk in the settlement is mapped as occurring in the approximate centre of the settlement limit which currently comprises a large field in pasture which rises from the roadside in a south easterly direction before falling after a central ridge.</p> <p>It is recommended that use be made of this natural contour with the mapped flood area utilised for open space provision.</p>	<p>E 691308 N 796624</p>
Conclusion	Accurate

Map 36 : Reaghstown Composite Map



4.21: SANDPIT

Sources of Flooding

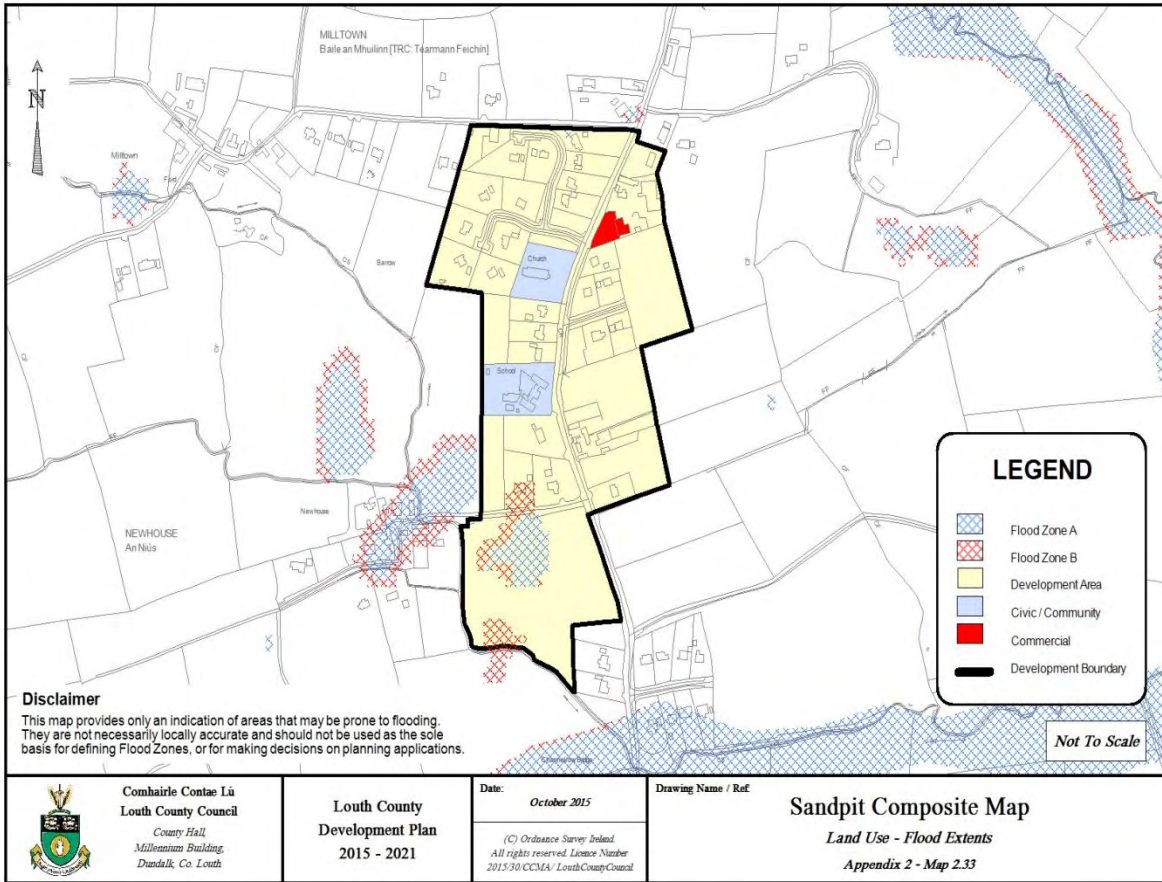
The PFRA flood mapping indicates a small number of areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Sandpit.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risk in Sandpit is from a small number of areas of pluvial flooding where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

Sandpit	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 14th April 2015	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Flood risk in the settlement is concentrated in the Newhouse area which comprises a series of large new build detached two storey dwellings within the boundary together with a complex of former mill and farm associated buildings beyond the boundary to the west in a clachan formation.</p> <p>The area indicated as liable to flood contains extensive gorse growth set within a series of apparently overgrown spoil heaps. No watercourse is apparent in the immediate vicinity however to the west there is an old millrace in working order.</p> <p>Mapping would indicate that a large 2-storey detached house border the western settlement boundary is at severe risk of flooding. This fact is borne out by the fact that the owner has constructed a substantial bund and drain to the western edge of his/her boundary.</p> <p>Local knowledge on the day of the site visit indicated that flooding in recent years has been severe with inundation occurring as indicated on the mapping.</p>	<p>E 711404 N 781230</p>
Conclusion	Accurate

Map 37: Sandpit Composite Map



4.22: SHEELAGH

Sources of Flooding

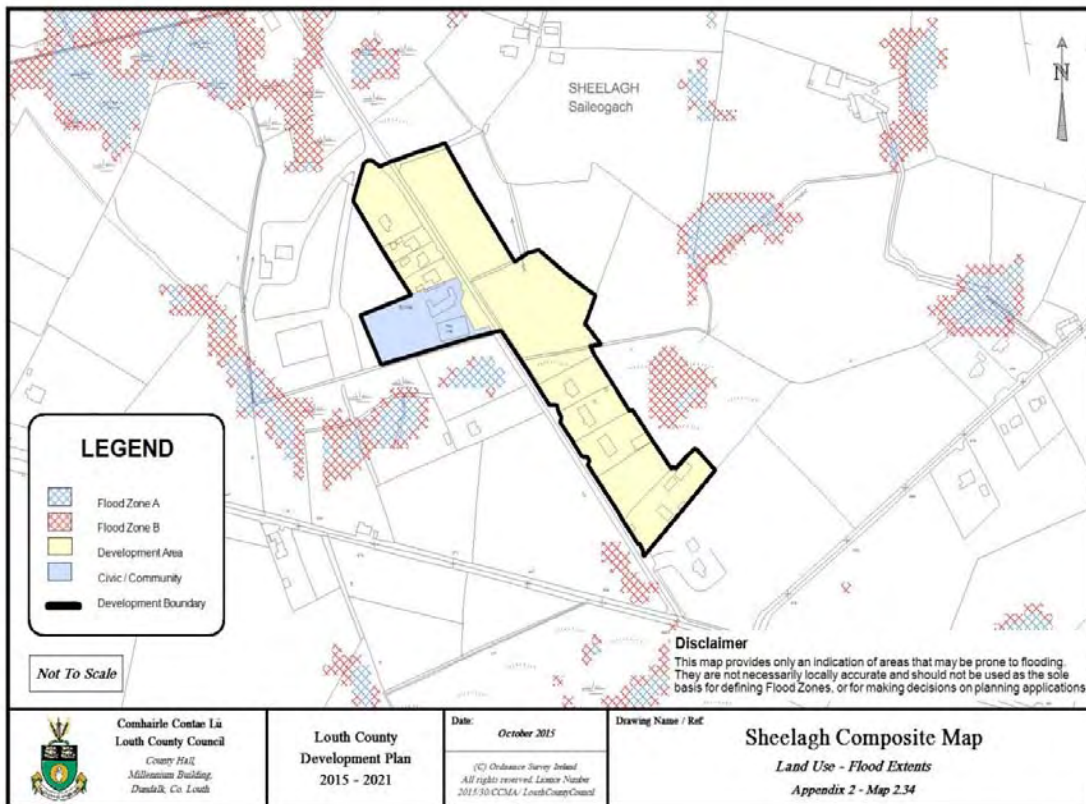
The PFRA flood mapping does not indicate any area as being vulnerable to Flooding within Sheelagh.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

None.

Walkover Survey not carried out

Map 38 : Sheelagh Composite Map



4.23: STABANNAN

Sources of Flooding

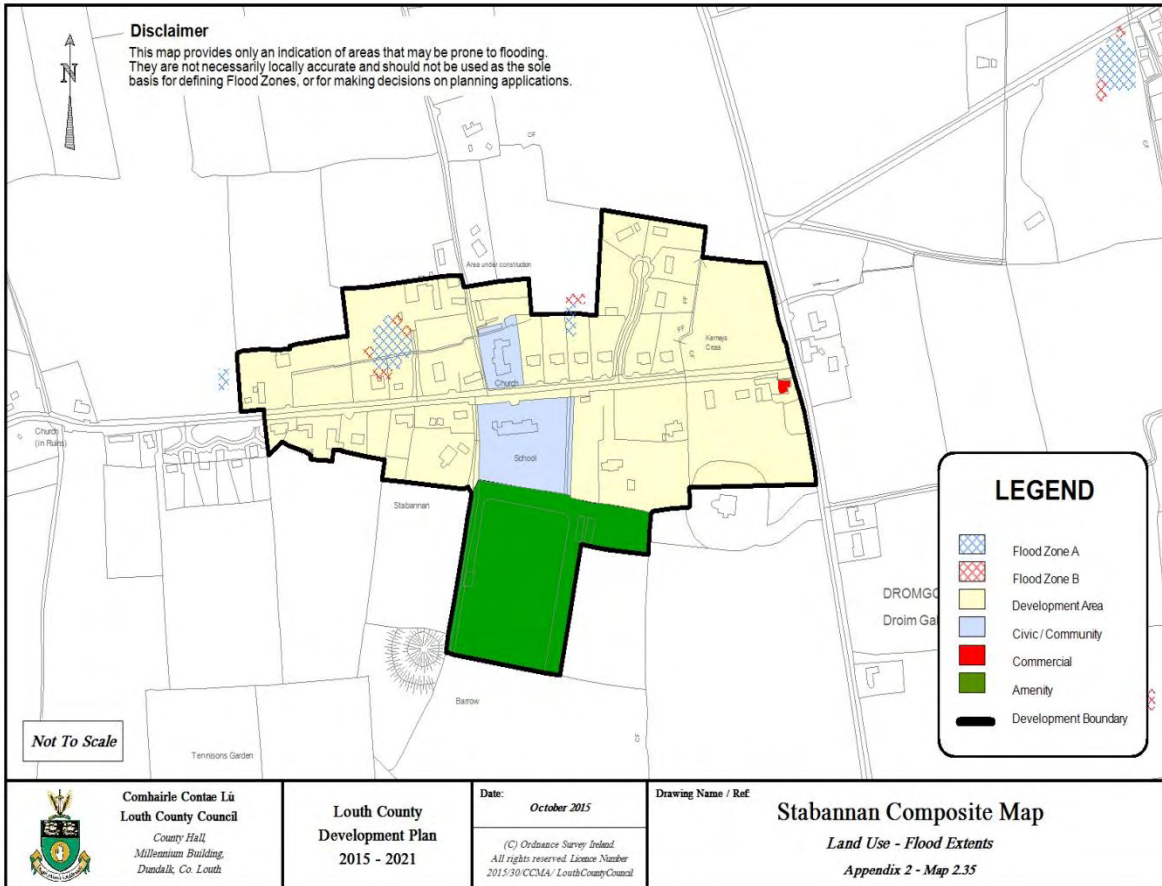
The PFRA flood mapping indicates a small number of areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Stabannan.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risk in Stabannan is from a small number of areas of pluvial flooding where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

Stabannan	
Walkover Survey Report	
Survey Date 14th April 2015	Coordinates
Site	
<p>Flood risk in the settlement is in a small area to the north of the central spine road. The area in indicated consists of a large field in pasture which falls gently south towards an open drain at the rear of an abandoned S/S cottage fronting the road. The garden area of the cottage appears to have considerable water present even on the relatively dry day of inspection.</p> <p>Local knowledge on the day of inspection indicated that the mapped area has been known to flood but historically this has not been severe. It would therefore be prudent to utilise this area as open space in any future development.</p>	<p>E 702449 N 791943</p>
Conclusion	Accurate

Map 39: Stabannan Composite Map



4.24: TINURE

Sources of Flooding

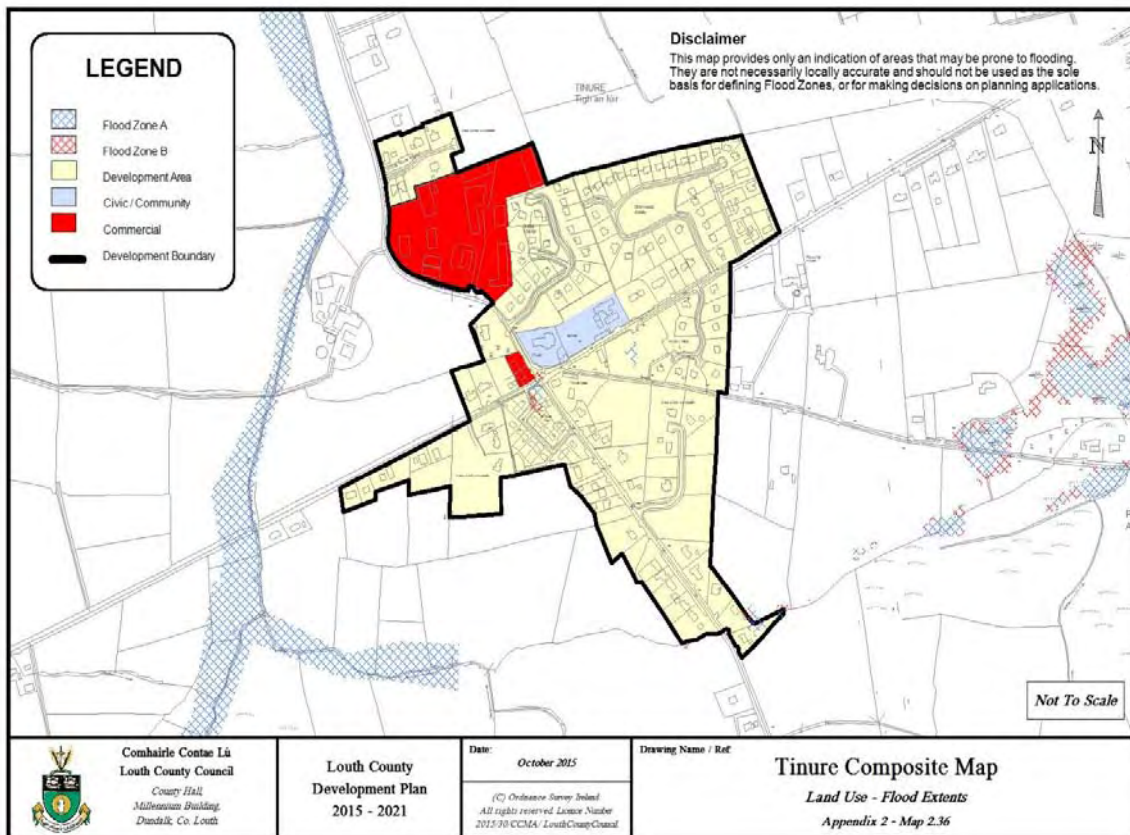
The PFRA flood mapping indicates a small number of areas as vulnerable to Pluvial Flooding within Tinure.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

The main flood risk in Tinure is from a small number of areas of pluvial flooding where a site specific FRA would be required for any development to demonstrate provision of appropriate mitigation as recommended by the Sequential Approach.

Walkover Survey not carried out

Map 40 : Tinure Composite Map



4.25: WILLVILLE

Sources of Flooding

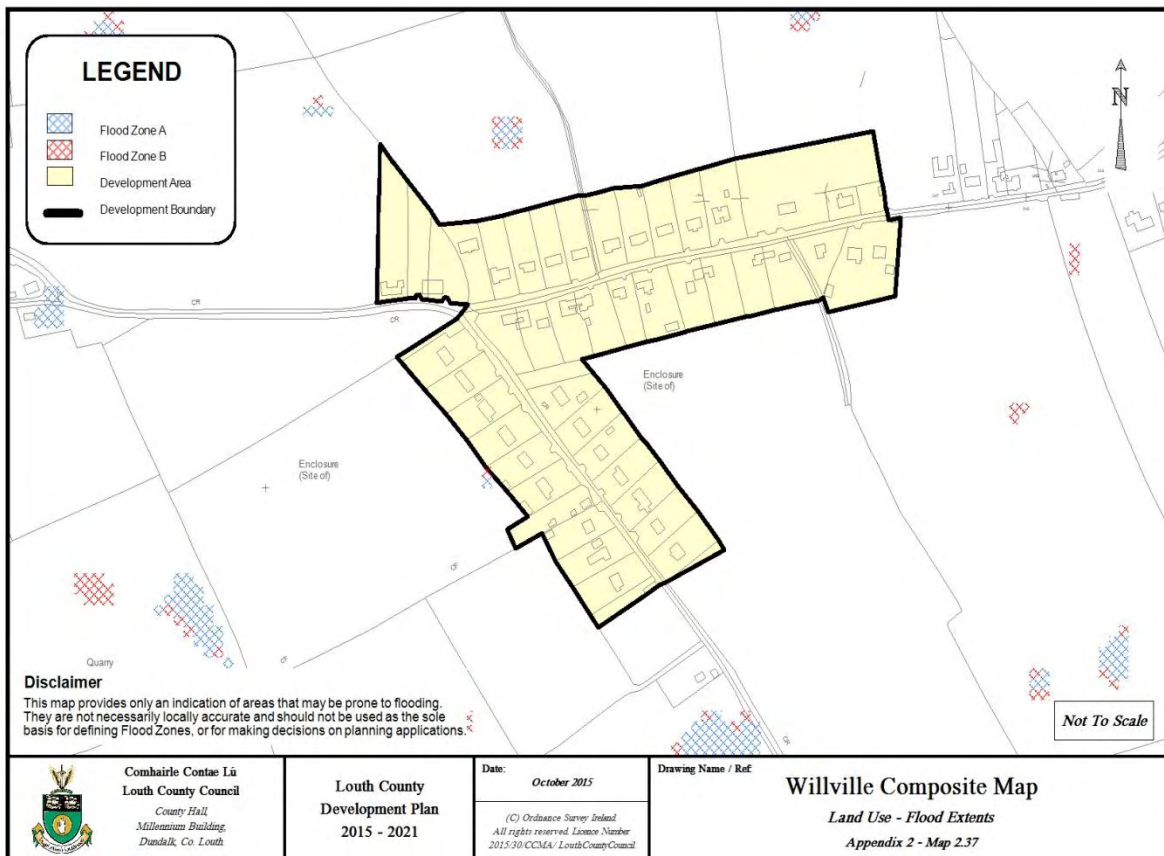
The PFRA flood mapping does not indicate any area as being vulnerable to Flooding within Willville.

Lands within development boundary in Flood Risk Areas

None.

Walkover Survey not carried out

Map 41: Willville Composite Map



Appendix 14
Green Infrastructure Strategy



Contents:	Page No.
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Green Infrastructure Definition	1
1.2 National Guidance for Green Infrastructure Strategy	3
1.2.1 European Context	3
1.2.2 National Context	3
1.2.2.1 Creative Green Infrastructure Strategy for Ireland	4
1.2.2.2 Green City Guidelines	4
1.2.2.3 National Climate Change Adaptation Framework	5
1.2.3 Local Context	5
1.2.3.1 Louth Heritage Plan 2007-2011	5
1.2.3.2 Louth County Bio Diversity Plan 2008-2012	5
1.2.3.3 Louth County Development Plan 2009-2015	6
1.3 Background and Objectives	7
1.3.1 Planning Process	7
1.3.2 Pre Draft Issues Paper Consultation	8
1.3.3 Problem & Challenges for Green Infrastructure Strategy	8
1.3.4 Strategic Objectives	9
2.0 County Louth Baseline Assessment	10
2.1 Landuse	10
2.1.1 Settlement Hierarchy	10
2.1.2 Corrine Land Cover (CLC) 2006	12
2.1.3 Forestry	14
2.1.4 Landscape Character Assessment	14
2.1.5 Movement & Access	16
2.2 Blue Infrastructure	18
2.2.1 Wetlands & Watercourses	18
2.2.2 Wetland Survey	19
2.2.3 Coastline	22
2.3 Biodiversity	22
2.3.1 Natura 2000 sites	22
2.3.2 National Parks & Wildlife Services Conservation Plans	23
2.3.3 Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA)	24
2.3.4 Important Protected Species within Louth	27
2.3.5 Hedgerows	29
2.3.6 Trees	29

2.4	Built Heritage & Conservation	31
2.4.1	Built Heritage	31
2.4.2	Heritage Gardens & Designated Landscapes	31
2.4.3	Protected Structures & Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA's)	32
2.4.4	Monuments & Archaeology	32
3.0	Going Forward The Green Infrastructure Strategy	35
3.1	Green Infrastructure Network	35
3.1.1	Appropriate Assessment	37
3.2	Spatial Planning	37
3.2.1	Core Strategy	37
3.2.2	Level 3 Settlement Plans	38
3.2.3	Level 1 Settlements Dundalk & Drogheda : Level 2 Settlements Dunleer & Ardee	42
3.2.4	Development Management Guidance	43
3.2.4.1	Development Proposals	43
3.2.4.2	Environmental Enhancement	44
3.2.4.3	Landscape Design & Planting	46
3.2.4.4	Public Realm	48
3.2.4.5	Climate Change	49
3.2.4.5.1	SUDS	49
3.2.4.5.2	Flood Risk	49
3.2.4.5.3	Sustainable Development Patterns	49
4.0	Conclusion	50

List of Tables:

Table 1	Indirect Reference to Green Infrastructure in the Existing Development Plan	6
Table 2	Problems and Challenges to be addressed by the Green Infrastructure Strategy	9
Table 3	Settlement Structure in County Louth	10
Table 4	Landscape Area Classification	14
Table 5	Access Routes within County Louth	16
Table 6	Main Rivers of County Louth	18
Table 7	Wetland Sites with High Importance in Phase 1	19
Table 8	Wetland Sites with High Importance in Phase 2	20
Table 9	List of Natura 2000 sites within County Louth	23
Table 10	Conservation Plans for Natura 2000 sites in County Louth	24
Table 11	Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA)	25
Table 12	Protected Species in Louth	27

Appendix 14
Green Infrastructure Strategy

Table 13	Historic Gardens & Designated Landscapes	31
Table 14	Assessment of Green Infrastructure within the Level 3 Settlements	39
Table 15	Objectives to be included for LAPS	43
Table 16	Summary of the Survey of Existing Biodiversity Features	44
Table 17	Native Planting Scheme	47

List of Maps:

Map 14.1	Development Zones in Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021	11
Map 14.2	Corrine Land Use	13
Map 14.3	Landscape Character Areas	15
Map 14.4	Road Network	17
Map 14.5	Rivers Lakes & Wetlands	21
Map 14.6	Nature Conservation Sites	26
Map 14.7	Trees & Woodlands of Special Amenity Value	30
Map 14.8	Built Heritage	34
Map 14.9	Green Infrastructure Network	36

List of Figures:

Figure 1	Natural Features Making Up Green Infrastructure	1
Figure 2	Indicative illustration of Green Infrastructure within the Landscape	2
Figure 3	National Guidance reports produced to support the provision of Green Infrastructure	4
Figure 4	Process for integration of Green Infrastructure Strategy into County Louth	7
Figure 5	Core Strategy and Integration and Compliance with Green Infrastructure	38
Figure 6	Masterplan Proposals and Links to Proposed Development from the City Of Stockholm	46
Figure 7	Example of Trees Integrated into the Townscape	48

1. Introduction

1.1 Green Infrastructure Definition

The term **Green Infrastructure (GI)** can describe a network of connected, high quality, multifunctional open spaces, corridors, and the links in between that provide environmental services and multiple benefits for both people and wildlife. It is also used to describe a broad range of design measures, techniques and materials that have a sustainable character and have a beneficial environmental impact including climate change.

This strategy aims to assess the current environmental baseline within County Louth. In addition to this it will provide support for a strategic network of natural and semi-natural areas interconnected, designed and managed to deliver a range of ecosystem services. The GI strategy incorporates green spaces, and blue spaces (water based) such as those in Figure 1, both in urban and rural areas to support a resilient society.

Figure 1: Natural Features Making Up Green Infrastructure



Green infrastructure is composed of an Ecological Network (EN) which consists of core areas (or hubs), corridors, stepping stones and buffer zones where the corridors and stepping stones create a connection between constituent core areas (Figure 2). These may be described as outlined below.

- **Core Areas:** These areas consist of the central most important ecological areas which support important or vulnerable species and habitats for e.g. Natura 2000 sites.
- **Ecological Corridor:** These are also referred to as landscape or linear corridors and include long strips of vegetation, such as hedgerows, strips of forest and other vegetation which facilitates to allow the movement of wildlife between the two core areas. Stepping stones are also corridors made up of a series of small, non connected habitats.
- **Buffer Zone:** These surround areas of ecological value to minimise the impacts of adjacent land use on these ecologically important areas.

The Green Infrastructure Strategy provides support for all such aspects of this ecological network as illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Indicative Illustration Of Green Infrastructure Within The Landscape
(Source: "Green Infrastructure, A Quality of Life Issue" (IEEM & Urban Forum))



1.2 National Guidance for Green Infrastructure Strategy

As the term Green Infrastructure is a relatively recent concept, guidance is currently limited in a national context. Guidance is primarily drawn from the European context and best practice examples of implementation are detailed in Section 2 of this Strategy.

1.2.1 European Context

“The Multifunctionality of Green Infrastructure” (EC, 2012) provides a background on green infrastructure and the cost benefit analysis of an integrated approach on the implementation of such a Strategy. The Green Infrastructure approach is particularly important for the delivery of ecosystem services, Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), green roofs and adaption to and mitigation for climate change. Additionally the European Commission is to provide financial support for Green Infrastructure projects as detailed in the document “Green Infrastructure (GI)- Enhancing Europe’s Natural Capital” (EC,2013). GI solutions will be supported through the Cohesion Fund and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) where it can demonstrate a “place-based” approach, is cost effective and preserves the physical features of the locality.

1.2.2 National Context

Presently there is limited national guidance regarding the provision of Green Infrastructure. Documents which are currently available are detailed below and outline policy implementation at a local level.

The National Biodiversity Action Plan 2011-2016.

The National Biodiversity Action Plan 2011-2016 provides support for a Green Infrastructure approach within planning policy to help protect or improve connectivity between habitats, thus reducing the effects of fragmentation which can lead to the loss of species. Actions to support GI at a national level include:-

- Review of proposed National Heritage Areas (pNHA) by 2015 and designation as appropriate under the **Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000**;
- The 2015 target to strengthen the coherence, connectivity and resilience (including climate change) of the protected areas network using, appropriate tools, that may include flyways, buffer zones, corridors and stepping stones.

Figure 3: National Guidance Reports Produced To Support the Provision of Green Infrastructure



1.2.2.1 Creating Green Infrastructure for Ireland

In general the Comhar guidelines provide strategic guidance on the implementation of Green Infrastructure at a national and regional level. Examples of data sets and case studies have been provided with support for an integrated approach to the delivery of Green Infrastructure. Eight functions of green infrastructure have been identified:

- Recreation & Health,
- Biodiversity & Natural Resources,
- Coast, Water Resource and Flood Management,
- Sense of Place,
- Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation,
- Economic Development,
- Social Inclusion,
- Production Environments.

1.2.2.2 Green City Guidelines (UCD, 2008)

The Green City Guidelines refer to the integration of a green infrastructure approach at a local level including examples for integration. Guidance is listed for biodiversity in urban areas and an overview of the planning and development process, case studies and practical measures for incorporating biodiversity at an early stage in the design process. Key factors for defining habitat quality include:

- Size,
- Diversity,
- Naturalness,
- Typicalness,
- Rarity,
- Fragility,
- History.

1.2.2.3 National Climate Change Adaption Framework

The National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (DECLG 2012) refers to methods for both adaption and mitigation measures for climate change. Mitigation refers to these actions taken to reduce emissions of the greenhouse gases that are driving climate change. It includes strategies to reduce activities that give rise to greenhouse gases and enhance sinks, for greenhouse gas, in forests and other part of the biosphere. Adaptation refers to the adjustment or preparation of natural or human systems to a new or changing environment, with the aim of moderating harm or exploiting beneficial opportunities. Climate change adaptation comprises all spontaneous responses and planned action taken to cope with the impacts of changing climate conditions, particularly flooding issues.

Green Infrastructure can be not only used as a mitigation measure for reducing the effects of climate change, but it can also ensure benefits to the environment when integrating with adaptation measures such as coastal defence measures. Examples of activities supporting climate change adaptation include the provision of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and planting for mitigation measures. Spatial planning can support both adaptation and mitigation by e.g. promoting sustainable growth patterns and addressing flood risk.

1.2.3 Local Context

1.2.3.1 Louth Heritage Plan 2007- 2011

Specific reference has not been made to Green Infrastructure within the current Heritage Plan 2007-2011 currently under review. This Heritage Plan includes actions which can be supported by the implementation of a GI Strategy. The three Key Performance Areas (KPA) in the Heritage Plan are listed below and support for the natural environment is included for within these themes:

KPA1: Primary data acquisition and management,

KPA2: Interpretation and increase public involvement and awareness,

KPA3: Improving current practice.

1.2.3.2 Louth County Biodiversity Plan 2008-2012

The Louth County Biodiversity Plan 2008-2012 currently under review does not specifically relate to green infrastructure, although particular reference has been made to important habitats and species within County Louth. This Biodiversity Plan includes for five key objectives as follows:

Obj 1: Develop a system for the protection of Local Biodiversity Areas (LBAs),

Obj 2: Integrate Biodiversity and Local Authority Activities,

Obj 3: Raise awareness and appreciation of Louth's Natural Heritage across all sections of society,

Obj 4: Gather data and enhance Louth's Biodiversity,

Obj 5: Monitor the effectiveness of the Louth BAP.

1.2.3.3 Louth County Development Plan 2009-2015

The Louth County Development Plan does not specifically reference green infrastructure within the plan. Notwithstanding this, those indirect references may be summarised as per Table 1 below:

Table 1: Indirect Reference to Green Infrastructure in the Existing Development Plan

Chapter	Reference	Green Infrastructure Opportunities
2	Louth Heritage Plan Landscape Character Assessment Biodiversity (pNHA, SAC, SPA) Trees and Woodlands The Built Environment	These may collectively provide support for local objectives relating to ecological networks.
3	Coastal areas and coastal protection Foreshore Forestry	Support for high quality landscape areas
4	Protection of roadside boundaries	Support for hedgerows
6	Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Areas of High Scenic Quality (AHSQ)	Strategic buffer zones around the core areas.
	Walkways and Cycleways	Provide and enhance planting along these routes to enhance ecological connectivity
	Amenity schemes	Public open space and zoned amenity areas.
10	Water provision	Compliance with water standards and the protection of ground waters and surface waters.
11	Flooding	Adaptation for flooding includes the protection of riparian corridors.

1.3 Background and Objectives

The following information provides an overview of the:

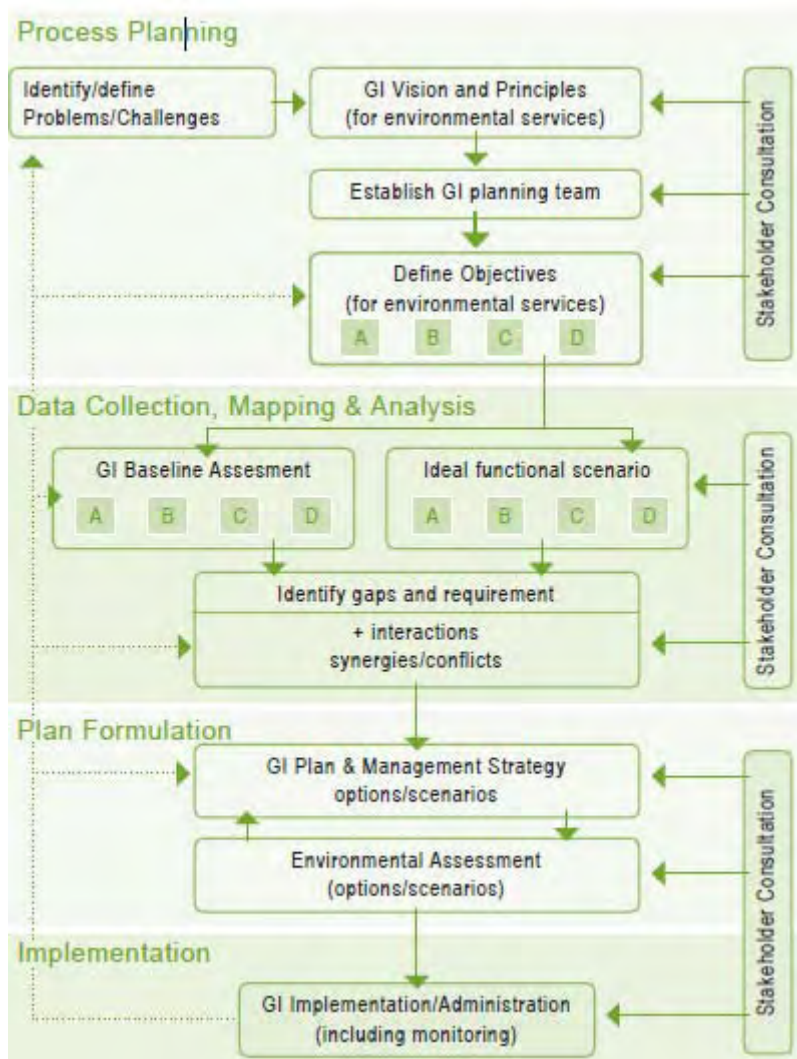
- Process involved in formulating the Strategy,
- Reason for the Strategy,
- Outcomes required from this Strategy.

1.3.1 Planning Process

Green Infrastructure is not a new idea or practice in planning, as the inclusion of amenity areas has always been central to the development of places for people. What green infrastructure does for planning is to provide a joined up thinking to the overall provision of green space indicating the functions served and roles played within our environment. Figure 4 provides an overview of the recommended process for the drafting and implementation of a green infrastructure strategy.

Figure 4: Process for Integration of Green Infrastructure Strategy into County Louth

(Source: "Green Infrastructure, A Quality of Life Issue" (IEEM & Urban Forum).



From this, problems and issues can be identified and defined starting with the pre-draft issues paper during the public consultation process ensuring stakeholder engagement at the earliest stage. Response from the public consultation as detailed below has fed into the drafting of this strategy.

1.3.2 Pre-draft Issues Paper Consultation

Pre-draft consultation for this green infrastructure Strategy was undertaken between 13th of November and the 11th of December 2013. An issues paper was placed on public display and comments were invited from the public. 14 submissions were received and the overall issues raised are as summarised below:

- Consider the national roads programme for Louth and prioritise accordingly,
- Afford consideration to the location of the firing range at the Red Barns Road,
- Incorporate the GIS into the review of the Development Plan and run concurrently for the same life span,
- Key ecological features of County Louth should be incorporated into the strategy such as water, biodiversity and additional environmental data sources,
- Existing national guidance sources have been supplied and additional support is recommended for Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), Integrated Constructed Wetlands (ICW), ecosystem services, allotments and community garden,
- Protection of hedgerows and other local natural features provide connectivity and remove or address any existing or potential barriers,
- The issue of GI should be used to raise public awareness and a central forum co-ordinated,
- Renewable energy and wind farms should be supported within the Green Infrastructure Strategy,
- The mapping facility on geological sites is available as a national facility and should be utilised,
- Support for green infrastructure along walking and cycling trails should be integrated.

The submissions and issues raised, fed into and filtered through the drafting of this Strategy and are incorporated into the forthcoming chapters.

1.3.3 Problems and Challenges for Green Infrastructure Strategy

Green Infrastructure can provide many social, economic and environmental benefits for people and wildlife. The following issues arose from public consultation as identified below:

Table 2: Problems and Challenges for the Green Infrastructure Strategy to Address

	Problem	Challenge for the strategy
1	Lack of protection of Natura 2000 sites	Provision of appropriate guidance for future development within and adjacent to Natura 2000 sites.
2	Defining the components of a Green Infrastructure Strategy	Mapping and illustration of important environmental components for the Strategy.
3	Identification of GI within the urban area and areas for connectivity.	Mapping and illustration of existing GI and possible additional GI for Local Area Plans such as Drogheda, Dundalk, Ardee & Dunleer.
4	Lack of distinctive green space and landscaping guidance for proposed residential and industrial developments.	Provision of guidance for appropriate landscape and green space provision within proposed developments.
5	Provision of areas of potential to connect green infrastructure where there is currently no connection.	Identify appropriate areas for the designation as ecological networks.

1.3.4 Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives applicable to the GIS have been derived from a combined consideration of consultation, best practise guidelines and a SWOT Analysis of the current situation within the County. These are as outlined below:

1. Flood Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation. To mitigate and adapt climate change, to increase the resilience and reduce the vulnerability to natural disaster - floods, water scarcity and droughts and urban heat islands.

2. An Ecological Framework. To enhance, conserve and restore biodiversity by *inter alia* increasing spatial and functional connectivity between natural and semi-natural areas and improving landscape permeability and mitigating fragmentation.

3. A Sustainable Movement Network. To minimise urban sprawl and its negative effects on biodiversity, ecosystem services and human living conditions.

4. A Sense of Place. To contribute provisioning a better place to live , healthy living , open spaces and recreation opportunities, increasing urban-rural connections, contributing to sustainable transport systems and strengthening the sense of community.

5. River Corridor and Coastal Management. To maintain, strengthen, and where adequate, to restore the good functioning of ecosystems in order to ensure the delivery of multiple ecosystem and cultural services.

6. Support Urban Regeneration. To make best use of the limited land resources in Louth.

7. Community, Health and Enjoyment. To enhance the societal and cultural link with nature and biodiversity, to acknowledge and increase the economic value of ecosystem services and to create incentives for the local stakeholders and communities to deliver them.

2.0 County Louth Baseline Assessment

A full baseline evaluation of the state of the environment of Louth is required for an assessment of the ecological network, connectivity throughout and barriers which exist for the identification of green infrastructure. All those available data bases within the Local Authority were accessed and those which are also publically available. There currently exists a wealth of natural and natural built heritage assets which function both as a recreational resource, wildlife habitat and amenity area.

2.1 Land use

2.1.1 Settlement Hierarchy

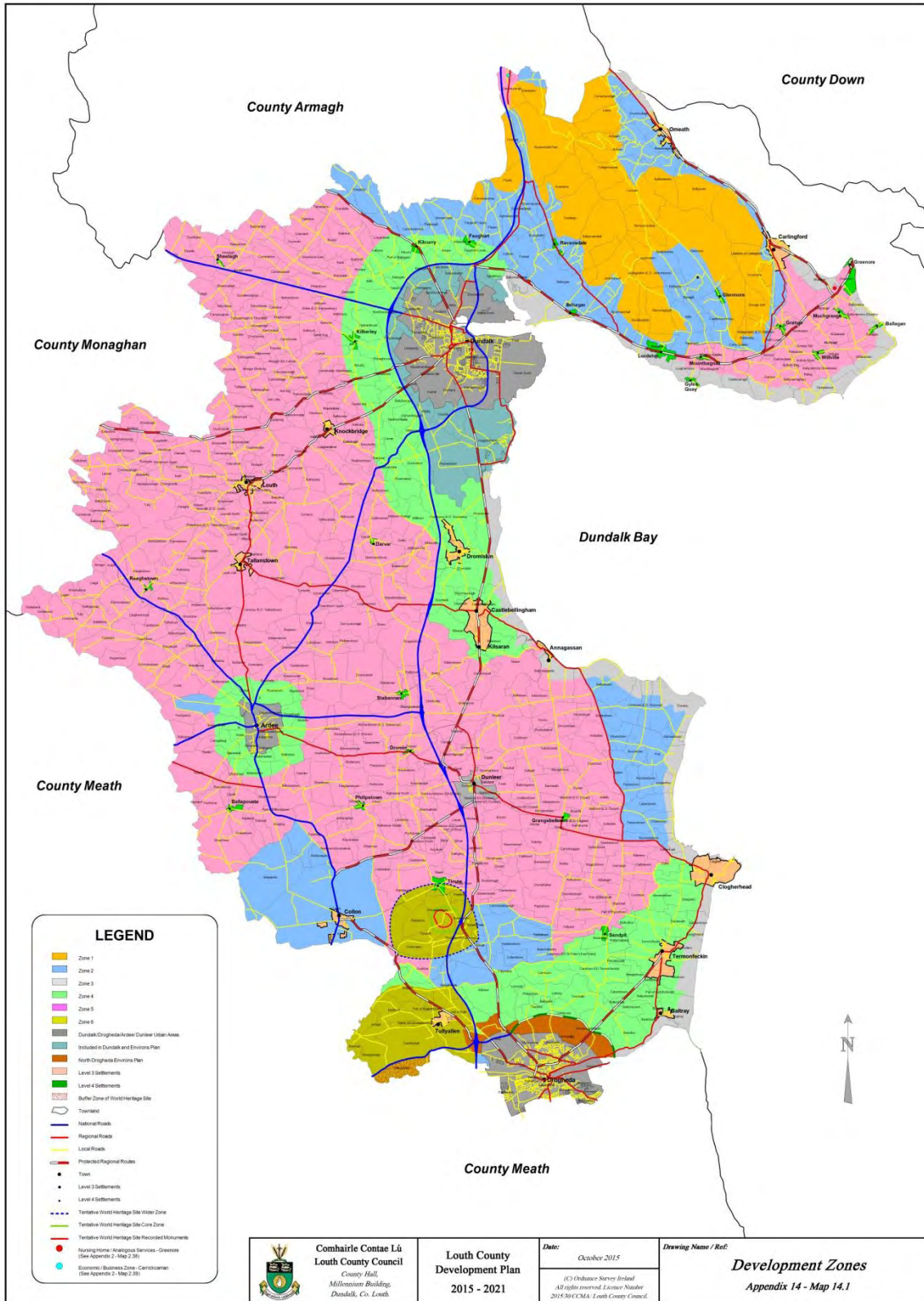
There currently exist 4 levels of settlements within Louth as per Table 3. Population growth within each of these centres is based on the targets directed from the core strategy from the County Louth Development Plan 2015-2021.

Table 3: Settlement Structure in County Louth

Level	Settlement
1	Dundalk and Drogheda
2	Ardee and Dunleer
3	Carlingford, Knockbridge, Louth, Tallanstown, Dromiskin, Castlebellingham/ Kilsaran, Annagassan, Clogherhead, Termofeckin, Baltray, Tullyallen, Collon, Omeath.
4	Ballapousta, Bellurgan, Ballagan, Darver, Dromin, Glenmore, Faughart, Grange, Grangebellew, Greenore, Gyles Quay, Kilcurry, Kilkerry, Lordship, Mountbagnal, Muchgrange, Philipstown, Ravensdale, Reaghstown, Sandpit, Sheelagh, Stabannon, Tinure, Willville

The provision of green infrastructure shall be supported within each of the identified settlements as outlined in Table 3 above. The LAP's for Level's 1 & 2 Settlements namely Dundalk, Drogheda Ardee & Dunleer will include individual green infrastructure plans. The provision of green infrastructure will be supported in all of the remaining settlements in Levels 3 & 4 with additional support for the 13, Level 3 settlements listed above.

Map 14.1: Development Zones in Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021

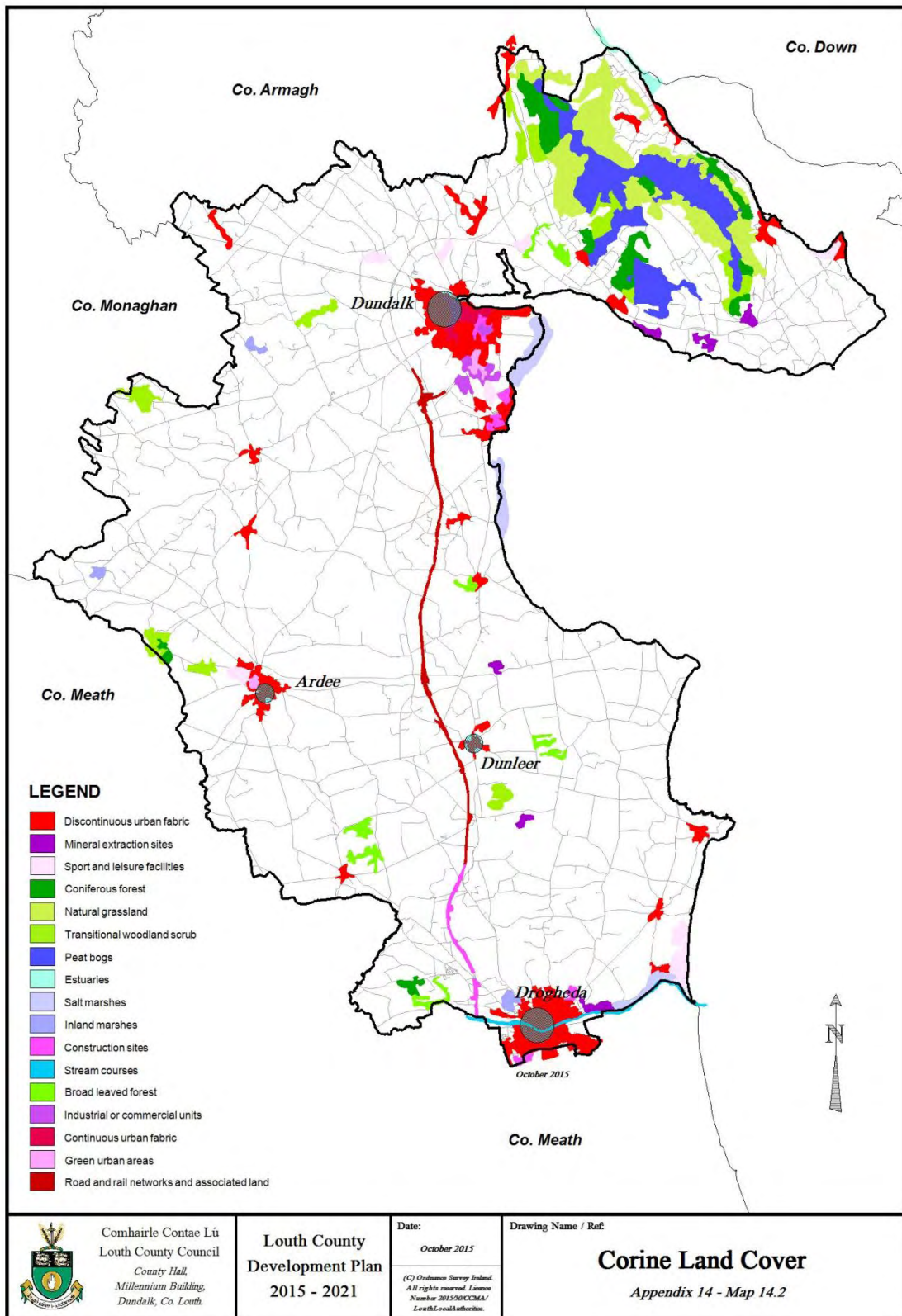


2.1.2 Corine Land Cover (CLC) 2006

GI strategy requires multiple layers and links of land use over a variety of sectors. Gathering data and formulating methodology requires an evidence based system for analysis. Existing mapping for land cover in the Louth Baseline assessment currently exists in the form of **Corine Land Cover (CLC)** undertaken in 2000 by the EPA. This mapping was first undertaken in 1990 and updated in 2000 and 2006. A new classification form of land cover will be released by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and will be based on new semi-automatic methodology. Map 2 is based on the 2006 CLC. Those areas not covered on the map are assumed to be agricultural use. This map may be used to identify the dominant land cover which is not available on other public data bases.

It is evident that the north of the County is dominated by peat bogs and is, buffered by grassland and forestry. The Cooley mountain range covers most of the land cover in North Louth which is then bounded along the coast by the 3 settlements of Omeath, Carlingford and Greenore. The populated area in the north of the County is Dundalk. The Corine map illustrates a scattering of settlements which are also surrounded by agricultural lands. The coastline along the southern section is less dominated by settlements than that to the north, with the majority of the population concentrated in the urban area of Drogheda. Other forestry and woodland scrub is distributed sporadically throughout the County.

Map 14.2: Corine Land Cover



2.1.3 Forestry

The Corine Land Cover (CLC) 2006 supplied from the EPA illustrates small pockets of woodland scattered throughout the County. In the Mid and South Louth region's there are approximately 10 identified areas of forestry including Coniferous, Transitional Woodland, Scrub and Broad Leaved Forest. In the north of the County the Carlingford Mountains contains a mix of Coniferous Forest and Broad Leaved Forest with the latter being the dominant feature. The Forest Service is the responsible authority for control over forestry mapping. However national guidance for forestry mapping is currently unavailable. As is evident from the Corine Land Cover map, County Louth does not contain a large expanse of land use dedicated to Forestry.

2.1.4 Landscape Character Assessment

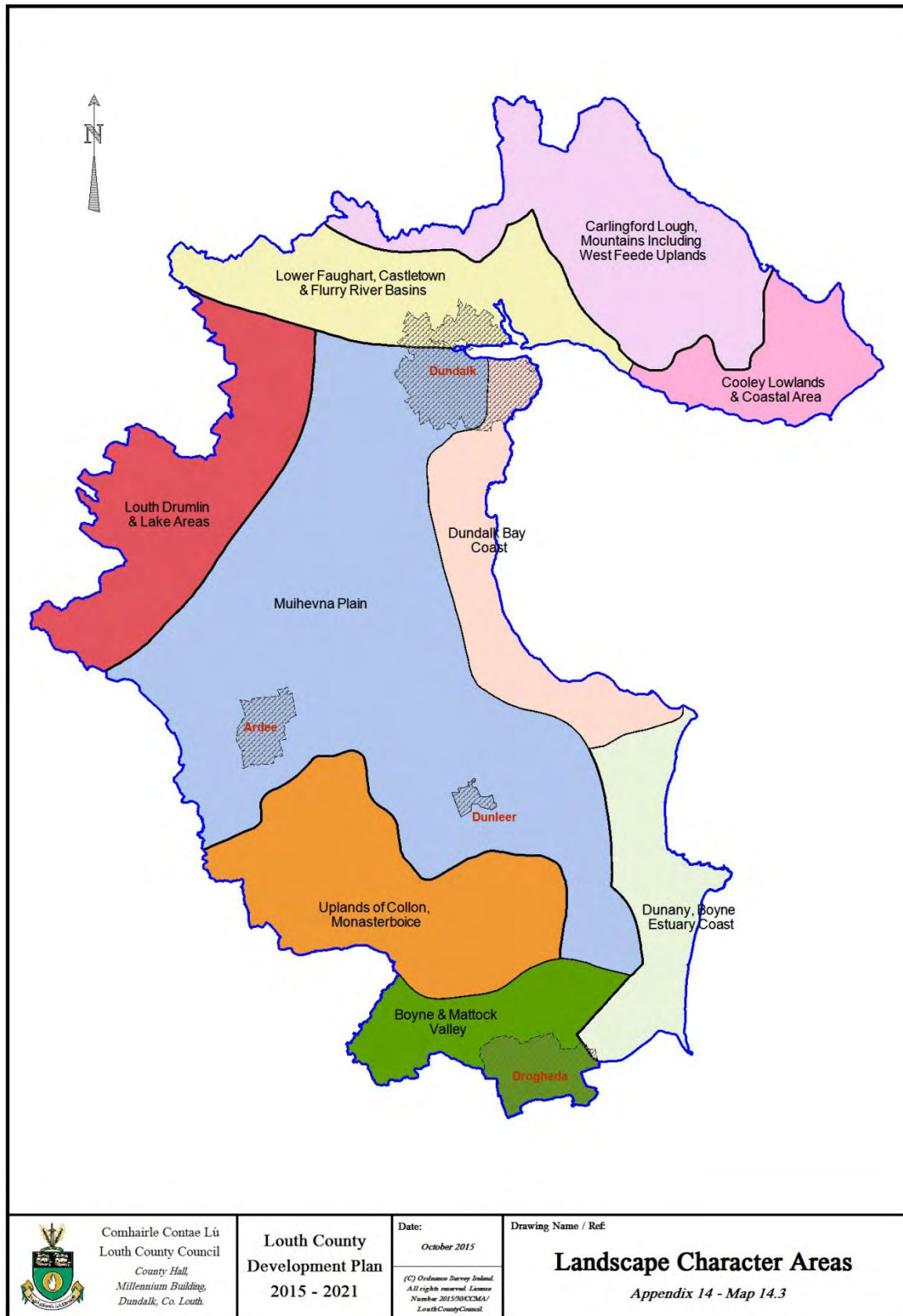
The Green Infrastructure Strategy recognises the need for Landscape Character Assessment provision. One of its objectives is to promote the protection and management of the landscape character and provide enhanced landscape settings for the built environment to ensure that new development respects and blends into its surroundings.

The Louth Landscape Character Assessment (2002) identified 9 distinct character areas. These areas have been illustrated and detailed in Table 4 and Map 2 and outlined in Corine Land Cover (CLC) 2006. Applying the Landscape Character Assessment to the GIS is advantageous in relation to proposed large scale development in areas of high scenic quality.

Table 4: Landscape Area Classification

International	Carlingford Lough and Mountains including West Feede Uplands
National	Boyne and Mattock Valley
Regional	Dundalk Bay Coast, Dunany to Boyne Estuary Coast, Uplands of Collon and Monasterboice
Local	Cooley Lowlands and Coastal Area Lower Faughart. Castletown and Flurry River Basins, Louth Drumlin and Lake Areas Muirhevna Plain

Map 14.3: Landscape Character Areas



These landscape character areas have been transcribed in the development plan through the designation of two distinctive areas. These areas have been afforded local protection through the policies of the Development Plan where the character of each of the landscapes should not be unduly damaged. Areas of High Scenic Quality (AHSQ) and Areas of Natural Outstanding Beauty (AONB) have been designated for protection as sensitive areas in the Development Plan based on the Landscape Character Assessment.

2.1.5 Movement and Access

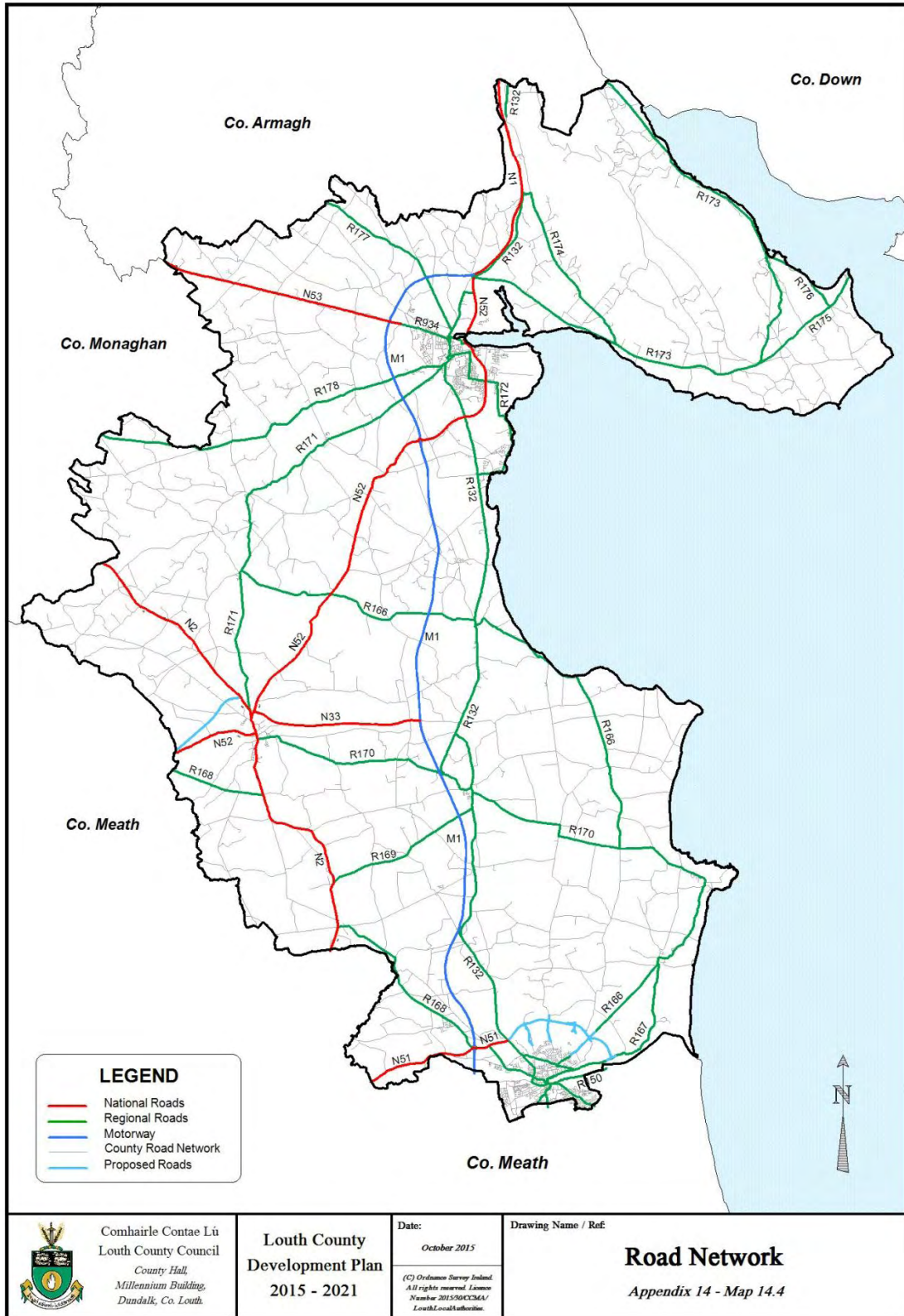
Transport corridors within the County include a hierarchical road network, ranging from motorways to local access routes, in conjunction with cycle paths and footpaths. This transport corridor is also evident in the rail line which traverses the County on a north-south axis. The provision and upgrade of grey infrastructure such as the aforementioned road and rail networks as well as cycle paths and footpaths can collectively be supported through the provision of green infrastructure.

Table 5: Access Routes within County Louth

Route	Number / Name
Motorway	M1
National Roads	N-2, N-33, N-51, N-52, N-53
Regional Roads	North Louth: R- 132, R-173, R-174, and R-177 Mid Louth: R- 13, R-166, R-170, R-171. R-172, R-178 South Louth: R- 132, R-166, R-167, R-168
Cycle Routes	Dundalk cycle routes Drogheda cycle routes North Louth greenway.
Pedestrian Routes	Throughout the County, settlements and urban areas.

These primary transport routes at national and regional level can be further supported at local level by roads, cycle ways and pathways once mapped in the settlement plans and other Local Area Plans. Both the motorway and the Dublin – Belfast rail line follow a north south trajectory through the county which is intersected by radial roads. These radial roads are composed of regional routes interlinking settlements in Louth and with adjoining counties and beyond. In addition to a vast array of local roads, paths and cycle paths. The entire transport network, if used efficiently, can provide support to and promote green infrastructure and consequently the flow and movement of species and habitats.

Map 14.4: Road Network



2.2 Blue Infrastructure

2.2.1 Wetlands and Watercourse

The inclusion of the wetlands and water courses within this Strategy is important for connectivity from the coastline through into the wider countryside. This is typically referred to as Blue Infrastructure. The protection of riparian corridors abutting watercourses can further integrate linear corridors into the ecological network. Attenuation ponds, swales and reed beds provide many advantages including:

- Natural ways to reduce flood risk,
- Provide temporary storage,
- Improve water quality,
- Create wetland habitats for wildlife in an attractive aquatic setting,
- Additional potential for accessible leisure facilities.

It is a policy of the local authority to implement the **EU Water Framework Directive (WFD)**. Louth falls within two river basin districts namely:

- Neagh Bann River Basin District (NBRBD),
- Eastern River Basin District (ERBD).

Water management plans for good future coastal and estuarine water for the two districts must be adhered to.

Data is currently available from the Office of Public Works (OPW) on the Wetlands and Watercourses within County Louth. Benefiting lands provide an assessment of those lands which would benefit from flood protection measures and may be used for any flood risk assessments. In addition the OPW are currently undertaking a Catchment Flood Risk Assessment Management of each County.

The rivers listed below must be protected and supported within a green infrastructure strategy to allow movement and flow of species and habitats throughout the county.

Table 6: Main Rivers of County Louth

Location	Rivers	Qualities
North Louth	River Big	Flows from Carlingford Mountain and enters into Dundalk Bay .
North Louth	River Flurry and River Ballymascanlan	Source at Ravensdale and enters into Dundalk Bay at Bellurgan embankment.
Dundalk	Castletown River	Flows into Dundalk Bay at the mouth.
South Dundalk	River Fane	Runs from Knockbridge and enters Dundalk Bay south of Blackrock Village.
South Louth	River White, Dee and Glyde	The River White and Glyde connect to the River Dee to enter Dundalk Bay.
South Louth	Termofeekin River	River enters the Bay at Termofeekin.

South Louth	River Boyne	Maddock River flows from Meath and enters the bay at Drogheda.
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2.2.2 Wetland Survey

Louth County Council in conjunction with the Heritage Council undertook a review of a number of wetland areas in County Louth in 2011 and 2012 (Foss, et al 2011, 2012). The Louth Wetland Identification Survey 2011 (LWS) represented Phase 1 of the overall wetland survey and included 108 potential wetland sites identified as part of the previous Potential Wetland Map GIS dataset, (Brophy 2009), for which little or no habitat or ecological information was available. The Louth Wetland Identification study, 2011, focused on determining whether 35 freshwater and brackish water wetland types (18 of which are listed in Annex 1 of the EU Habitats Directive, with a further 9 listed as priority habitats) existed on the 108 target sites in County Louth.

Phase 2 of the Wetland Survey included 31 sites with a rating of A- C+ indicating the importance of the site where, A rating, is of international importance, B rating, is of National importance and C + has a local conservation of high value. Map 5 includes those wetland sites which were assessed during the survey. Further reference should be afforded to the individual reports for each wetland on the 2011 and 2012 reports. In some cases these wetlands have been filled, some may be wetland grassland while others have a high national and local importance such as those listed below in Table 7 and Table 8.

Table 7: Wetland Sites with High Importance in Phase 1

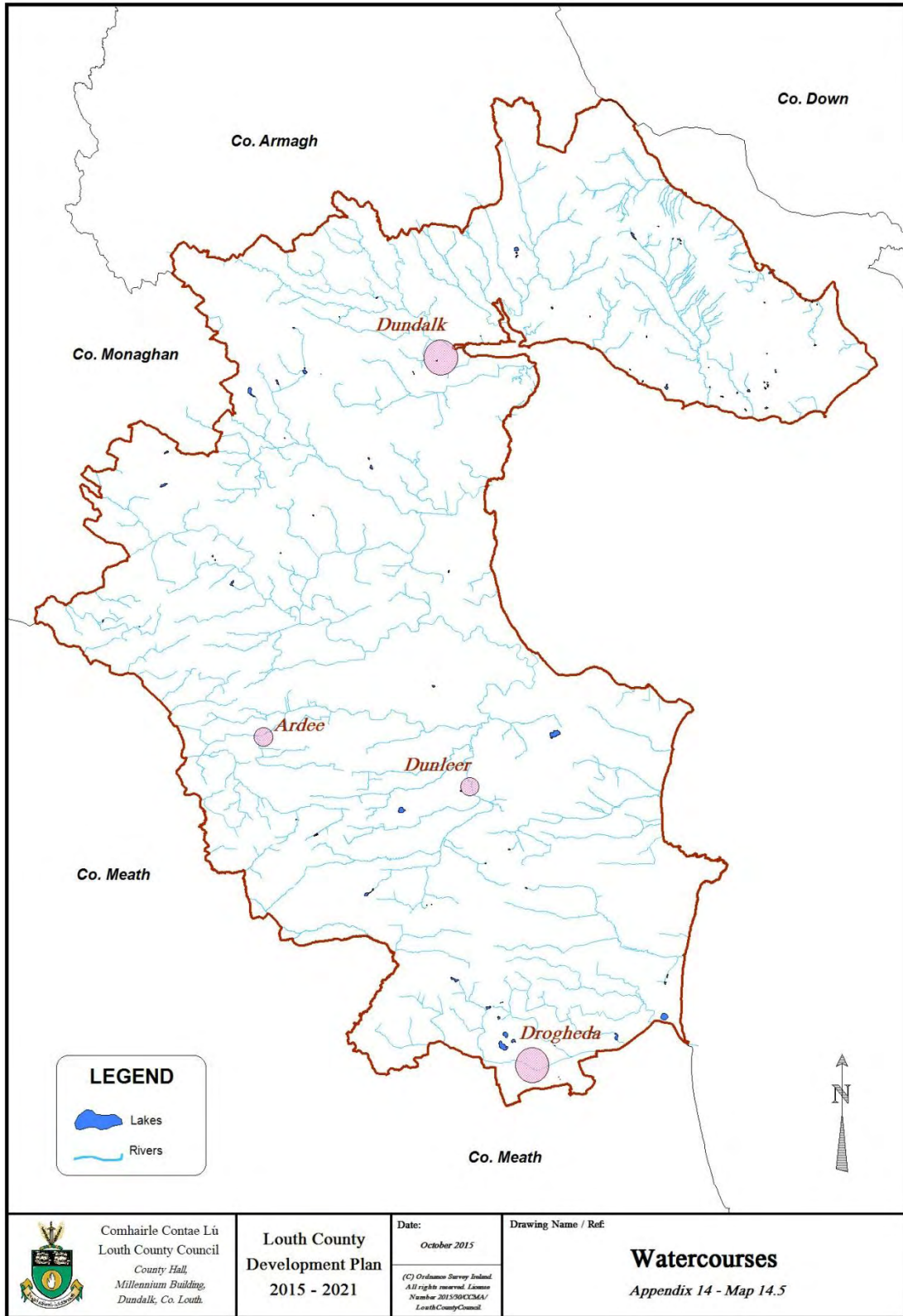
Location	Rating
Ardee Cutaway Bog	B
Ardpatrick	C+
Artoney	C
Ballyagan and Whitestown	C+
Ballynamagher	C
Ballynamoner (Bredshaw)	C
Bealui	C
Boycetown	C
Carraghcloghan	B
Carrickbaggot	C
Castlecarragh South	C +
Carraghdoran	C +

Table 8: Wetland Sites with High Importance in Phase 2

Location	Rating
Burren Stabannan/Bragasntown NHA/SPA	A
Cartanstown Lough NHA	B
Kildemock Marsh NHA	B
Killincoole Marsh	B
Reaghstown Marsh NHA	B
Drumulla and Lislea	B
Collon- Mellifont Abbey Woods NHA	B
Liberties of Carlingford and Millgrange	B
Rathescar wood NHA	B
Gallagh	B
Corrakit (Windy Gap) SAC	A

These wetlands have not been mapped in this Strategy due to the absence of previous public consultation on the matter. It is hoped that future funding streams made available will allow this mapping and subsequent protection to be finalised.

Map 14.5: Watercourses



2.2.3 Coastline

The coastline of Louth stretches from the County Armagh border, through Carlingford Lough, Dundalk Bay and as far south as the Boyne Estuary south of Drogheda. The coastline is an important resource to protect and is one which is also subject to erosion from sea level rises due *inter alia* to climate change. Our existing coastal protection measures are located along the coast line at Blackrock, Salterstown, Port Beach, Baltray and Bellurgan. In addition repairs may be required at other locations as the need arises.

Climate Change Adaption measures are required by local authorities as part of their development plan review process. **National Guidance on Climate Change Adaptation (DECLG)** provides guidance on development of measures along the coastline to address the impacts from climate change. Sea levels will rise and increased storm intensity and surge will affect wetlands and coastal communities. The use of green infrastructure and its protection can alleviate some of the impacts associated with climate change by, for example, integrating solutions for flooding. National guidance can be incorporated into this strategy to provide a stronger, clear process for climate- change proofing of the Development Plan. Mitigation measures such as green building measures and less carbon intensive forms of development and adaptation measures such as flood risk assessment can be referenced to include:

- The core strategy (urban and rural settlement plans) and zoning,
- Physical and social infrastructure provision,
- Development standards,
- Natural and built heritage.

2.3 Biodiversity

The support and protection of biodiversity is critical for the function of green infrastructure. The protection of habitats and species is an integral part of this Strategy. The habitats and species have been listed according to their importance both at a European Level and National Level. The green infrastructure network aims to support both designated wildlife and other habitats of local importance.

2.3.1 Natura 2000 Sites

Louth has 11 Natura 2000 sites which have been protected under the **EU Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EC)** and the **European Community Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EC)** as per Table 9. These sites are identified as “Core Areas” for the purposes of the green infrastructure strategy and the movement and flow of species between these core areas into the adjoining open countryside, is of high importance.

Table 9: List of Natura 2000 Sites within County Louth

Name SAC	Site Code	Designation	Name SPA	Site Code	Designation
Dundalk Bay	000455	cSAC Coastal / Estuarine	Dundalk Bay	004026	SPA Coastal / Estuarine
Carlingford Shore	002306	cSAC Coastal	Carlingford Lough	004078	SPA Coastal
Carlingford Mountain	00453	cSAC Mountain	Stabannan–Braganstown	004091	SPA Alluvial Plain
Clogherhead	001459	cSAC Coastal	Boyne Estuary	004080	SPA Coastal/ Estuarine
Boyne Coast and Estuary	001957	cSAC Coastal	River Boyne and River Blackwater	004232	SPA Estuarine
River Boyne and River Blackwater	002299	cSAC Estuarine			

2.3.2 National Parks and Wildlife Service Conservation Plans

The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) are the component authority for the purposes of regulation and control of operations within the Natura 2000 sites. Each Natura 2000 site includes conservation objectives for which either the SAC or SPA is listed. In addition it has been highlighted that Clogherhead and Stabannon/Braganstown have no supplementary information. The NPWS undertakes detailed conservation management plans for those sites which are vulnerable. Information on these sites with additional management plans or supporting documentation in Louth, have been listed in Table 10

Table 10: Conservation Plans for Natura 2000 Sites in County Louth

Natura 2000 site	Status of NPWS plan
Carlingford Mountain SAC	Conservation Management Plan has been provided by NPWS in 2009.
Carlingford Lough SPA	Conservation Objectives have been updated in 2013 and supporting documentation based of data collected on the Light Bellied Brent Goose in 2013.
Carlingford Shore SAC	Conservation Management Plan in 2013 with supporting documentation based on the original Coastal Monitoring Project (Rye, <i>et al</i>).
Dundalk Bay SAC/SPA	Conservation Management Plan in 2011 with additional supporting documentation in 2011.
Clogherhead SAC	There are basic Conservation objectives provided with no supporting documentation.
Stabbannon/ Braganstown SPA	There are basic Conservation Objectives provided with no supporting documentation.
Boyne Coast and Estuary SPA	A Conservation Management Plan has been provided in 2012.
Boyne Coast SAC	A Conservation Management Plan and updated with supporting documentation in 2013.
River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA/SAC	There are basic Conservation Objectives provided for the site. Supporting documentation has also been provided (2012) based on the original Coastal Monitoring Project (Rye, <i>et al</i>).

(Source: www.npws.ie)

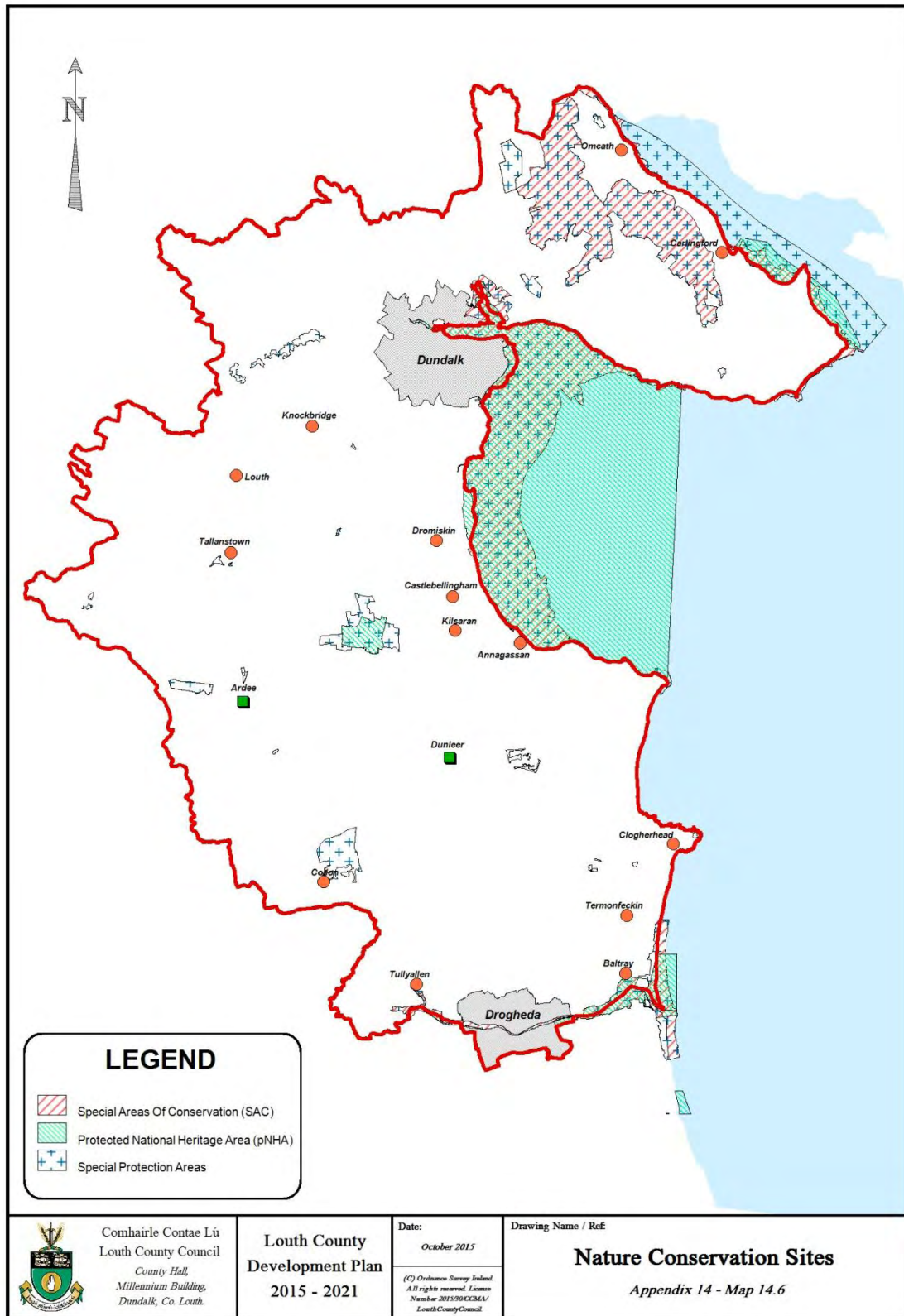
2.3.3 Proposed National Heritage Areas (pNHA)

The Louth County Development Plan 2009-2015 includes for 24 proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA). These areas have been identified by the NPWS and include sites which are of outstanding national importance for the natural environment. These sites can be integrated into a coherent green infrastructure strategy for Louth and support a resilient ecological network.

Table 11: Proposed Natural Heritage Areas (pNHA)

Ref.	Location
NH1454	Ardee cutaway bog
NH1801	Barmeath Woods
NH1293	Blackhall Woods
NH1957	Boyne coast and estuary
NH1862	Boyne river islands
NH452	Carlingford Lough
NH453	Carlingford Mountains
NH1458	Castlecoo Hill
NH1459	Clogherhead
NH1461	Darver Castle Woods
NH1462	Drumcah, Toprass and Cortial Loughs
NH1856	Dunany Point
NH 455	Dundalk Bay
NH1806	Kildemock Marsh
NH1804	King Williams Glen
NH1451	Liscarragh Marsh
NH1616	Louth Hall and Ardee Woods
NH1464	Mellifont Abbey Woods
NH1805	Ravensdale Plantation
NH1828	Reaghstown Marsh
NH456	Stabannan- Braganstown
NH1803	Stephenstown Pond
NH1468	Trumpet Hill
NH1465	Woodland at Omeath Park

Map 14.6: Nature Conservation Sites



2.3.4 Important Protected Species within County Louth

A list of protected species for Louth has been compiled from the Natura data forms on each of the Natura 2000 sites and which are detailed in Table 12. This list is not exhaustive as there is no other available data reference for protected species outside of the European sites. Important species in Louth should be included in any green infrastructure analysis due to the importance for biodiversity and integration for decision making.

Table 12: Protected Species in Louth

Species	Location	Protected Status
<i>Birds</i>		
<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i> (winter) European Golden Plover	Boyne Coast and Estuary SAC Boyne Estuary SPA Dundalk Bay SAC Dundalk Bay SPA	EU Birds Directive (Annex 1) Wildlife Act BoCCI- Red listed
<i>Limosa Lappinca</i> (winter) Bar-tailed Godwit	Boyne Coast and Estuary SAC Boyne Estuary SPA Carlingford Lough SPA Dundalk Bay SAC Dundalk Bay SPA	EU Birds Directive Wildlife Act
<i>Sterna Albifonas</i> (breeding) Little Tern	Boyne Coast and Estuary SAC	EU Birds Directive Wildlife Act
<i>Calidris canutua</i> Knot	Boyne Estuary SPA	BoCCI- Red listed
<i>Arenaria interpres</i> Turnstone	Boyne Estuary SPA	
<i>Gavia stellata</i> Red Throated Diver	Dundalk Bay SPA	
<i>Gavia immer</i> Great Northern Loon	Dundalk Bay SPA	

<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i> Greater White Fronted Goose	Dundalk Bay SPA	
<i>Falco peregrines</i> Peregrine Falcon	Carlingford Mountain SAC Carlingford Shore SPA	EU Birds Directive Wildlife Acts
<i>Ardea cinerea</i> Grey Heron	Dundalk Bay SAC	
<i>Cygnus olor</i> Mute Swan	Dundalk Bay SAC	
Plants		
<i>Cryptogramma crispa</i> Parsley Fern	Carlingford Mountain SAC Carlingford Shore SPA	
<i>Scilla verna</i> Spring Squill	Clogherhead SAC	
<i>Trifolium striatum</i> Knotted Clover	Clogherhead SAC	
<i>Trifolium ornithopodioides</i> Birdsfoot Clover	Clogherhead SAC	
<i>Inula crithmoides</i> Golden Samphire	Clogherhead SAC	
<i>Crambe Maritima</i> Sea kale	Dundalk Bay SAC	
Other		
<i>Lutra Lutra</i> Otter	River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC	EU Birds Directive Wildlife Act IUCN Red List Bern Convention
<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	River Boyne and River	

Whooper Swan	Blackwater SAC	
Salmo salar Atlantic Salmon	River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC	EU Birds Directive Wildlife Act Bern Convention
Lampetra fluviatilis European River Lamprey	River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC	EU Birds Directive Wildlife Act

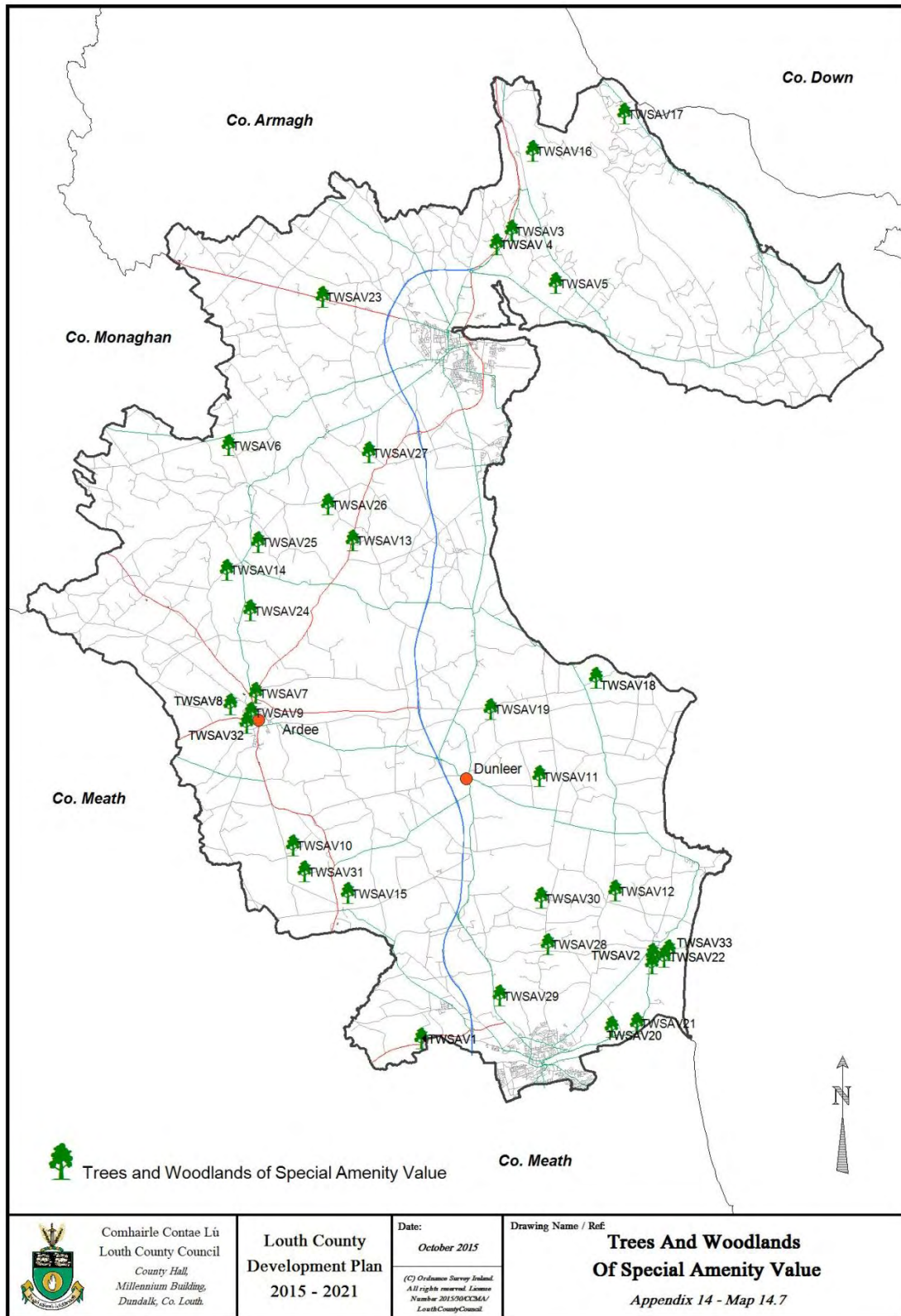
2.3.5 Hedgerows

Hedgerows are an important element of the Irish landscape and provide an important wildlife habitat. Hedgerows host a wide range of plant and shrub species including insects, birds and mammals all of which combine to support green infrastructure. The retention of existing hedgerows and the promotion of native planting for replacement hedgerows supports habitats for animals which arable land or change in land use fails to support. The removal of a hedgerow for the provision of a one-off house represents a major pressure on hedgerow destruction. For this reason the retention of existing hedgerows is promoted and encouraged during the development management process. Where however this is not possible any permitted replacement should be in the form of a variety of native species such as hawthorn and blackthorn with supporting species such as holly, hazel and wild cherry. There is currently no record of the length of hedgerows in Louth due to the absence of any survey or baseline information.

2.3.6 Trees

The County Louth Development Plan 2015-2021 currently includes a list of 33 trees and woodlands of Special Amenity Value. In addition to this there are 5 sets of trees protected under the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2013 by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO1-TPO-5).

Map 14.7: Trees & Woodlands of Special Amenity Value



2.4 Built Heritage and Conservation

2.4.1 Built Heritage

Elements of built heritage can make substantial contributions to green infrastructure. Built heritage sites that have value to green infrastructure include e.g. heritage sites and gardens, designated landscapes and old graveyards.

2.4.2 Heritage Gardens and Designated Landscapes

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage conducted a survey which listed 94 heritage gardens and designed landscapes within County Louth which are identified in Table 13. A Phase 3 field Survey has been undertaken for each site in County Louth and is available for public viewing on www.buildingsofireland.ie/surveys/gardens.

Table 13: Historic Gardens & Designated Landscapes

Allardstown, Ardee District House,	An Grainin, Arthurstown House,	Anaverna House, Ashville,
Ballymascanlan House, Beaulieu House, Black Hall,	Barmeath Castle, Bellurgan Park, Braganstown House.	Barronstown Rectory Beltichburne,
Cardistown House, Castletown House, Claret Rock House, Coolestown Stud, Corderry House.	Carstown, Catherines Grove, Clermont Park, Corbollis House,	Castlebellingham, Charleville, Clonaleenaghan House,
Darver Castle, Doolargy House, Dromiskin House, Dun Luighaidh Convent,	Dellin House, Dowdstown House, Drumcashel House, Dunany House,	Derryfalone House Dromin, Drummullagh House,
Fairhill House,	Falmore Hall,	Faughart House
Glyde Court,		
Harristown House,		
Icehouse Hill Park,		
Kildemook House, Killineer House,	Killin, Kitallaght House,	Killincoole, Knockabbey Castle

Lisnawully House, Louth Hall	Lisrenny House,	Listoke House,
Maine House, Monasterboice House Mount Bailey,	Milestown House, Monavallet House, Mount Oliver Convent	Milltowngrange House, Mooremount House,
New Mellifont Abbey, Nootka Lodge	Newtown Darver,	Newtown House,
Park Hotel, Piperstown House,	Park Inn Hotel, Prospect	Philipstown House,
Rahanna House, Rathcoole House, Ravensdale House, Rokey Hall	Rath House, Rathescar, Red House,	Rathbrist House, Rathneestin House, Richardstown Castle,
Shanlis House, Smarmore Castle Hotel, Stephenstown House,	Shortstone House, Spencer Hill, Stickillin House,	Shortstone West, St Marys Hospital, Stone House
The Grove,	Thistle House,	Townley Hall
Williamstown House		

2.4.3 Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA)

County Louth has a wealth of architectural heritage which constitutes an important element of our culture. The Local Authority has a legal responsibility to include a Record of Protected Structures (RPS) in its County Development Plan. Protected structures within a country setting can be supported by demesne landscapes and large curtilage areas. Buildings of conservation interest may be grouped together and referred to as Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA's) which display an overall character which makes them valuable to an area. An ACA is an area, group of structures, or a townscape which is of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest or contributes to the appreciation of protected structures. There are currently 10 ACA's identified in the County Development Plan.

2.4.4 Monuments and Archaeology

The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) is the official record of archaeological sites and monuments in Ireland. Within County Louth there are some 1,546 Recorded Monuments which are afforded protection under the National Monuments Acts. Such monuments are vulnerable to change in land use and development. This finite resource is an important part of both our past and also our future.

Portions of the Buffer Zone of the Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage Site and the Battle of the Boyne site are located within County Louth. Development and its impact on these international sites and the surrounding areas must be considered into the future.

3.0 Going Forward: The Green Infrastructure Strategy

The Green Infrastructure Strategy aims to strengthen and/or create wildlife corridors between interconnecting core areas for the benefit of biodiversity, enhanced outdoor recreational opportunities, visual amenity and general wellbeing. This Green Infrastructure Strategy approach proposed for County Louth will consist of:

1. Support for the existing green infrastructure network,
2. Enhancement of green infrastructure throughout the thirteen Level 3 settlements in the county,
3. Proposals for detailed green infrastructure in the LAP's for the Level 1 settlements of Dundalk & Drogheda and the Level 2 settlements of Ardee & Dunleer,
4. Provision of guidance for support in spatial planning and integration of green infrastructure into local development proposals and throughout all relevant aspects of the Development Plan.

This green infrastructure strategy has been further detailed below.

3.1 Green Infrastructure Network

The interconnected ecological network which includes core areas, corridors, stepping stones and buffer areas comprises the Green Infrastructure Network for County Louth which is illustrated on Map 9. This represents the amalgamated environmental components from Section 2 of this strategy and provides a baseline assessment on a county wide basis. The green infrastructure network provides a strategic overview of the current linkages to be retained and protected.

Objective GI 1

To support the green infrastructure network of County Louth. To implement the green infrastructure network in any assessment of development proposals, to prevent adverse impact on the ecological connectivity of County Louth's core areas.

3.1.1 Appropriate Assessment (AA)

Map 9 is a tool which may be utilised to ensure the assessment of development proposals which may impact on Natura 2000 sites for Appropriate Assessment (AA). The assessment of likely effects of a development proposal on a Natura 2000 site (Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Area (SPA)) would consider the ecological connectivity of a proposed site to a SAC/SPA.

Objective GI 2

To require the use of the Green Infrastructure network as a supplementary guide for the protection and conservation of the Natura 2000 sites in County Louth.

3.2 Spatial Planning

The key accomplishment of a green infrastructure network is the provision of a new framework which identifies the constituent parts of the network and provides a strategic approach to land conservation, given the priority of the natural environment. Appropriate support measures will be made available for the natural environment through the following measures:

1. Prioritisation of lands within the core strategy,
2. Provision of green infrastructure strategy in the Local Area Plans for the Level 1 settlements of Dundalk, Drogheda and the Level 2 settlements of Ardee and Dunleer,
3. Enhance and support the green infrastructure strategy in Level 3 settlements in the Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021,
4. Support for Green infrastructure at local level decision making through all relevant sections/aspects of the Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021.

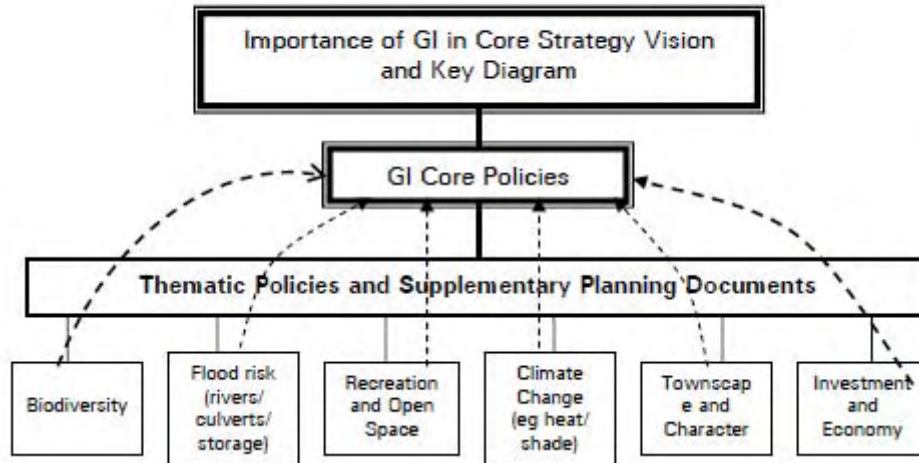
3.2.1 Core Strategy

The Core Strategy (as per DECLG guidance note 2010) requires that lands are prioritised and compliant with the requirements of the following:

- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA 2001/42/EC),
- The Water Framework Directive (WFD 2000/60/EC),
- The Habitats Directive (HD 91/43/EEC) regarding the protection of Louth's natural environment.

The evidence based assessment of land allocation will support the GI Base and the overall network Figure 5 will be used for the core strategy.

Figure 5: Core Strategy and Integration and Compliance with Green Infrastructure



Residential lands shall be prioritised based on the availability of lands and sustainable development. The provision of valuable resources within urban areas and settlements will enable the prioritisation of lands for development.

Objective GI 3

To utilise all information available on the Louth Baseline Assessment as evidence based decision making in the Louth Core Strategy

3.2.2 Level 3 Settlements

The 13 Level 3 settlements in County Louth were assessed for current green infrastructure. The important biodiversity features have been mapped and assessed in Maps 2 - 9. These green infrastructure maps include features of interest such as the existing open space areas, those trees and hedgerows identified as having special amenity value and riparian corridors. Additionally possible areas for potential upgrading of green infrastructure have been identified within these settlements as "Areas for potential green infrastructure enhancement". These areas should be used for development management decision making and integrated into proposed developments. It should be noted that their inclusion does not prevent the promotion or development of other such areas for potential green infrastructure.

Table 14 provides an overview of the green infrastructure in the 13 Level 3 Settlements and should be read in conjunction with the objectives maps for the Level 3 Settlements. Development management proposals within these settlements should be assessed having regard to Section 3.2.4 of this strategy.

Table 14: Assessment of Green Infrastructure within the Level 3 Settlements

Settlement	Features of Interest	Potential for Green Infrastructure Enhancement
Annagassan	River Glyde; Coastline; SAC/SPA; Strategic reserve and 4 areas of designated public open space;	Protection of coastline; Riparian corridor retention Additional supporting planting along the road lines, between open spaces and into the countryside.
	ACTION A: Roadside planting schemes along the main road Important hedgerows, if removed, to be integrated into any submitted design.	
Baltray	Coastline; SAC/SPA; Open space network throughout the settlement.	Core area (Natura site) with ecological corridors retained along road frontages and into the countryside.
	ACTION A: Promote connectivity between the coastline and public open space within the village of Baltray. B: Retain current roadside planting along a main route in Baltray and promote the enhancement of additional planting.	
Carlingford	Coastal location; Large expanse of open space designation; Trees and views to be protected; Number of intact roadside treatments.	Core area of SAC/SPA along the coastline is to be supported by open space designations and ecological networks via trees and hedgerows.
	ACTION Protect central open space designation and support the connectivity in to the countryside. Protect roadside hedgerows and any appropriate relocation.	
Castlebellingham & Kilsaran	River Glyde through the village; Large expanses of designated open space lands;	The central village area is lacking in greenspace or planting and would benefit the overall quality and public realm through more interconnectivity.
	ACTION A: Additional supportive planting throughout the village centre to link the river and countryside.	

Clogherhead	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) SAC//pNHA Public open space	There is very little quality green infrastructure within the Clogherhead settlement and integration into any future upgrade is essential.
	ACTION Retention of AONB for the preservation of the natural environment and provision of street planting throughout the centre where possible.	
Collon	Presence of New Mellifont Abbey Woods pNHA, Abundance of trees proposed to be protected within the centre. The presence of stone walls and banks.	Roadside planting along identified growth areas out of the centre; Protection of green spaces and riparian corridors.
	ACTION A: Inclusion of roadside planting and native planting schemes within any proposed developments.	
Dromiskin	Expanses of strategic land reserve with mature planting and hedgerows; Open space, places of worship and graveyards located close,	Native planting and enhancement schemes.
	ACTION A: Integration of green infrastructure throughout the village centre providing connectivity	
Knockbridge	Central provision of open space with abundance of mature hedgerows and mature trees.	Consolidation of GI within future enhancement schemes.
	ACTION Provision of open space in any residential development schemes.	
Louth Village	Abundance of open space and amenity throughout the village.	Provision of appropriate integration of proposals into future residential development.
	ACTION Roadside treatment detail and enhancement schemes at several locations throughout the village centre and main routes into the village.	
Omeath	SAC/SPA The Coastline, Adjoining pNHA,	Support for the core area and protection of green routes through into the countryside.
	ACTION	

	Central spine of the village requires upgrade to allow for connectivity and environmental enhancement.	
Tallanstown	River Glyde flows through the central area with important riparian corridors. Good quality open spaces; Important hedgerows and trees.	Protection of existing important biodiversity areas.
	ACTION Integration of existing native landscaping schemes into any development proposals.	
Termofeckin	Riparian Corridor, Public open space and domain, Biodiversity enhancement schemes; Protection of trees and hedgerows.	Protect the existing green infrastructure network throughout the settlement.
	ACTION Additional roadside boundary treatment.	
Tullyallen	Adjoining SAC/SPA; Abundance of open space provision.	Protection of open space to allow the support and connectivity of core areas
	ACTION Roadside boundary treatment.	

Objective G1 4

To support the existing features of interest in the Level 3 Settlements of County Louth and promote and facilitate any areas identified for green infrastructure enhancement.

The following features of interest should be supported, not only within the identified settlement areas but also outside of these boundaries and throughout the countryside.

Riparian Corridors: A riparian corridor is a unique area along a river, stream, lake or waterbody which serves to support the natural environment through:

- Preserving water quality by filtering sediment from run-off prior to entering rivers and streams,
- Protecting stream banks from erosion,
- Providing a storage area for flood waters,
- Providing food and habitat for fish and wildlife,
- Preserving open space and aesthetic surroundings.

Riparian corridors are fragile areas which are recognised for their contribution to green infrastructure.

Objective GI 5

A minimum of a 20m wide riparian corridor shall be kept free from development (except for pathways) along the side of each bank of the river for the purposes of habitat protection, maintenance access requirements, flood alleviation and recreational requirements. Any proposed path should be located a minimum of 6 meters from the top of the river edge.

Landscape Features: Landscape features of importance in each of the settlements have been listed below and these can form an essential part of an ecological network within an overall context. These features include trees, hedgerows, stone walls and Louth banks which have special amenity value. These features shall be retained in any proposed developments and in any event where this is not possible, the Planning Authority will require the relocation of stone walls and/ or planting of hedgerows and trees.

Objective GI 6

Identified stone walls shall be incorporated into any overall development proposals. Where it is not feasible to retain the existing walls at the existing location, proposals submitted shall illustrate the removal and rebuilding of the wall at a separate location.

3.2.3 Level 1 Settlements: Dundalk & Drogheda, Level 2 Settlements: Ardee and Dunleer

In addition to the overall green infrastructure network of the County, an in-depth assessment of the features of interest in urban areas can further support quality of life. Additionally green infrastructure baseline assessments will be provided for Dundalk, Drogheda, Ardee and Dunleer Local Area Plans following the adoption of the Louth County Development Plan 2015-2021 and the subsequent review of these plans.

Objectives to be included within each of the Local Area Plans for the four main urban areas of Dundalk Drogheda, Ardee and Dunleer will enhance the quality of life of the residents by affording support for existing and proposed green infrastructure. These objectives for the identified urban areas will be comprehensive in nature and will be based on the following strategic objectives:

1. To create a high quality, well-connected and sustainable natural environment of green spaces and watercourses based on linkages by footpaths and cycleways,
2. Promotion of a high quality, well-connected and sustainable urban area with flexible, multi-functional places to enhance local distinctiveness and character for e.g. use of trees and planting within public spaces,
3. Protection of high value habitats and support for the enhancement of habitats of local importance,

4. Integration of green infrastructure features to combat climate change impacts and flood control such as green corridors, green roofs and native planting.

Table 15 provides an example of the real objectives which may be included within the identified LAP's and which may transpire as policies and actions for the urban areas. The delivery of these features and green infrastructure should also be linked into operational plans for these areas.

Table 15: Objectives to be included for LAPS

Feature	Green Infrastructure
Greenways	Provision of planting schemes in conjunction with planned pedestrian and cycle routes. Where these are planned within landscaped areas caution will be taken to retain mature planting already in place.
Public Realm	The enhancements of existing public spaces as green infrastructure "hubs" which can encourage use of these areas by the public. Integration of green environments within hospitals and health centres.
Biodiversity	Planting schemes with regeneration schemes and roads infrastructure. The use of vacant and derelict land as set aside areas and/ or rewilding. Native planting required in all landscaping schemes for proposed developments.
Climate Change	Integration of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) into all developments and policies to reflect this integration. Identified flood area to be addressed within the core strategy and used as an important aspect of the overall green infrastructure network for urban areas. Defence works should benefit the green infrastructure network.

Objective GI 7

To provide a detailed green infrastructure network for Dundalk, Drogheda, Ardee and Dunleer integrated into the Local Area Plan for each area.

3.2.4 Development Management Guidance

3.2.4.1 Development Proposals

Developments proposed at a local level have an opportunity to put strategic objectives into practice. These proposals may be further advanced within the LAP's but should not be precluded from any other areas within County Louth. Louth County Council promotes green infrastructure integration is based on

- Biodiversity,
- Landscapes,

- Open spaces, parks and recreation;
- Heritage,
- Water management.

Following on from the green infrastructure baseline assessment recommendations which can be included within any development proposals to enhance the environment should be incorporated and cognisant of the promotion and integration of green infrastructure to enhance the quality character and design of the proposal.

Table 16 below can be used during the assessment of a development proposal. The advantage of this relates to the retention and enhancement of existing green infrastructure and supports these overall policies and objectives for enhancing the quality of life.

3.2.4.2 Environmental Enhancement

- Assessment and enhancement of biodiversity features for development proposals should have regard to the following assessment included within Table 16.

Table 16: Summary of the Survey of Existing Biodiversity Features¹

Features	Description
Surrounding land cover and landscape character	The Corine Land Cover ² (CLC 2006) indicates that at level 3 (most detailed level) the plan area includes land uses as pasture, non- irrigated land, and discontinuous urban fabric and sport and leisure facilities. The Louth Landscape Character Assessment ³ includes 9 areas of character which can help shape development proposals.
Connecting Features	Green networks: Protection and/or integration of important hedgerows & treelines into development proposals. Green routes: inclusion of environmental enhancement features along the main connection route throughout urban areas and settlements in conjunction with green infrastructure such as cycle, pedestrian and bus routes.
Biodiversity Review	The inclusion of the green infrastructure assessment and proposals can provide great value for biodiversity and support movement of species. This includes the retention of valuable hedgerows, Louth banks and nature corridors. They can be further enhanced by integrating with green routes, walkways cycleways etc. Louth is particularly rich with biodiversity due to its location along the coast, beside an SAC/ SPA, the number of amenity spaces, the existing and proposed recreational areas and the agricultural lands. Any development proposals should

¹ Adapted from "Green City Guidelines", UCD Urban Institute Ireland, 2008.

² Corine Land Cover, www.epa.ie

³ Louth County Council, Landscape Character Assessment, Dec 2002

	enhance rather than remove features of interest.
Integration of habitats	<p>Habitats: Those of importance have been identified as green spaces or valuable habitats as illustrated in the green infrastructure network and the settlement maps. They have the potential to contribute to the overall environmental quality of the plan in addition to supporting the ecosystem services of the County.</p> <p>Any development proposals should integrate these habitats of importance according to “ A Habitat Guide in Ireland” (Fossit, 2000).</p> <p>Valuable habitats can support the SPA , cSAC and provide additional support areas and valuable ecosystem services by preventing fragmentation.</p>
Features of Value	<p>Green Space: Aside from the existing green spaces provided within the plan area a number of additional areas are identified as features of value, as listed below. These should be retained and developed in tandem with future development proposals.</p> <p>Public Green space: Public green space provision in the settlements can enhance the quality of life for the residents within these counties with additional open space areas integrated into residential areas.</p> <p>A centrally located park can provide a range of facilities and prove to be favourable with the resident’s. It should be well located and supported by good linkages to surrounding areas and integration of additional planting.</p> <p>Private Green space: Unbuilt areas and gardens can benefit public health by providing informal passive recreation opportunities. The opportunities exist to incorporate valuable private garden areas to enhance economic value of residential developments.</p> <p>Trees: A number of trees and groups of trees are being surveyed as part of an assessment and those with value will be subject to a formal Tree Preservation Order.</p> <p>Hedgerows: Hedgerows of importance have been mapped as important green infrastructure and shall be retained and incorporated into any proposed development areas.</p> <p>Wetlands & Watercourse: support the environmental qualities of the area and other features of value.</p>

Objective GI 8

To require future development proposals to integrate into the overall design any important biodiversity features including those listed above in Table 16 into the overall design.

3.2.4.3 Landscape Design and Planting

Land use planning objectives transferred into a development proposal can incorporate useable green infrastructure proposals for the benefit of the proposed developments. The integration of appropriate landscape layout can be used in the first instance in any masterplan schemes or proposals such as those illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure: 6 Masterplan Proposals and Links to Proposed Development from the City of Stockholm



Following on from the overall landscape design and support for the green infrastructure network, the detail provided should include native planting such as tree planting referred to in Table 17.

Table 17: Native Planting Scheme

Aspect	Detail
<p>Tree Structure/ species-richness</p>	<p>Native trees to Ireland include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alder, Ash, Aspen • Birch Silver, Birch Downey • Cherrywild • Hazel, Hawthorn, Holly • Oak Pedunculate, Oak Sessile • Rowan • Scots Pine, Strawberry tree • Willow, Wych elm, • Yew. <p>The species listed above should be included within any proposed planting development and further links are provided by the Tree Council in <i>“Our trees, a guide to growing Ireland’s native trees”</i>.</p> <p>The Native Woodland Scheme ⁴ provides a grant to land owners eligible and partaking in the planting scheme. The scheme includes two elements. The first is for the protection and enhancement of existing native woodlands and the conversion, where appropriate, of existing non-native forests to native woodlands. The second supports the establishment of new native woodlands on greenfield sites.</p> <p>Element 2 is focused in particular on the following site types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sites within areas regarded as being particularly sensitive from an environmental, landscape or amenity perspective • sites located immediately adjacent or close to existing designated native woodland • sites that create physical connectivity between existing native woodlands and other important habitats

⁴ Native Woodland Scheme (2011), Teagasc.

Objective GI 9

To require development proposals to include native planting schemes in landscaped areas and open spaces.

3.2.4.4 Public Realm

Environmental enhancement schemes can be in the form of both public and private areas and good public realm is appropriate for all areas which members of the public may utilise. Schemes can include hard (street furniture/ paving) and soft (planting) options. Green infrastructure benefits should be enhanced by soft schemes and landscape details should promote the flow of species throughout all areas.

The area included within the Business Improvement District (BID) can be used to deliver local business-led aspirations for Greening for Growth. An attractive town centre environment can entice visitors in to shop, work and play, therefore increasing revenue for the local business. The Market Square enhancement in 2012 has successfully transformed the central area of Dundalk as an attractive location for the public to gather. Figure 7 provides details of trees integrated into a townscape.

Figure : 7 Example of Trees Integrated into the Townscape
(Source: Landscape Institute)



Objective GI 10

To require the integration of green infrastructure in all areas of public space

3.2.4.5 Climate Change

3.2.4.5.1 Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS)

SUDS assist with adaptation measures and ensure that proposed developments can deal with any severe climate changes. It can alleviate storm surges and increased surface run off.

3.2.4.5.2 Flood Risk Assessments

Flood risk assessments of any spatial plans shall identify areas at risk of flooding as per “The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009”. These guidelines require that planning authorities shall:

- Identify whether and the degree to which flood risk is an issue,
- Identify flood zones (if not already available),
- Inform decisions in relation to zoning and planning applications,
- Develop appropriate flood risk mitigation and management measures for development sited in flood risk areas.

Green infrastructure can be supported through the planning process for flood areas. Flood defence measures should not adversely affect the movement of green infrastructure by unnecessary fragmentation.

3.2.4.5.3 Sustainable Development Patterns

The promotion of sustainable settlements and transportation strategies throughout County Louth can:

- reduce energy demand,
- reduce anthropogenic greenhouse gases,
- address the necessity of adaption to climate change.

Green Infrastructure proposals can be supported in these strategies through the provision of greenways and support for green infrastructure.

Objectives GI 11

To require the integration of climate change mitigation measures in any future spatial plans and climate change adaptation measures in proposed developments

4.0 Conclusion

Green infrastructure support and provision can manifest itself in many forms throughout the countryside and through settlements and urban areas. This Strategy provides a first stage analysis of the network currently available in Louth. The retention of this network is particularly important in the protection of our European and nationally important biodiversity sites.

The policies provided for in this strategy may assist in the protection of current features of interest and the provision of additional connectivity, where this is deemed necessary. Additional detailed guidance will further be provided during the drafting of Local Area Plans and other masterplans. The final aim shall always be to improve the resilience of County Louth within a changing environment.

Appendix 15

Procedures for Taking in Charge of Recently Completed Housing Estates

Note: Water service assets are covered by a MoU between Irish Water and Louth County Council.

1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Commencement of Process	1
3.0	Work Items to be Taken in Charge	2
4.0	Taking in Charge File	3
4.1	Mapping and Drawings	3
4.1.1	General	3
4.1.2	Water Services	4
4.1.3	Foul Sewerage	4
4.1.4	Surface Water Drainage (additional to requirements for Foul Sewerage above)	5
4.1.5	Public Lighting, Electrical, Gas and Telecom Services etc.	5
4.1.6	Roads and Footpaths	5
4.2	Test Results	5
4.2.1	Generally	5
4.2.2	Water Supply	6
4.2.3	Foul Sewerage and Storm Water Drainage	6
4.2.4	Sewage Treatment Plants	6
4.2.5	Roads	6
4.2.6	Public Lighting	6
5.0	Developer Inspection	6
5.1	Inspections	7
5.1.1	Water Supply	7
5.1.2	Foul Sewerage and Storm Water Drainage	7
5.1.3	Roads and Footpaths	7
6.0	Site Inspection	8
7.0	Fees for Additional Inspections	8
8.0	Taking in Charge	8

1.0 Introduction

Louth County Council have a duty as outlined under Part XI, Section 180 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 to take in charge roads, open spaces, car parks, sewers, watermains and drains.

The development must conform to the conditions set out during the planning application and subsequent approval.

Implicit in the above is that the Developer must construct the works to a standard similar to, or higher than the standards and specifications of the Department of the Environment and Local Government and/or those attached to the planning applications and subsequent approval.

The Local Authority must ascertain that the works have been carried out to acceptable standards (by visual inspection, testing, obtaining certification covering materials and workmanship).

Assessment will be carried out by:

- Examining as-constructed drawings of the works
- Examining certificates covering quality of materials and workmanship
- Visual inspection of the work elements/areas to be taken in charge
- Surveying hidden services
- Performance testing of identified work elements
-

Before an estate is taken in charge, the work must be complete. Roads shall have their wearing course applied and all foul and storm drains shall be properly constructed and free running.

2.0 Commencement of Process

When the Developer is satisfied that the estate is ready for taking in charge he shall notify, in writing, the Local Authority and hence formally apply to have the development '*taken in charge*'. The Developer shall prepare a 'taking in charge handover file'. to include the following:

- **Drawings**
The Developer must provide detailed as-constructed drawings of the works to be taken in charge (in hardcopy and digital format).
- **Certificates**
The Developer must provide test certificates covering items such as: watermain pressure tests, air tests on sewers, macadam materials tests, installation certificates for pumps, ESB compliance etc.

- **Wayleaves and easements**

The Developer must produce evidence of all wayleave agreements for services that traverse private property.

- **Surveys**

The Developer must organise surveys and inspections of 'hidden' works i.e. CCTV surveys of foul and storm drains, dye tests at selected locations to determine if surface water is connected to foul sewers, trial holes or cores on roadways etc.

The Developer should commence assembling the file from the start of construction activities. The file shall, as mentioned above, include all relevant certificates for materials and testing, supervising Engineer's or Architect's certificates.

The Developer shall submit the handover file to the Local Authority when applying to have the development taken in charge. The Local Authority shall inspect the handover file and may issue the Developer with a list of items requiring attention.

Note: Presentation of sub-standard or incomplete handover file will delay or put in abeyance the taking in charge process.

3.0 Work Items to be Taken in Charge

Sanitary Services to be taken in charge

Generally water, sewer and surface water pipelines, manholes, valves, fixtures and fittings located on roadways or open spaces will be taken in charge.

Piped services that traverse private property will not be adopted unless permission to traverse such property was clearly indicated at planning approval stage. The pipelines will only be taken in charge if they are not overbuilt and if enforceable wayleave agreements are in place as a burden on contract of sale for properties. It is not Council policy to take in charge service connections, drains or combined drains that serve to provide a connection from one or more houses to a sewer.

In the case of water service connections the Local Authority will take the connection in charge up to the point 225mm from where the pipe enters onto private property.

Roads and footpaths to be taken in charge

All 'public' roads and footpaths within estates shall be taken in charge. Roads and footways on private property shall not be taken in charge unless a public right of way has been established.

Grass Areas and Open spaces

The Local Authority shall take in charge open spaces (grassed areas) including narrow grassed strips located between the edge of footpaths and the adjacent roadside kerb. The Local Authority will not carry out maintenance of the grassed areas.

4.0 Taking in Charge File

The Local Authority requires the Developer to prepare a comprehensive '*taking in charge handover file*'. This file shall be commenced at the start of construction activities. The file shall include all relevant certificates

for materials and testing, Supervising Engineer's or Architect's certificates etc.

The following are the minimum requirements and standards for the information to be included in the taking in charge handover file:

4.1 Mapping and Drawings

4.1.1 General

Layout plans of developments shall be in hardcopy at a scale of not less than 1:500 and digital mapping compatible with AUTOCAD Release 14 or later version.

Digital Mapping shall be co-ordinated with OS mapping, and features shall relate to national grid co-ordinate system.

The maximum tolerance of location in horizontal plane shall be 0.5m.

Background mapping shall incorporate all features normally presented on 1:1000 series OS sheet mapping. All structures, paths, roads, verges, boundaries, valves, manhole/duct access covers, light standards etc. shall be indicated.

Drawings standards and symbols used shall conform to relevant BS Drafting Standards.

House numbering system and names of roads where applicable shall be indicated on drawings.

All pre-existing services, wells, drains, and rights of way shall be appropriately indicated on maps. This shall include drains and watermains, cable ducts open drains, culverted drains etc. Where a mapped wayleave exists in respect of these it shall be clearly indicated on layout maps.

Details of warning tape/detection mesh over various piped services shall be indicated.

4.1.2 Water Services

Location of all sluice valves, scour valves, air valves, hydrants, meters and customer Water Service Control Units (WCSU), utilising a recognised standard symbols (BS) shall be indicated.

All pipelines shall be shown coloured blue.

Diameter and class of each pipe shall be indicated.

Details of junctions and bypass meter layouts, shall be indicated at a scale that will allow each fitting to be identified. (Couplers/distance pieces/flanged sections/meters/bends etc.)

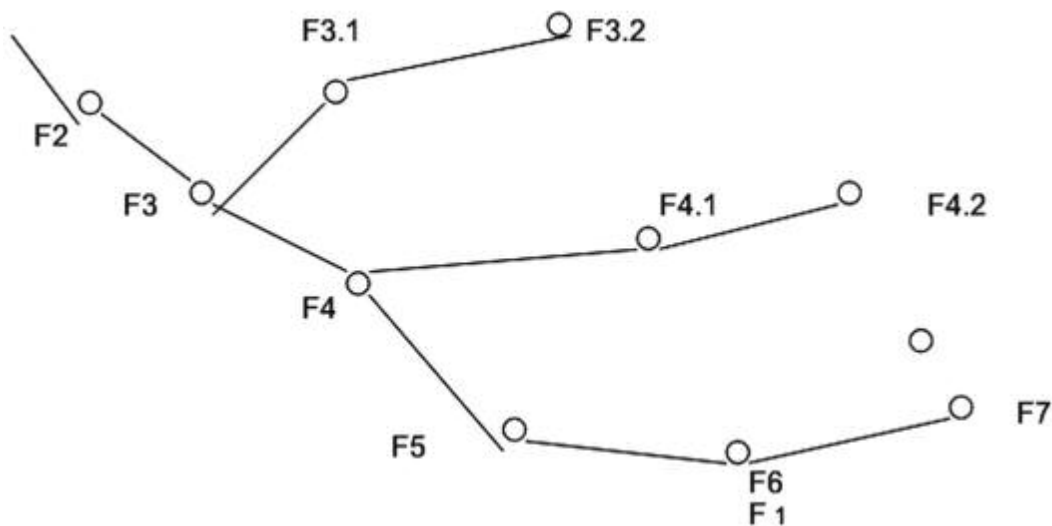
Crown level of pipe and finished ground level shall be indicated at each valve/hydrant. Vertical tolerance $\pm/10\text{mm}$.

The location of all pipelines and individual services to houses shall be indicated

4.1.3 Foul Sewerage

Location of all manholes including ground and invert level to be identified on plan. Manholes shall be numbered sequentially from connection point to existing public sewer with the prefix F before the numbers. (See example below).

All pipelines shall be coloured red.



Full longitudinal sections of all sewers shall be provided; vertical scale 1:100 horizontal scale 1:1000. Gradient, pipe diameter and type, bedding type, invert and ground levels at manholes, ground levels where surface gradient changes, location of services crossing pipes and location of connections shall be indicated on the sections.

Grade and standard of all covers and frames to be clearly indicated in appended schedule.

Location of all connections to main sewers and routing of house connections to be indicated.

4.1.4 Surface Water Drainage (additional to requirements for Foul Sewerage above)

Manholes shall be numbered with the prefix S before the numbers.

All pipelines shall be coloured green.

Location and routing of all house connections to main drains to be indicated.

Location and routing of connections to road gullies to be indicated.

Where existing open drains have been culverted or diverted, full details of works carried out to be shown on drawings. This includes where drains are backfilled with stone and land drainage piping. Where attenuation measures are incorporated in the development, detailed as-constructed drawings and full design calculations shall be submitted.

4.1.5 Public Lighting, Electrical, Gas and Telecom Services etc.

All duct and cable runs shall be mapped and all chambers, branches indicated on drawings. Depth of cover to ducts shall be indicated at a minimum of 20m intervals in the case of live electric cables or gas piping. Offset dimension from fixed features shall be provided at similar intervals. Tolerance 0.1m.

Details of duct sizes and type shall be provided.

Where such ducts cross over water or sewer lines or are within 500mm of such lines in the horizontal plane, this shall be clearly indicated on as constructed drawings.

4.1.6 Roads and Footpaths

The layout of all roads and footpaths, position of lighting columns, location and types of street furniture and road markings shall be clearly indicated.

4.2 Test Results

The following performance tests are to be carried out by the Developer and reports prepared for inclusion within the 'taking in charge handover file'.

4.2.1 Generally

Quality assurance certificates for materials or accreditation certificates from suppliers shall be provided (e.g. bitumen macadam, water mains).

4.2.2 Water Supply

The Developer must provide pressure test certificates for all watermains from the Local Authority's Water Inspectors. Details for each test should also include plan or layout of mains section tested, and indicate classes of mains i.e. class C or D, length of main tested, date of test, period of test, test pressure (i.e. 1.5 times working pressure) and results achieved.

Where a section has failed, subsequent repairs and retests must be reported on.

Results of testing the supply to the development by means of metering and logging for a period of 1 week shall be included in the 'taking in charge handover file'. Base flow must be less than 1.7L/property/hour for a minimum of 10 hours over this period subject to the above flow level not being

exceeded each and every night for a period of not less than 1 hour. The supply shall be simultaneously pressure logged downstream of the flow meter and meter isolation valve.

4.2.3 Foul Sewerage and Storm Water Drainage

A CCTV survey carried out by WTI certified operator at the applicants cost of the foul and storm sewers of 6" diameter and greater shall be provided. A detailed report, presented in the same order as the survey, shall be submitted to the Local Authority laid out in accordance with relevant WRC specification along with videos. The survey shall be carried out at the taking in charge site inspection stage with a Local Authority representative present. Survey shall be referenced to as constructed drawings.

A full manhole survey shall be carried out and presented in accordance with WRC specification.

4.2.4 Sewage Treatment Plants

Where package treatment plants have been utilised the Developer must produce all installation data and certificates of compliance.

Maintenance agreements for the above plants must be furnished.

Where sewage is pumped to a rising main, certificates for the pumps must be provided.

4.2.5 Roads

Laboratory test certificates for materials and record of on site tests (delivery and rolling temperatures) must be provided.

4.2.6 Public Lighting

Confirmation from the E.S.B. in writing that the Public Lighting system is compliant and adequate shall be included within the taking in charge file.

Confirmation that all fees and connection charges have been paid to the E.S.B. up to the agreed date of handover shall be provided.

5.0 Developer Inspection

The Developer is advised to carry out inspections before contacting Louth County Council. Inspections should ensure that all works to be taken in charge have, in general, been constructed in compliance with the standards and specifications in Louth County Council's "Guidelines for Design and Construction of Housing Estates" or the Department of the Environment and Local Government's "Recommendations for Site Development Works for Housing Areas" issued in November, 1998, together with Louth County Council's "Schedule of amendments and additions" to the Department of the Environment and Local Government Recommendations or an equivalent publication which was current at the time the development was carried out.

5.1 Inspections

Prior to a request for the development to be taken in charge the following inspections are to be carried out by the Developer and a report prepared. Any defects or departures identified shall be repaired to a satisfactory standard, prior to a request for an inspection by the Local Authority. Further investigations may be requested as determined by the Local Authority.

5.1.1 Water Supply

Visually check all chambers for structural integrity and compliance with relevant construction guidelines.

Check all hydrants, valves and Water Service Control Units (WCSU) for water tightness.

Visually check that all domestic connections are fitted with WCSU or other approved control unit in compliance with conditions issued in respect of water connections and that they are located in footpaths at access to property.

5.1.2 Foul Sewerage and Storm Water Drainage

Check all chamber/manhole covers meet relevant standards and that frames and covers located in highly trafficked areas are heavy duty (IS EN 124).

Check no flow is observed in surface water drains following five days of dry weather, unless specific detail indicates that existing drain or spring has been piped. Sewer manholes shall be inspected for benching and installation of step irons.

5.1.3 Roads and Footpaths

The Local Authority's Area Engineer, where possible, should be requested to inspect the roadways pre-wearing course stage. This inspection will not count as an additional inspection in respect of fees as set out in Section 7 of this document.

Check that the layout of the roads and footways comply with planning approval conditions, i.e. Road and footway widths, sight distances at entrances and that road construction is to the depths indicated on approved drawings (wearing, basecourse and sub-base).

Check that roadways, parking areas and footpaths have optimum gradients and falls, are free from ponding and have adequate gullies.

Check that kerbing has been carried out in a satisfactory manner with dropped kerbs installed at entrances and access points and disabled access at all road crossing points.

Check that publicly accessed areas are free from trip hazards (i.e. faulty kerbs, incorrectly recessed manhole covers).

6.0 Site Inspection

Having satisfactorily fulfilled the aforementioned criteria the taking in charge procedure can proceed to the site inspection stage.

The Local Authority will, on examining the details submitted and carrying out of initial on ground verification of layouts, identify the pipelines which it proposes to take in charge.

The Local Authority's Engineer shall notify the Developer of an impending site inspection. The Local Authority shall carry out two inspections of an estate free of charge. For the third and subsequent inspection a fee on a rising scale shall be levied.

Initially the Planning Section of Louth County Council will carry out an audit to confirm that all planning conditions have been complied with and that all development charges have been paid.

The Local Authority will assess that the works have been carried out to acceptable standards.

The Local Authority may request the Developer to organise the taking of cores and/or trial holes on roadways.

The Local Authority may wish to carry out further tests on materials and workmanship, i.e. structural performance testing of the roadway. This may, for example, include a performance test on the pavement using deflection equipment such as the Falling Weight Deflectometer (FWD).

The Local Authority may request the Developer to expose the watermain at specified locations to demonstrate the adequacy of pipe bedding, surround and cover. A similar test may be applied in respect of stopcocks/service connections.

Dye tests may be carried out at random locations to determine if surface water is cross-connected to foul sewers.

The Local Authority may require the Developer to install a suitably approved water metering arrangement adjacent to the connection to the public main at his own cost.

7.0 Fees for Additional Inspections

The Developer's attention is drawn to the scale of fees for additional or repeat inspections.

8.0 Taking in Charge

'Taking in charge' of estates is a process commencing from the start of construction activities. The onus is clearly on the Developer to construct an estate to the highest standards.

The Developer must monitor the construction and keep accurate records of quality of materials supplied and workmanship of contractors and sub-contractors. Materials sampling results and corresponding laboratory test results for all areas to be taken in charge shall be entered into the 'taking in charge file'.

Appendix 15
Procedures for taking in charge recently completed Housing Estates

The Local Authority shall not take in charge an estate that has not been fully completed. All snagging work as highlighted by the Developer's Clerk of Works or Architect must be completed prior to the initial Council inspection.

The Local Authority will check the conformity with planning conditions, payment of fees, fulfilment of legal obligations, production of certificates and drawings and the performance of the works via tests and visual inspections.

The Local Authority shall, on inspection, issue the Developer with a list of items requiring attention. This making good or remedial work shall be assessed on a repeat inspection.

On successful completion of the above, the taking in charge process will be completed, and the Local Authority will confirm in writing that the estate (or identified parts thereof) have been taken in charge.

Appendix 16

Tree Protection

Survey

- All trees with a diameter of 150 mm or more, measured at a height of 1.4 m above ground level shall be marked down on a scaled site layout map.
- Trees shall be numbered for identification on site and correspondingly plotted on a map similar in scale to the above.
- Trees shall be described by reference to species, spread, shape, condition, height and remedial works necessary.
- Hedgerows shall be shown and described with reference to their condition, extent and the predominant species contained therein.
- Following the results of the survey, proposals shall be made for the preservation of specimen trees and compatibility of same within the overall development.

Protection

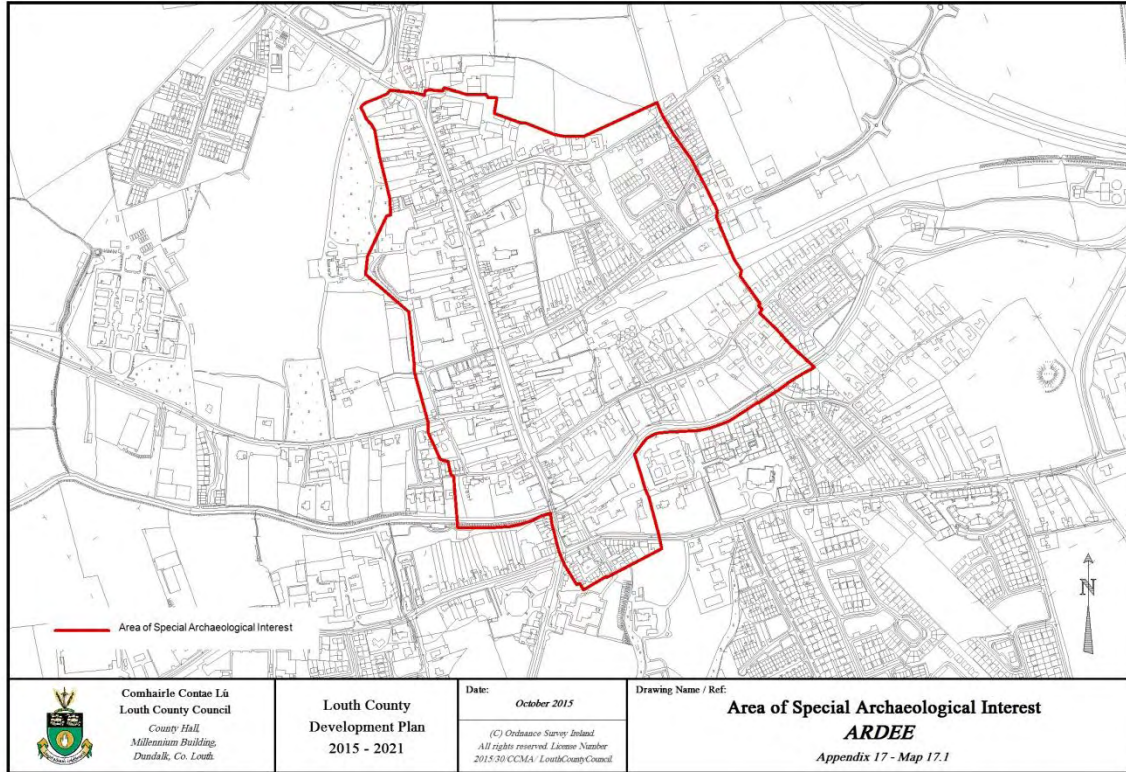
- Where trees are to be preserved on a site, it is essential that such trees be protected from damage during construction arising from plant movement, storage of materials, ground level changes or other site works. Fencing of robust construction shall be erected outside the maximum branch spread of the tree or tree group.
- No excavation or other material should be stored within the enclosed area or within 5 m of any tree. Items such as telephone cables or notices should not be attached to any tree. Vehicles should be kept clear of the enclosed area.
- Walls or other structures should only be built at distances sufficiently far from trees and hedges that are required to be preserved, so as to ensure the long-term vibrancy of such trees and hedgerows.

Appendix 17

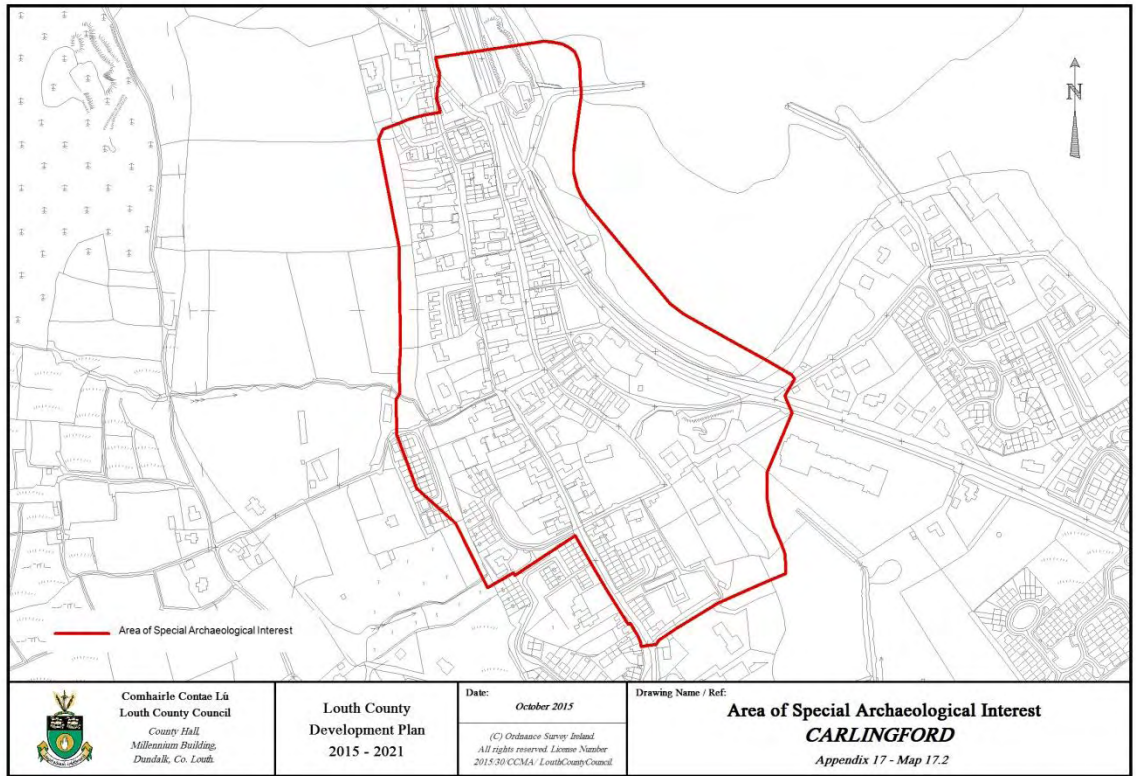
Areas of Special Archaeological Interest

Areas of Special Archaeological Interest	Map Ref No.	Page No.
• Ardee	Map 17.1	2
• Carlingford	Map 17.2	3
• Castlering	Map 17.3	4
• Castleroche	Map 17.4	5
• Collon	Map 17.5	6
• Dromiskin	Map 17.6	7
• Dunleer	Map 17.7	8
• Grange	Map 17.8	9
• Louth Village	Map 17.9	10
• Monasterboice	Map 17.10	11
• Termonfeckin	Map 17.11	12

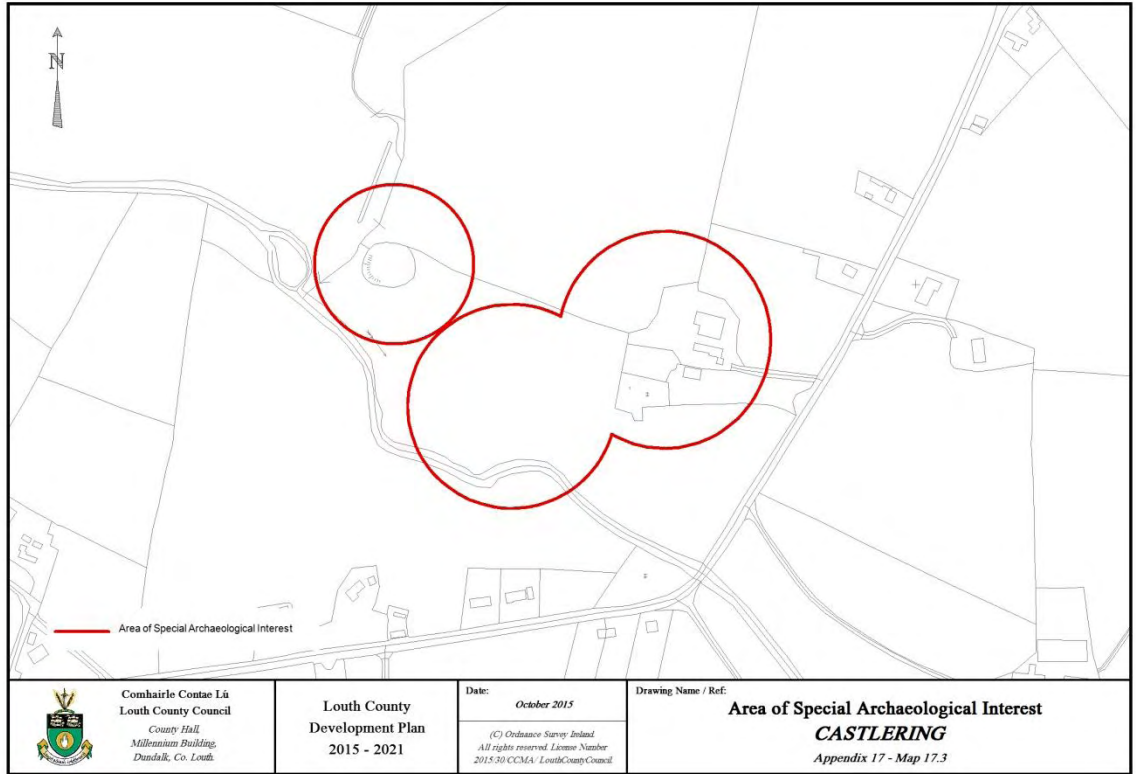
Appendix 17
Areas of Special Archaeological Interest



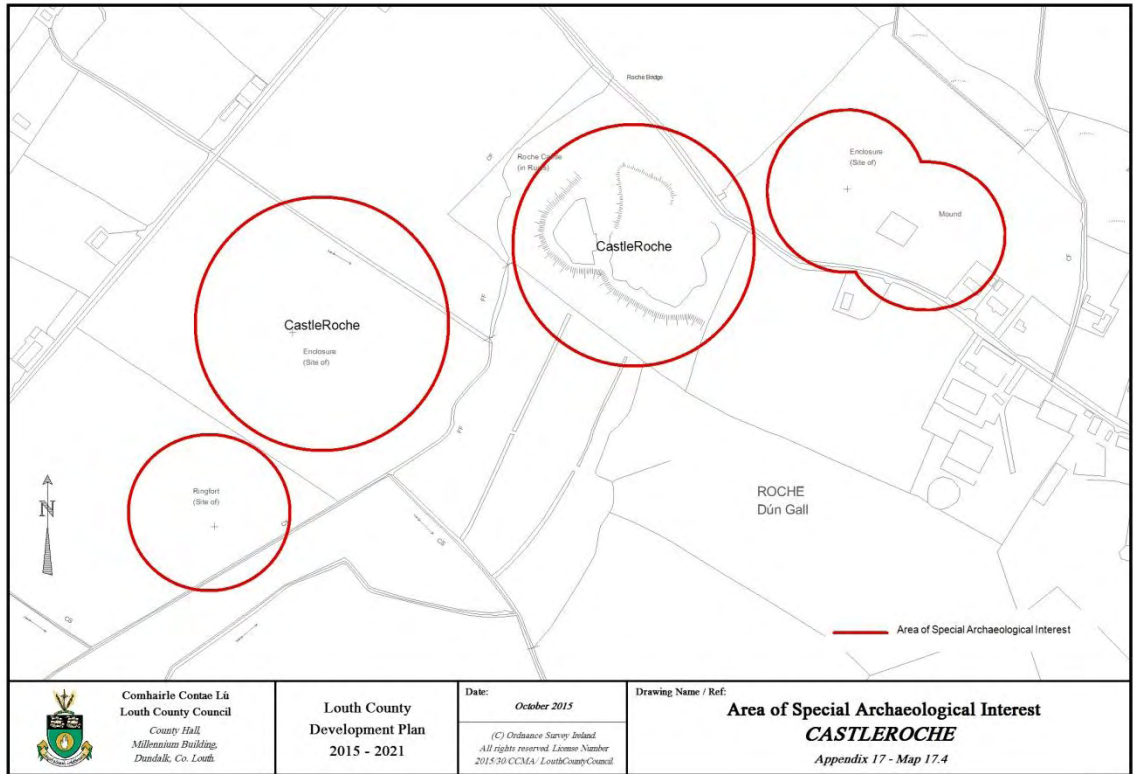
Appendix 17
Areas of Special Archaeological Interest



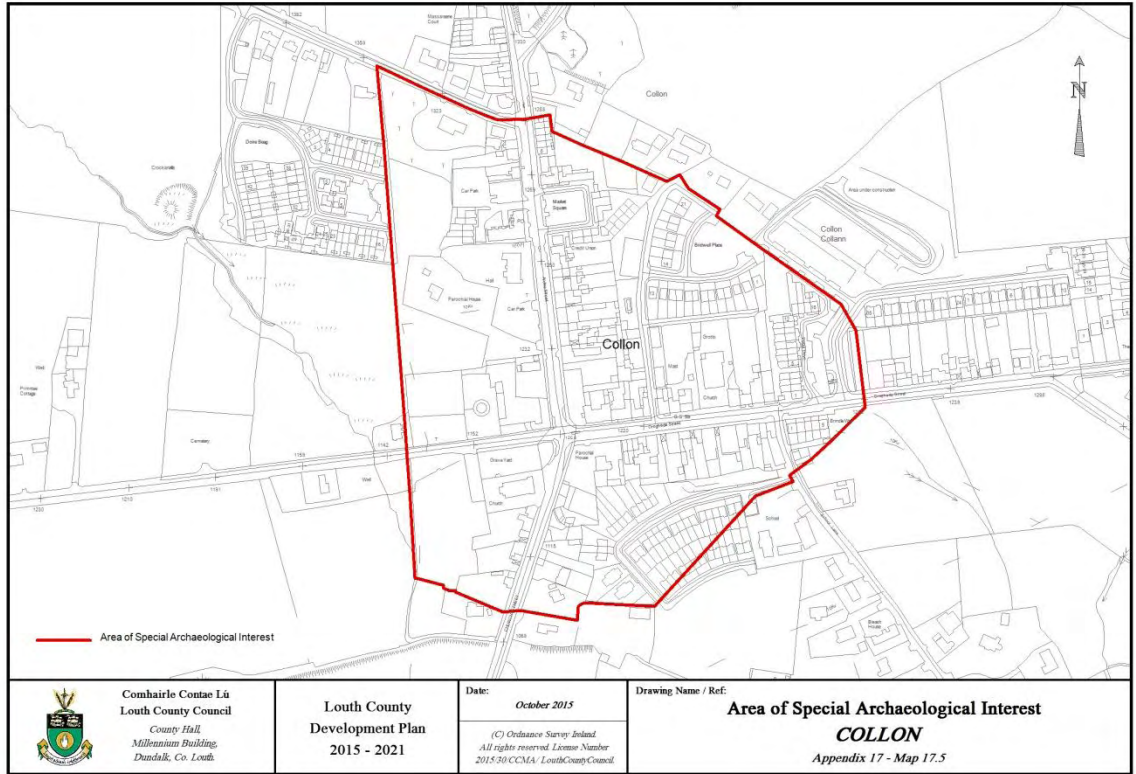
Appendix 17
 Areas of Special Archaeological Interest



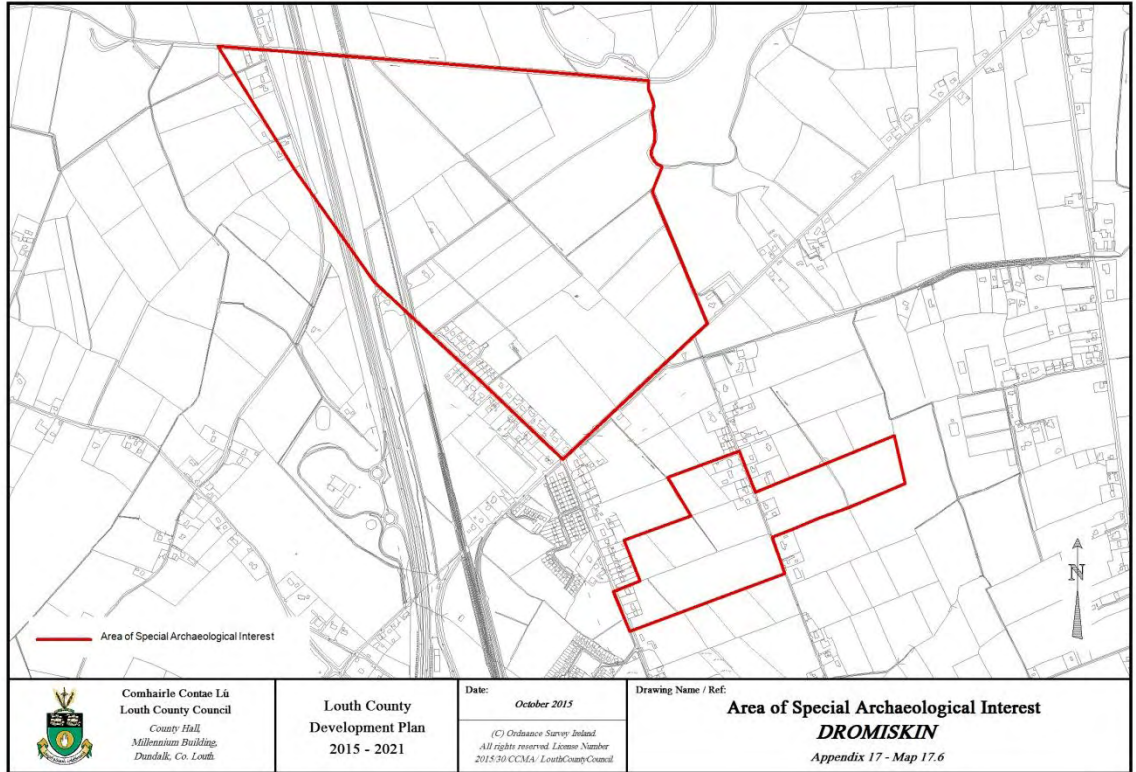
Appendix 17
 Areas of Special Archaeological Interest



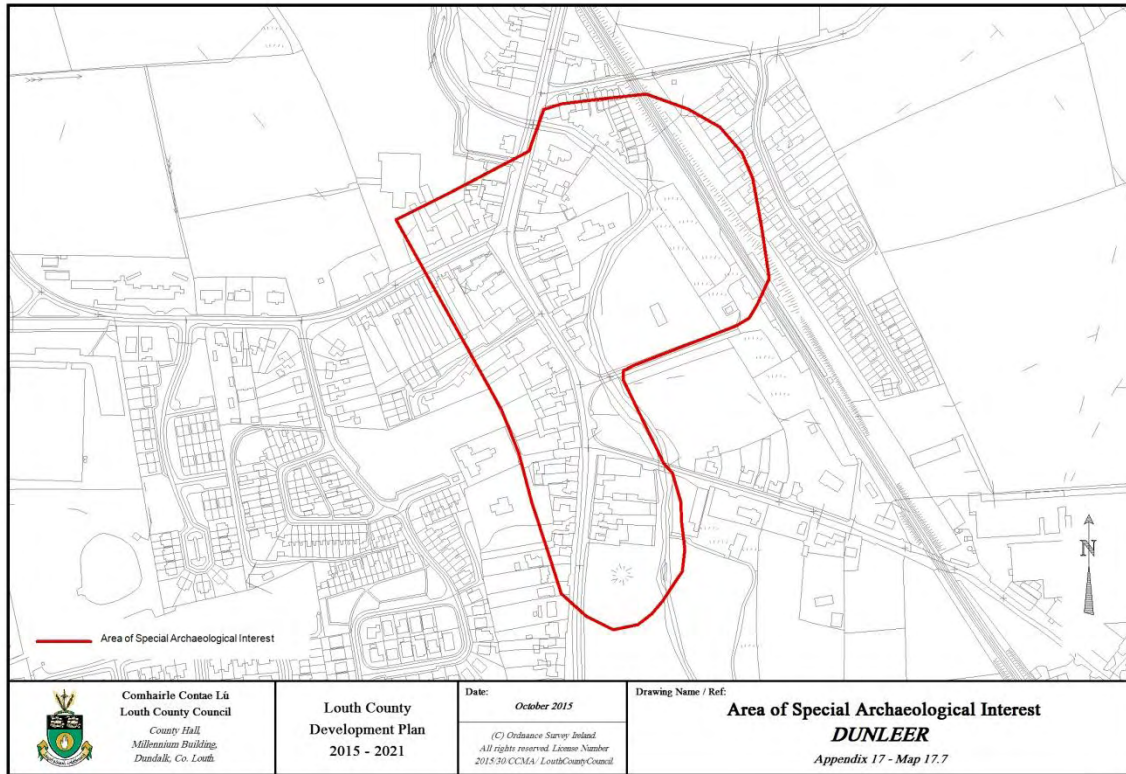
Appendix 17
 Areas of Special Archaeological Interest



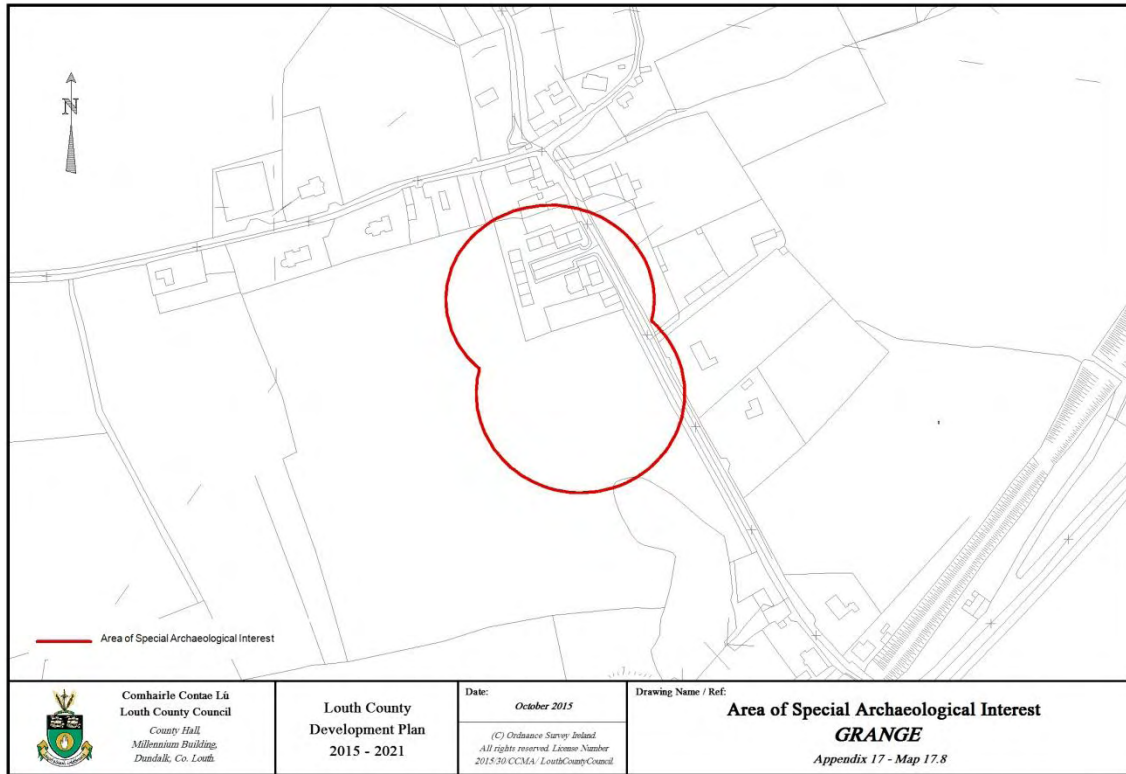
Appendix 17
 Areas of Special Archaeological Interest



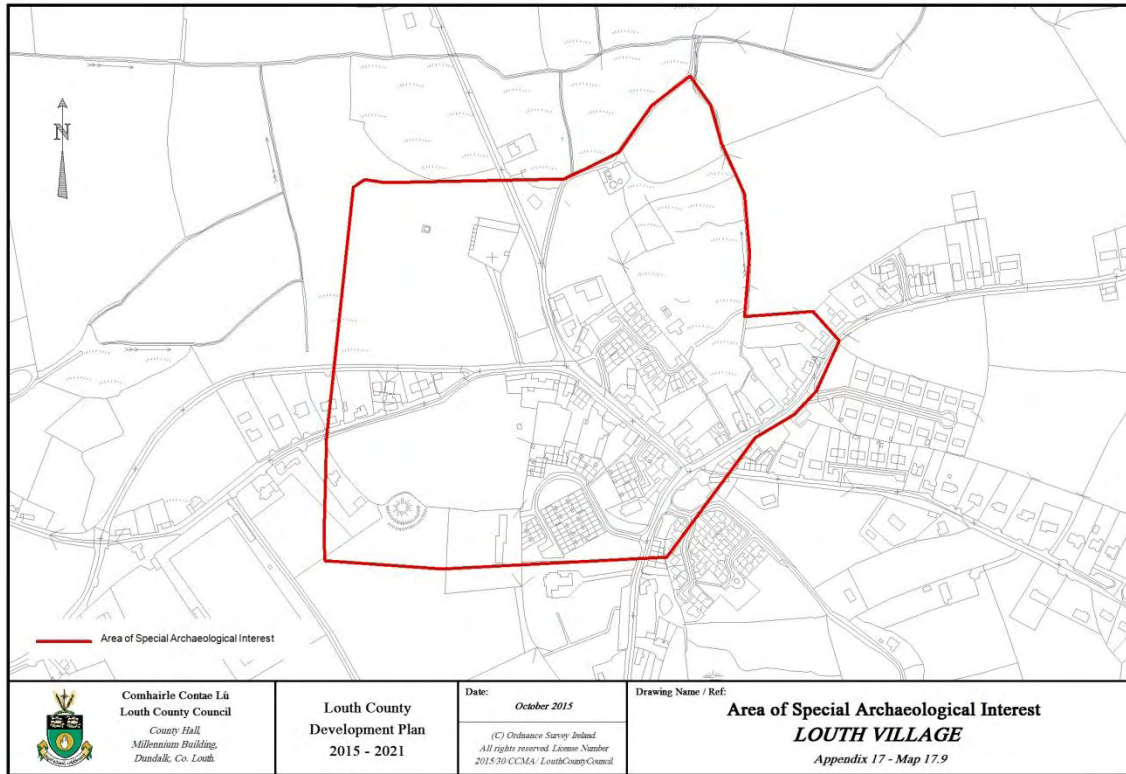
Appendix 17
Areas of Special Archaeological Interest



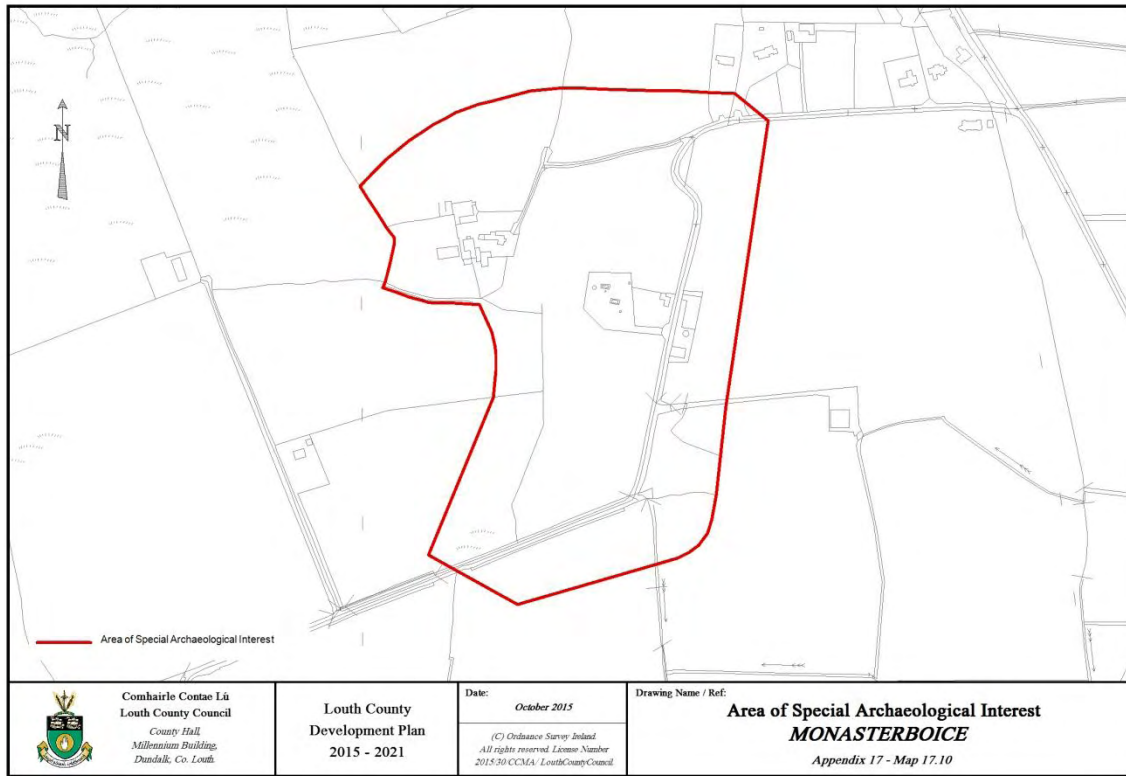
Appendix 17
Areas of Special Archaeological Interest



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