



CHAPTER 9

INFRASTRUCTURE





9 INFRASTRUCTURE

9.1 Introduction

The provision of high-quality infrastructure and environmental services is pivotal to enabling growth, securing investment, creating sustainable, attractive and safe places, safeguarding community health and wellbeing, and protecting the environment.

Enabling infrastructure that can facilitate growth includes water services, surface water management, energy, telecommunications, and broadband infrastructure; whilst waste management ensures the potential impacts of waste on the environment and human health are reduced.

Proper planning of infrastructure and utilities is critical so that they can support development, in a manner that is environmentally sensitive, cost and resource efficient, and protects public health and wellbeing.

9.2 Policy Context

National, regional, and county development plan policy recognises the critical role of infrastructure and service provision in the implementation of plan led development, enabling population growth and attracting economic investment.

It is also recognised that in planning for future infrastructure a key policy approach will be ensuring that mitigating against and adapting to the impacts of climate change has been factored into the design, location, and construction methods to be utilised in the delivery of infrastructure.

9.3 Water Supply and Wastewater

Uisce Éireann has statutory responsibility for the national provision of public water services, which includes the supply and treatment of drinking water and the disposal of wastewater.

It is a strategic aim of Uisce Éireann to ensure there is adequate water and wastewater treatment and network capacity available to facilitate growth in accordance with national and regional economic and spatial planning policy. Louth County Council continues to work closely with Uisce Éireann in the operation and maintenance of the public water supply and wastewater collection and treatment systems in Dundalk. The Uisce Éireann Capital Investment Plan identifies the priority projects for water services infrastructure and investment. At the time of writing the 2025-2029 Capital Investment Plan was under preparation. Recently completed, ongoing and future investment proposals for Dundalk include the following projects:

- Dundalk East Wastewater Network (ongoing);
- Dundalk Water Supply Scheme - Water Treatment Plant Upgrade (Completed August 2022);
- Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund (LIHAF)/ Major Urban Development Sites (MUHDS) Growth Programme (Water and Wastewater) - Mount Avenue, Dundalk (to be complete in 2025); and
- St. Helena's Pumping Station and Rising Main - Assessment & Replacement (completed July 2023).

9.3.1 Water Supply

Water supply in Dundalk is sourced from Cavanhill and Greenmount Water Treatment Plants. Works to the Cavanhill Water Treatment Plant have recently been completed which will assist in safeguarding the water supply for businesses and homes in Dundalk.

The Uisce Éireann National Water Resource Plan (NWRP) was adopted in Spring 2021. Following on from this, regional plans have been prepared.



Louth falls within the Eastern and Midland, and North-West Regions with Dundalk being located in the North-West Region. The Regional Resources Plan for the North-West was published in 2023. This Plan aims to enable secure safe, reliable and sustainable drinking water supplies in Dundalk for the next 25 years.

The Castletown Water Network Upgrade works involve upgrading and upsizing 1.7km of water mains and is part of a project to improve the capacity of the existing water network and operational performance in the area. This project is being delivered to support existing and future developments in the Castletown area.

9.3.2 Water Conservation

Water conservation has a major role in reducing the demand for and leakage of potable water in Dundalk through measures such as active leakage detection, demand management and pressure management.

The National Leakage Reduction Programme, implemented by Uisce Éireann, commits to investing €250 million every year until 2030 to fixing leaks to provide a more reliable water supply.

Some of the leakage reduction programmes recently completed in Dundalk include the replacement of ageing water mains in Muirhevnamor, Quay Street, Dublin Road and Ecco Road. These projects have helped improve the reliability of supply, eliminated existing leaks and improved water network operation that will require less maintenance in the future.

9.3.4 Policy Objectives

INF 1

To liaise and work in partnership with Uisce Éireann in identifying, prioritising and progressing the implementation of water and wastewater projects and policies over the lifetime of this Plan that will enable Dundalk to achieve the projected population target and housing allocation set out in Table 2.4 in the Development Strategy (Chapter 2) of this Plan.

9.3.3 Wastewater

Wastewater in Dundalk is directed to the wastewater treatment plants located on the Point Road and a second in Blackrock on Mooretown Lane. An upgrade to the Blackrock Wastewater Treatment Plant was completed in 2020 and provided additional capacity. At the time of writing capacity was available in both the Dundalk and Blackrock Wastewater Treatment Plants.

Several pumping stations in Dundalk have been upgraded or are subject to planned upgrades to address capacity issues including the following:

- St. Helena's WWPS (completed July 2023);
- Cocklehill WWPS (completed Q4 2023);
- The Square WWPS (completed Q2 2024); and
- Coes Road WWPS (to be completed during the life of the Plan).

Whilst capacity issues have been identified in the existing wastewater network, design solutions will be set out in the Dundalk-Blackrock Strategic Drainage Study, which was being prepared by Uisce Éireann at the time of writing. The progression of these recommended projects will ensure the wastewater network will have the capacity to cater for the projected population and economic growth during the plan period.



INF 2

To support the delivery of essential infrastructure, incorporating appropriate climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, concurrent with the future residential, commercial and employment growth of Dundalk.

INF 3

To support the provision, extension and upgrade of high-quality water and wastewater services infrastructure for both existing and future developments within the plan area, consistent with the principles of sustainability.

INF 4

To require all new developments to connect to the public supply where public water and wastewater infrastructure is available, or likely to be available, and which has sufficient capacity.

INF 5

To discourage the use of pump stations for conveyance of sewage unless the proposed pump station will cater for a significant catchment of zoned development lands that otherwise cannot be serviced. Where deemed appropriate, in consultation with Uisce Éireann, temporary pumping arrangements may be considered as an interim measure, pending the provision of more permanent arrangements within a reasonable timeframe. All arrangements for same will be as per the requirements and agreement of Uisce Éireann.

INF 6

To promote the sustainable use of water and water conservation (such as rainwater harvesting) in existing and new developments within Dundalk and to support the commitment to water conservation and leakage reduction in accordance with best practice, and through the implementation of the National Leakage Reduction Programme.

9.4 Surface Water Management and Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS)

In recent years surface water management in Louth has moved away from the more traditional interventions such as piping, culverting, and the use of underground attenuation towards a focus on nature-based solutions such as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS).

The use of SuDS will improve the management of surface water run-off and the provision of green infrastructure in new developments can help mitigate the effects of flooding, through the utilisation of nature-based SuDS.

Such measures are an essential part of managing the effects of climate change and creating a more climate resilient urban environment.



The Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GSDSDS) produced several policy documents, which include:

- Environmental Management;
- Drainage of New Developments; and
- Climate Change.

These documents focus on the design approach and criteria for drainage infrastructure within new development to ensure it does not continue the trend of pollution and flooding of waterways.



The publication 'Nature-based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas – Best Practice Interim Guidance Document' prepared by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) in 2022 provides best practice advice for the use of nature-based solutions.

9.4.1 Policy Objectives

INF 7

To require the use of sustainable drainage systems to minimise and limit the extent of hard surfacing and paving and require the use of SuDS measures be incorporated in all new development (including extensions to existing developments). All development proposals shall be accompanied by a comprehensive SuDS assessment including run-off quantity, run off quality and impacts on habitat and water quality and should have particular regard nature based solutions and Section 3.5 of the accompanying Strategic Flood Risk Assessment in Volume 4, 'Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and Surface Water Guidance and Strategy'¹.

Nature based SuDS include ponds and basins, wetlands, planted filter strips and swales, permeable surfaces, green facades, and green roofs.

Such drainage systems can assist in the delivery of water sensitive urban design which is an approach to design that delivers greater harmony between the water cycle, the environment, and communities. The benefits are wide ranging, including a reduction in pollution from urban run-off, reduced flooding, and reduced loading of combined sewer systems. They can be positive landscape features within the urban environment, providing amenity benefits and contributing to biodiversity.

All new developments in the Plan area shall incorporate SuDS into their design proposals and shall be designed in accordance with the best practice guidance set out in the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GSDSDS) and the Nature-based Solutions to the Management of Rainwater and Surface Water Runoff in Urban Areas – Best Practice Interim Guidance Document.

¹ Because of the infinite range of land use types and associated developments and designs that could occur on sites under this Plan, the full range of SuDS available should be considered, taking into account the recommendations and information provided in Section 3.5 of the SFRA report.



INF 8

To require that all development proposals meet the design criteria, (adjusted to reflect local conditions), and material designs contained in the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GSDS) and demonstrate how runoff is captured as close to source as possible with subsequent slow release to the drainage system and watercourse.

INF 9

To seek to avoid the discharge of additional surface water to combined sewers and promote Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and solutions to maximise the capacity of Dundalk's combined drainage system.

INF 10

To ensure all new developments provide for separated drainage systems.

INF 11

To promote rainwater harvesting and grey water use in all developments and in particular for larger developments, as an alternative to attenuation.

INF 12

To encourage in all buildings, and particular in buildings of increased height, the provision of green roofs and green walls as an integrated part of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), wherever possible.

INF 13

To encourage the use of Nature based Sustainable Urban Drainage System (NbSUDS), when feasible, where streetscape enhancement programmes or resurfacing programmes are planned.

9.5 Water Quality and River Basin Management Plan

The Water Framework Directive was adopted in 2000. It requires that all waters are protected and that measures are put in place to ensure the quality of these waters is restored to at least 'good' status or 'good' potential by 2027. This is carried out through the implementation of a River Basin Management Plan (RBMP). In Ireland there is a single River Basin District. A Draft River Basin Management Plan for the country was published in Q1 2022.

This Plan sets out the measures necessary to protect and improve the quality of our waters.

The RBMP was finalised in Q4 2024. There are several waterbodies within Dundalk with all monitored waterbodies designated with an ecological status of moderate.

The unmonitored waterbodies have been modelled and assigned a poor ecological status. This Plan will aim to support the improvement of waterbodies throughout Dundalk.



Table 9.1: Monitored and Unmonitored Sites

Monitored	Unmonitored
Raskeagh 010	Haggardstown 010
Castletown 020	Haggardstown 010
Castletown 030	
Fane 060	
Ramparts 010	

Groundwater is used to supply water for drinking, agriculture, and industry. It helps maintain healthy water ecosystems flowing into wetlands and rivers. Human activities can lead to pollution of groundwater, if not managed properly. In the most recent reporting period 2016-2021, the EPA has designated status of the groundwater catchments for Dundalk as ‘Good’.

If land is not appropriately managed there is potential for contaminants to be introduced into water sources.



This can create challenges at water treatment plants that result in higher treatment costs.

9.5.1 Policy Objectives

INF 14

To implement the EU Water Framework Directive through the implementation of the appropriate River Basin Management Plan and Programme of Measures to protect and improve water bodies and to ensure developments shall not, individually or cumulatively, adversely impact on the status of waterbodies, subject to Water Framework Directive exemptions.

INF 15

To ensure all new development incorporates appropriate measures to protect existing water bodies, through appropriate treatment of runoff. In particular, discharges from car parks shall be appropriately treated so as to remove pollutant materials.

INF 16

To protect any groundwater resources in Dundalk and to implement the recommendations included in any Groundwater Protection Scheme prepared under the EU Groundwater Directives.



9.6 Flood Risk Management

Preventing and mitigating the impact of flooding through Flood Risk Management is an important role in proper and comprehensive spatial planning.

'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2009) provides for an integrated and standardised approach to flood risk management within the planning system and acts as the principal guidance document for dealing with flood risk. This guidance requires an examination of flood risk as part of the preparation of this Plan. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) was undertaken for Dundalk to inform the preparation of this Local Area Plan, details of which are set out in Volume 4.

The land use zoning maps published as part of this Plan include flood zones. It should be noted that these flood zones may be updated during the life of this Plan. Applicants and developers are therefore advised to consult the OPW Flood Information Portal <https://www.floodinfo.ie/> or contact the Planning Authority to confirm the most up to date flood maps that are available. All Site-Specific Flood Risk Assessments shall be based on the most up to date flood maps.

9.6.1 Dundalk and Blackrock Flood Relief Scheme

Louth County Council, in partnership with the Office of Public Works (OPW) are advancing the Dundalk and Blackrock Flood Relief Scheme to improve flood risk management for the town.

The OPW recommended the development of the scheme as a result of the work completed in the Neagh Bann Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management (CFRAM) Study. It forms part of the National Development Plan 2030 with €1.3bn announced by the Government for Flood Relief Schemes throughout the country.

At the time of writing background and preparatory work was ongoing with regard to the preliminary design of the Dundalk and Blackrock Flood Relief Scheme.



Whilst the flood defences for this scheme have yet to be finalised, they may include a series of hard defences, including flood embankments and walls, rock armour coastal protection, demountable barriers, road raising, a sluice gate and tanking of two properties, and channel conveyance improvements.

The defences would be required along with improvement of channel conveyance on the Blackrock River and Dundalk Blackwater River, along with storage on the Castletown River.

These proposed measures are expected to provide protection to the 0.5% coastal events and the 1% AEP fluvial flood event. On completion, it is anticipated that it will afford protection to approximately 450 properties, both residential and non-residential, from 1 in 100-year flood events. This Plan supports the ongoing co-operation between the Council, the OPW and other stakeholders in progressing the Dundalk and Blackrock Flood Relief Scheme.

9.6.2 Benefitting Lands

New developments proposed on lands benefitting from drainage district measures shall preserve access for maintenance. Applications for development on land identified as benefitting land may be prone to flooding, and as such site specific flood risk assessments may be required in these areas.



9.6.3 Policy Objectives

INF 17

To support the progression of the Dundalk and Blackrock Flood Relief Scheme and the delivery of associated infrastructure critical to the implementation of the Scheme; and to prohibit development that could prejudice the future delivery of the Scheme.

INF 18

To work closely with the OPW, property owners and other stakeholders in the progression and delivery of the Dundalk and Blackrock Flood Relief Scheme.

INF 19

To require all proposals for development falling within or adjacent to an identified flood zone(s) to submit a site-specific flood Risk Assessment, based on the most up to date information available, that demonstrates that the proposal identifies all sources of flood risk to and from the proposed development, can adequately manage and mitigate any flood risk arising from the development including details of any structural and non-structural risk management measures (e.g. floor levels, flood-resilient construction etc.), and will not exacerbate flood risk elsewhere².

INF 20

With respect to climate change, Flood Risk Assessments shall apply the precautionary approach recommended in the Guidelines and shall consider climate change impacts and adaptation measures, including details of structural and non-structural flood risk management measures, such as those relating to floor levels, internal layout, flood-resistant construction, flood-resilient construction, emergency response planning and access and egress during flood events. The Local Area Plan SFRA datasets and the most up to date CFRAM Programme climate scenario mapping, together with the allowances to be provided for future flood risk management provided in the OPW's (2019) Flood Risk Management Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan and the guidance on potential future scenarios contained therein, should be consulted by prospective applicants for developments in this regard and will be made available to lower-tier Development Management processes in the Council.

² More information on requirements in relation to Structural and Non-Structural Risk Management Measures are provided in a footnote to this Policy Objective at Table 5 of the accompanying SFRA report in Volume 4.



INF 21

Uses under all zoning objectives (apart from where the Justification Test outlined in the Flood Risk Management Guidelines has been passed or where the uses comprise minor development in existing developed areas, as outlined in Section 5.28 of the Guidelines as amended by Circular PL 2/2014) shall be limited to water-compatible uses in Flood Zone A, and less vulnerable or water-compatible uses in Flood Zone B³. Detailed, site-specific Flood Risk Assessment will be required in these areas.

This limitation shall take primacy over any other provision relating to these land use zoning objectives. The Justification Test has been passed for the following Land Use Zonings:

- Lands east of Bellews Bridge Road and north of Castletown Road, zoned A1 Existing Residential and A2 New Residential Phase 1 (Site 10 on SFRA Report Table 6 'Justification Tests');
- Dundalk Central Map 1, zoned A1 Existing Residential, B2 Neighbourhood Centre, B4 District Centre, C1 Mixed Use, E1 General Employment and G1 Community Facilities (Site 11 on SFRA Report Table 6 'Justification Tests');
- Dundalk Central Map 2, zoned A1 Existing Residential, B1 Town Centre, C1 Mixed Use, C2 Port Harbour Area, E1 General Employment, and G1 Community Facilities (Site 12 on SFRA Report Table 6 'Justification Tests');
- Lands built out north of Castletown River, zoned A1 Existing Residential and E1 General Employment (Site 13 on SFRA Report Table 6 'Justification Tests'); and
- Lands along the Point Road, zoned A1 Existing Residential (Site 14 on SFRA Report Table 6 'Justification Tests');
- Main Street, Blackrock, zoned B1 Town Centre (Site 17 on SFRA Report, Table 6 'Justification Tests');
- Lands west of Hill Street Bridge, zoned C1 Mixed Use (Site 18 on SFRA Report, Table 6 'Justification Tests');

9.7 Coastal Erosion

Coastal protection from erosion and flooding is becoming a prominent issue for many coastal cities and towns across Ireland. The impact of climate change on coastal processes has had a pronounced impact on how we think about development along the coast. Rising sea levels and increased storm events presents a real concern for coastal towns like Dundalk.

Climate change is expected to increase storm frequency and intensity and with this will likely result in increased storm surges which could potentially cause considerable damage to people and property. Managing coastal processes and mitigating against coastal flooding plays an important role in living with the effects of climate change.

Implementation of coastal erosion management measures can be categorised into two categories; hard and soft.

Hard Engineering typically involves the construction of the physical infrastructure such as groins, breakwaters, rock armouring /gabions and sea walls. However, the impact of groins on coastal process can have an adverse impact on the coastline elsewhere.

The construction of sea walls is expensive and should be reserved for places in which the benefit to existing properties outweighs the construction cost and, similar to groins, sea walls can reduce accretion and create and exacerbate erosion elsewhere.

³ Any amendments to extant permissions in Flood Zones A or B that have commenced development and construction is ongoing will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will require an updated site-specific flood risk assessment to be carried out.



Soft Engineering typically involves the use of natural, sustainable solutions to control coastal processes. Reprofiling involves the redistribution of sediment from the lower part of the beach which distributes the energy of the waves.

Dune nourishment involves planting vegetation, typically marram grass, to stabilise dunes and trap more sand. Beach nourishment involves pumping sand onto the existing beach.

In order to fully assess the potential impact of coastal erosion, there will be a requirement for planning applications for certain developments within 100 metres of the coastline to include a Coastal Assessment Report.

The requirement for such a report will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be determined as part of the Development Management process at either pre-planning or application stage.

9.7.1 Policy Objectives

INF 22

To require, on a case-by-case basis to be determined by the Planning Authority at either the pre-planning or planning application stage, the preparation of a Coastal Erosion Assessment Report for development within 100 metres of the coastline. New development will be prohibited unless it can be established based on the best scientific information at the time of the application, that the likelihood of erosion at a specific location is minimal taking into account, inter alia, any impacts.

INF 23

To ensure that Dundalk's natural coastal defences (beaches, salt marshes and estuary lands) are protected and to ensure they are not put at risk by inappropriate works or development.

INF 24

To explore, where coastal erosion is considered a threat to existing properties, the technical, environmental, and economic feasibility of coastal adaptation and coastal retreat management options.

INF 25

To employ soft engineering techniques as an alternative to hard coastal defence works, wherever possible.

INF 26

To identify, prioritise and implement necessary coastal protection works subject to the availability of resources, whilst ensuring a high level of protection for natural habitats and features, and ensure due regard is paid to visual and other environmental considerations in the design of any such coastal protection works.



9.8 Riparian Corridors

The importance of protecting and enhancing the environmental and ecological quality of rivers and streams within the Dundalk urban area is recognised. Given the nature of the existing pattern of development within Dundalk, the provision of a riparian buffer zone on both sides of a watercourse may not always be achievable. However, new development will be encouraged to adopt a best practice approach.

The provision of riparian corridors will be assessed through the Development Management process. Inland Fisheries Ireland have produced supplementary guidance titled 'Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment' in 2020.

This guide seeks to provide a template for the protection and enhancement of rivers in urban areas.



Table 9.2: 4 Steps to Good Riparian and River Planning

4 Steps to Good Riparian & River Planning for Urban Areas	
Step	Description
1	Protect Streamside Zone >10m Ensure sufficient space is set-aside with vegetation only.
2	Construct Middle Zone 15m-30m Ensure sufficient space set-aside with vegetation and amenity uses.
3	Construct Outer Zone >8m Ensure sufficient space set-aside incorporates SUDS and wider amenity uses.
4	Rehabilitate Instream Channel Using appropriate habitat restoration techniques.

9.8.1 Policy Objective

INF 27

To ensure that, where feasible, no development, including clearing or storage of materials, takes place within a minimum distance of 10m measured from the bank of any river, stream, or watercourse unless the development is water compatible. New developments shall seek to incorporate the 'Four Steps to Good Riparian and River Planning for Urban Areas' as set out in 'Planning for Watercourses in the Urban Environment' (Inland Fisheries Ireland, 2020).



9.9 Pollution and Environmental Services

One of the cross-cutting themes of this Plan is to create an attractive, climate resilient and healthy living and working environment for residents, businesses, and visitors to the town. Air quality, noise, lighting, and an effective waste management policy are contributing factors in delivering and maintaining environmental quality.

This Plan will promote the implementation of best practice in the management of waste, achieving good air quality, and mitigating against any potential adverse impacts relating to noise or lighting.

9.9.1 Waste

The approach to the management of waste is based on a hierarchy of prevention, minimisation, reuse, recycle and energy recovery with the level of waste going to landfill kept to a minimum. This Plan supports the move to a more circular economy, where materials are retained in use at their highest value for as long as possible and are then re-used or recycled, leaving minimum residual waste. This approach will conserve resources, increase resource efficiency, and help reduce carbon emissions whilst also creating employment opportunities.

In terms of waste management/recycling facilities, Dundalk is currently served by a recycling centre at Newry Road which accepts a range of materials including cardboard, glass, plastics, batteries, scrap metal, green waste, white goods and other electrical appliances.



There are seven bring/bottle banks within Dundalk which accept glass and aluminium drinks cans. See Table 9.3 for details.

Table 9.3: Bring/Bottle Bank Locations Dundalk

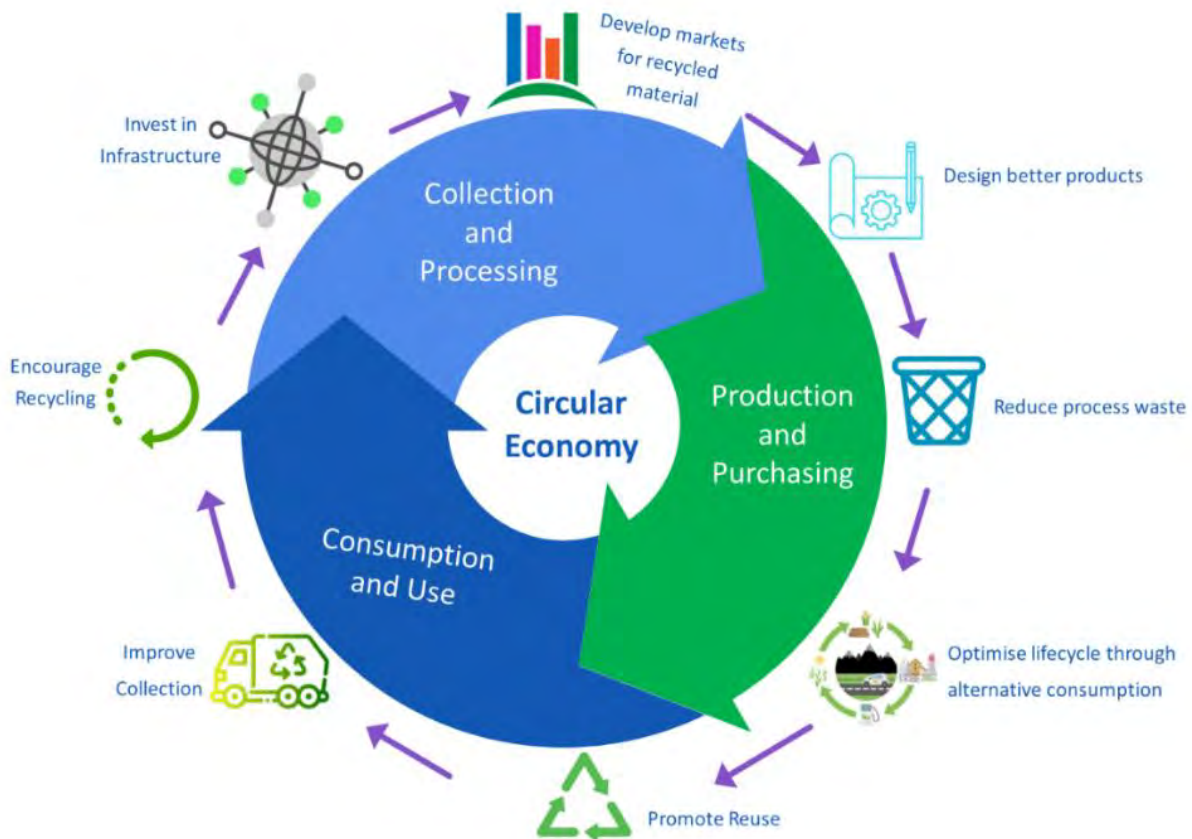
Ref.	Location	Eircode
1	Tennis Club, Meadow Grove	A91 H5F9
2	St. Gerard's Square, Barrack Street	A91 DE06
3	Long Walk Shopping Centre	A91 KX70
4	Car Park at Harp	A91 P8W9
5	Castletown Service Station	A91 AE72
6	De La Salle School Castletown Road	A91 FC91
7	Main Street, Blackrock	A91 Y0H7

This Plan will continue to promote awareness of the need to increase the amount of waste that is re-used and recycled and ensure that adequate facilities are provided over the plan period and beyond.

It will facilitate the provision of additional recycling facilities and services at appropriate locations in the town where a need is identified.



Figure 9.1 Circular Economy



9.9.2 Air Quality

Poor air quality within an urban environment has the potential to lead to significant environmental problems and is linked to poor health amongst the general population. The primary responsibility for monitoring air quality, as well as the nature and extent of emissions is assigned to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) whereas the responsibility for addressing local instances of air pollution is assigned to local authorities, as per the Air Pollution Act 1987.

The *Clean Air Strategy*, published by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications in 2023 provides the strategic policy framework necessary to integrate measures across government policy that are required to reduce air pollution and promote cleaner ambient air, and deliver national objectives.

The first annual Progress Report was submitted to Government in July 2024. This report provided a high-level overview of progress to date.

The EPA has introduced the National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Programme (AAMP) which will see a greater number of monitoring locations established across the country. The EPA Air Quality Index for Health indicates that since the adoption of the Plan the Air Quality in Dundalk was generally Good.

The most recent data from 2022 stated that there were 3 Fair, 1 Poor and 2 Very Poor air quality instances.

This Plan will support the provision of air quality real time monitoring stations at appropriate locations in Dundalk.



9.9.3 Light

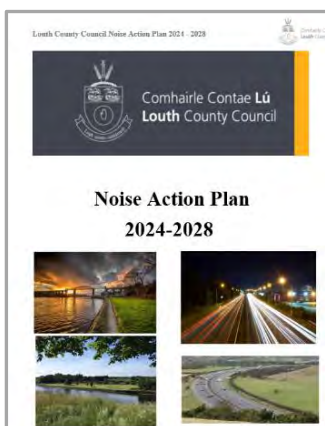
Whilst artificial light is important in creating a safe and secure environment it is acknowledged that light pollution, glare, and spillage can have an adverse impact on the visual, wildlife and residential amenities of surrounding areas. There is therefore a need to strike a balance between the desire for illumination and security with the control of light pollution and the avoidance of light spillage and glare.

9.9.4 Noise

It is recognised that there is potential for persons/properties to be affected by uses/operations that are noise intensive. Such operational noise will be assessed as part of a planning application and may require the preparation of a Noise Assessment to analyse and assess the potential noise levels generated by the use or operation, in addition to the potential impacts it may have on the amenities of surrounding properties or residents.

This will be particularly pertinent where the use or operation is in close proximity to a residential area. Where necessary, development should provide appropriate sound proofing and noise mitigation.

Louth County Council have prepared a Noise Action Plan (2024-2028), in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Noise Regulations (SI 140 2006).



This Action Plan is largely transport based and seeks to address the long-term management of traffic noise. The 2024-2028 Noise Action Draft Plan was finalised in Q4 2024.

The overall aim of managing environmental noise within the framework of the regulations is to avoid, prevent and reduce the harmful effects due to long term exposure to environmental noise.

9.9.5 Contaminated Land and Soil Remediation

There are brownfield lands in Dundalk that have a history of industrial use which may have resulted in a contamination of the land due to spillages, leaks, and seepages of oil or other industrial products or materials. Any lands that are known or suspected of contamination will require detailed investigative works to be carried out as part of a planning application to identify the source and extent of contamination.

A risk-based approach in accordance with best practice techniques, in consultation with the Environmental Protection Agency and any other relevant bodies (as required or necessary), shall be taken to the remediation of contaminated lands to ensure works are completed to the highest standards.

9.9.6 Policy Objectives

INF 28 6

To protect and maintain environmental quality in Dundalk through the implementation of relevant European, National and Regional policy and legislation relating to air quality, greenhouse gases, climate change, light pollution, noise pollution and waste management.



INF 29

To support the ongoing investment and maintenance of existing waste disposal and recycling facilities within the Plan area and to facilitate the provision of additional facilities in appropriate locations in accordance with the requirements of the current National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy 2020-2025 or any subsequent plan.

INF 30

To encourage and support the expansion and improvement of the three-bin system (mixed dry recyclables, organic waste and residual waste) in order to increase the quantity and quality of materials collected for recycling in conjunction with relevant stakeholders.

INF 31

To support circular economy principles, prioritising prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery, to support a healthy environment, economy and society and to enhance employment opportunities.

INF 32

To ensure that all external lighting whether free standing or attached to a building shall be designed and constructed so as not to cause excessive light spillage, glare, or dazzle motorists, and thereby limiting light pollution into the surrounding environment and protecting the amenities of nearby properties, traffic and wildlife.

INF 33

To implement the Noise Action Plan for Louth County Council in order to avoid, prevent and reduce the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to environmental noise exposure.

INF 34

Developments for noise sensitive uses shall have regard to the noise maps contained within the Louth Noise Action Plan 2024-2028 or any subsequent plan and developers shall be required, where deemed necessary by the Planning Authority, to produce a noise impact assessment and mitigation plans, for any new noise sensitive development within these areas.

INF 35

To ensure that development on contaminated lands includes appropriate remediation measures.

9.10 Energy Supply and Infrastructure

The provision of secure, reliable, flexible and efficient energy transmission supply and distribution infrastructure to power and heat homes and businesses, and fuel transport, is of critical importance to the continued economic, social and cultural development of Dundalk. The electricity and gas network in Dundalk has a vital role in carrying and distributing this energy throughout the town.



To ensure the electricity and gas network has the capacity to meet growing demand this Plan will support proposals by energy providers that will strengthen and support the network and associated transmission infrastructure, increase capacity and improve security of supply.



It is recognised that there will be an increased demand for electricity as part of the decarbonisation of the economy and transition to net zero. This increased demand will be across all sectors but is likely to be particularly apparent in transportation, due to the electrification of vehicles, in addition to the residential and commercial sectors, due to the use of electricity for the heating of homes and businesses.

As part of the decarbonisation of electricity generation further investment in the grid infrastructure and distribution network will also be required to facilitate the connection of renewable energy projects.

In accordance with national and regional policy this Plan will support the increase in use of renewable energy and development of renewable energy infrastructure and initiatives to provide a viable alternative to the burning of fossil fuels.

The Plan will also promote innovative designs that help improve the energy efficiency of new and existing buildings and encourage the installation and retrofitting of renewable energy technologies, where appropriate.

9.10.1 Policy Objectives

INF 36

To support investment in the electricity and gas transmission and distribution network to ensure there is resilience in the network and security of supply, thus enabling population growth and economic investment to occur in the Plan area.

INF 37

To require that in all new developments, local services such as electricity be undergrounded where possible and appropriate.

9.10.2 Renewable Energy

The generation of electricity from renewable sources will be a fundamental part of the decarbonisation of the economy and society and improving security of supply.

This Plan supports the transition towards renewables and will support and facilitate large and small-scale projects, subject to complying with the relevant planning and environmental criteria. Examples of such projects include, but are not limited to, solar, on and offshore wind, heat pumps, district heating, and geothermal.

The progression and delivery of renewable energy projects in Dundalk will support the objectives of the Dundalk-Blackrock Decarbonising Zone, as set out in the Louth Climate Action Plan 2024-2029, being achieved.

9.10.3 Policy Objectives

INF 38

To support initiatives for limiting and reducing emissions of greenhouse gases through energy efficiency and the development and progression of renewable energy projects at suitable locations, utilising the natural resources available in Dundalk, in an environmentally acceptable manner subject to normal proper planning considerations in particular the impact on areas of environmental or landscape sensitivity.

INF 39

To support initiatives aimed at reducing the level of energy consumption within Dundalk.



9.11 Communications Network and Digital Infrastructure

Harnessing Digital - The Digital Ireland Framework (2022), advocates positioning Ireland as a digital leader, driving and enabling digital transformation across the economy and society. It is fully acknowledged that digital infrastructure that delivers better connected services is vital for continued growth, supporting businesses and enhancing our communities. In particular, the availability of a high-speed broadband network that provides homes and businesses with high levels of connectivity is critical in attracting inward investment.

The urban area of Dundalk is currently well serviced by high-speed broadband with some small pockets of intervention required. Dundalk benefits from the open access fibre optic infrastructure known as Metropolitan Area Networks. This open access means all licensed operators can have access, which provides for increased competition in the market and improves value for consumers.

This Plan will continue to support businesses and commercial operators in enhancing and upgrading their services to improve access to high-speed broadband in Dundalk. Regional Policy Objective (RPO) 6.30 of the RSES seeks to support the development of 'Smart City' programmes in Athlone, Drogheda, and Dundalk.



While there is no universal definition for a 'Smart City', this term generally refers to a city or town that uses technology to provide

services and solve city/town problems such as improved access to transport services, reducing waste and inconvenience and increasing public safety.

It involves a systematic integration of ICT in the planning, design, operations and management of cities, towns, and villages for the benefit of the citizen and can help boost a location's attractiveness for people and business.

This Plan will support and promote opportunities for greater innovation in digital technology across all urban functions in order to foster the development of secure, smart solutions for Dundalk.

9.11.1 Policy Objectives

INF 40

To promote and facilitate the sustainable delivery of a high-quality ICT infrastructure network throughout Dundalk in the interests of promoting economic growth, competitiveness and social inclusion whilst ensuring there is no adverse impact on the urban environment.

INF 41

To co-operate with the relevant agencies to facilitate the undergrounding of all electricity, telephone, and television cables within Dundalk wherever possible, in the interests of visual amenity.

INF 42

To support and promote the development of Smart City Programmes within Dundalk through the implementation of the *National Smart Specialisation Strategy for Innovation* and, maximising the opportunities for industry-academic collaboration between DkIT, businesses and industry located in the town.