



Chapter 7

MOVEMENT

'To facilitate investment and improvement in transport infrastructure in the County that will support economic growth and investment and the creation of healthy, sustainable communities; by improving connectivity and journey times within and between settlements, promoting and investing in more sustainable modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport, creating a more attractive public realm, and reducing carbon emissions.'

7 MOVEMENT

7.1 INTRODUCTION

A modern, functional and sustainable transportation network that allows people and goods to move around efficiently contributes to an environment where businesses can thrive and people can enjoy a more balanced lifestyle. Louth benefits from a well-developed network of transport links at a national, regional and local level.



The strategic location of the County along the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor provides excellent transport links to these cities via the motorway, national roads, and inter-city rail line. There is also a strong network of regional and local roads that provide connectivity between settlements within the County and key service centres in the wider region.

This Chapter will set out the strategy for transport infrastructure provision and investment in the County.

It will strive to strengthen the links between land use and transportation and will seek to promote more sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling, public transport and car-share facilities, including the use of electric vehicles, so as to reduce urban congestion, create more attractive environments and to help transition to a low carbon and climate resilient County.

The Plan also seeks to progress key infrastructure projects that will facilitate economic growth in the County and maintain its economic competitiveness.

7.2 OVERSIGHT AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRANSPORT POLICY, INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

7.2.1 Department of Transport

At a national level, the Department of Transport is responsible for transport policy and the funding and oversight of transport infrastructure and services.

Working under the remit of the Department of Transport, the National Transport Authority (NTA) and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) are the state agencies with responsibility for providing and maintaining transport infrastructure.

7.2.2 Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)

Transport Infrastructure Ireland was established through a merger of the National Roads Authority and the Railway Procurement Agency under the *Roads Act 2015*. TII's primary function is to provide an integrated approach to the future development and operation of the national roads network and light rail infrastructure throughout Ireland.

7.2.3 The National Transport Authority (NTA)

The NTA is responsible for planning, implementation and funding of public transport and infrastructure, regulation and contracting of public transport services, and providing facilities and infrastructure that promote walking and cycling.

7.2.4 Local Authorities

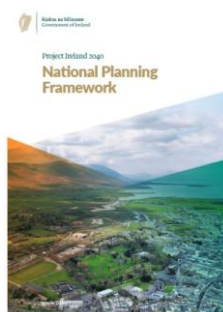
Local Authorities work closely with the DTTAS, the NTA and TII in the implementation of transport policy and in identifying and funding roads and transport related projects at a local level.

7.3 POLICY CONTEXT

The Movement and Transport Strategy in this Plan has been informed by a broad range of national and regional policy documents and strategies. A brief summary of these documents is set out in this section.

7.3.1 National and Regional Strategies

Project Ireland 2040 – The National Planning Framework (NPF) and National Development Plan 2018-2027 (NDP): The NPF recognises the importance of an integrated approach to land use and transport planning in achieving the goals of the Framework. These goals are set out in the document as National Strategic Outcomes.



This integrated approach includes:

- Improvements to public transport to facilitate compact growth and achieving a reduction in carbon emissions;
- Investment in walking and cycling infrastructure to promote more active and healthy lifestyles; and
- Investment in road infrastructure to improve connectivity and accessibility.

The NDP sets out details of infrastructure investment up to 2027. It is closely aligned to the National Strategic Outcomes of the NPF which will ensure there is a co-ordinated approach between policy and expenditure. The following transport related projects in Louth have been included in the NDP:

- N2 upgrade Ardee to Castleblayney;
- N52 Ardee Bypass; and
- DART Expansion Programme to Drogheda.

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland Region 2019-2031: The RSES supports the implementation of the National Planning Framework and the National Development Plan by setting out a strategic planning and economic framework that is consistent with the National Policy Objectives and National Strategic Outcomes set out in the NPF.



As part of the integration of land use and transportation planning there is an emphasis on reducing the need to travel, by focusing development in identified centres of growth and ensuring there is a closer alignment between population and employment growth. Local Transport Plans are to be prepared for identified settlements in the region, which include Drogheda and Dundalk, to assist in the integration of land use and transportation planning.

There is also an emphasis on promoting a modal shift away from a dependence on the private car to more sustainable modes of transport, to facilitate greater efficiency in transport networks and address the impacts of climate change.

In addition to supporting the progression of infrastructure projects set out in the National Development Plan, the RSES also supports the delivery of enabling infrastructure that will facilitate population and economic growth in the Regional Growth Centres of Drogheda and Dundalk and allow the settlements to develop into centres of scale. This includes the construction of the Port Access Northern Cross Route (PANCR) in Drogheda.

Planning Land Use and Transport – Outlook 2040 (PLUTO 2040): This is a framework for investing in land transport that was under preparation by the Department of Transport, Tourism, and Sport at the time of writing.

It is an update of the document ‘Strategic Investment in Land Transport’ published in 2015.

It will set out key priorities and principles for future investment that will ensure the delivery of a transport network that meets the needs of the country and delivers the National Strategic Outcomes in Project Ireland 2040.

Building on Recovery: Infrastructure and Capital Investment 2016-2021: This Capital Plan presents the Government’s new €42 billion framework for infrastructure investment in Ireland over the period 2016 to 2021.

Smarter Travel: Is a transport policy published by the Department of Transport, Tourism, and Sport in 2009. It sets out a vision of how a sustainable travel and transport system can be achieved.

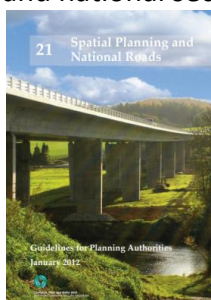
The document includes a series of goals and targets including:

- Improve accessibility to transport
- Maximise the efficiency of the transport network and alleviate congestion and bottlenecks;
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with transport;
- Reduce travel demand and commuting distances travelled by the private car; and
- Reduce the dependency on fossil fuels.

The document acknowledges that the successful implementation of this policy will require future employment and population growth to be predominantly concentrated in compact urban areas.

7.3.2 Planning Guidance

Spatial Planning and National Roads: The [‘Spatial Planning and National Roads – Guidelines for Planning Authorities’](#) provides guidelines and planning considerations relating to development affecting motorways, national primary and national secondary roads.



The emphasis of the guidelines is to maintain the efficiency, capacity and safety of the national road network.

The Guidelines highlight:

- The interdependency between land use and transportation policies in minimising the need to travel; and
- The impact of new accesses on to national roads in terms of road safety, and the importance of development management in achieving high standards in relation to design quality and traffic management.

Plan led development that takes account of future development patterns including trip generation associated with land use zoning and how this will be catered for is promoted in the Guidelines.

National Cycle Policy Framework: The [National Cycle Policy Framework](#) was published in 2009 alongside the Smarter Travel policy document. The goal of this Framework is to create a strong cycling culture across the country. A range of objectives that will assist in achieving this goal are set out in the document.

These objectives focus on investment in cycling infrastructure that will make it safer and a viable alternative to motorised transport.

National Cycle Manual: The [National Cycle Manual](#) published by the National Transport Authority (NTA) is a guide used by planners and engineers to improve cycling provision and integrate the bike into the design of urban areas.

The manual embraces the principles of ‘Sustainable Safety’ which is a Dutch principle of design that seeks to make roads and streets easier to use, thus making them a safer environment for all road users including cyclists.

Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways: This [Strategy](#) seeks to assist in the development of nationally and regionally significant Greenways and to increase the number and geographical spread of Greenways across the country.

It recognises the tourism potential of Greenways to act as economic drivers in local areas, particularly where associated infrastructure can be provided or is available. The Strategy promotes a close working relationship between key stakeholders including Local Authorities, landowners, local communities and other state bodies in delivering successful Greenways.

Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS): Commonly referred to as ‘DMURS’, the [Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets](#) was originally published in 2013 with an updated version published in 2019. DMURS seeks to put well-designed streets at the heart of sustainable communities and supports boarder government policies on the environment, planning and transportation.

It provides the practical measures to achieve:

- Highly connected streets which allow people to walk and cycle to key destinations in a direct and easy-to-find manner;
- A safe and comfortable street environment for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages;
- Streets that contribute to the creation of attractive and lively communities; and
- Streets that calm traffic via a range of design measures that make drivers more aware of their environment.

Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities: This document makes reference to car parking standards for new apartments.

TII Publications: TII publications are a set of publications that provide standards, advice notes and other documents relating to the design, assessment and operation of National Roads, trunk roads, minor roads, including motorways in Ireland, generally outside the 60kph zones. TII Publications are categorised as Standards or Technical.

These Publications supersede the NRA Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB), which have been subsumed into the TII Publications. In order to maintain continuity between TII Publications and the old NRA Standards system, pre-existing documents within the NRA DMRB and MCDRW have been assigned a 'historical reference' so that existing documents and drawings can be searched using the old document names.

Design Manual for Roads and Bridges: The NRA, Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) is a series of volumes that provide standards, advice notes and other documents relating to the design, assessment and operation of National Roads and [trunk roads](#), including [motorways](#) in Ireland. These Standards have been subsumed into the TII publications.

Policy Objective	
MOV 1	To work with national transport agencies in supporting the delivery of a high quality, climate resilient and sustainable transport network in the County.

7.4 TRANSPORTATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE

In 2017 transport accounted for 19.8% of greenhouse gas emissions in Ireland. The *Climate Action Plan*, published by the Government in 2019, sets out a series of policy actions that will support a reduction of emissions from the transport sector by 2030. This includes a reduction in CO₂ emissions by 45-50% relative to 2030 pre-NDP projections, an increase in the number of Electric Vehicles, and investment in sustainable mobility projects that will assist in increasing the modal shift towards sustainable modes of transport. *Section 10(2)(n) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)* requires development plans to include objectives relating to the promotion of sustainable settlement and transportation strategies including measures to reduce energy costs, greenhouse gas emissions, and adaptation to climate change.

This Plan recognises the need to transition to a low carbon society and will support the implementation of any plans or programmes that will assist in meeting national targets on greenhouse gas reductions from transport related activities.

In achieving these targets consideration will be given to the 'Avoid-Shift-Improve Framework' which seeks to deliver sustainable transport systems by:

- i) Improving the efficiency of the transport system e.g. through more integrated land use and transport planning;
- ii) Improving trip efficiency by promoting a modal shift from private cars to non-motorised transport (i.e. walking and cycling) or public transport; and
- iii) Improve vehicle and fuel efficiency and promote innovation in transport infrastructure.

The Council will work closely with government agencies and in particular the National Transport Authority (NTA) in improving public transport infrastructure and services and walking and cycling infrastructure in the County through a range of measures including:

- i) The preparation of Local Transport Plans for the larger settlements of Drogheda (in conjunction with Meath County Council) and Dundalk, which will seek to improve the integration of land use and transportation;
- ii) The implementation of the Rural Mobility Plan 'Connecting Ireland' which is currently under preparation by the NTA, which seeks to improve mobility in rural areas and provide better connections between villages and towns by an linking the settlements through an enhanced regional network; and

- iii) The progression and implementation of sustainable mobility projects funded by the NTA. It is anticipated that by taking a co-ordinated approach at a local and national level to invest in such transport infrastructure and services there will be a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport which will assist in reducing greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with national policy and targets.

Policy Objective	
MOV 2	To support the implementation of the 'National Climate Action Plan' 2019, and any subsequent plans, and in particular the measures included that will assist in achieving the target of CO ₂ emissions reduction by 2030 in the transport sector as set out in Section 10.2 of the 'Climate Action Plan'.

7.5 INTEGRATION OF LAND USE AND TRANSPORT PLANNING

The relationship between land use and transportation revolves around where people live, where people work or go to school and the transport infrastructure available for people to bring them to their destinations.

Recognising this relationship is critical in creating an environment where there is a reduced reliance on the private car and where travel habits can be influenced to encourage more sustainable modes of transport.

National and Regional Policy recognises the benefits that integrated land use and transportation planning can offer, in improving accessibility and connectivity within neighbourhoods and urban areas, increasing economic productivity and facilitating balanced and healthy lifestyles.

These benefits are closely aligned to the compact growth and urban regeneration policies in the NPF and RSES and can be delivered by promoting higher density developments, particularly along public transport corridors; improving connectivity and prioritising walking and cycling within and between neighbourhoods; and supporting mixed use neighbourhoods where there are employment opportunities and community facilities close to where people live.

Chapter 8 of the RSES 'Connectivity' provides a set of Guiding Principles for the Integration of Land Use and Transport. The 'Guiding Principles' applicable to Louth have formed the basis of the Integrated Land Use and Transport Strategy for this Plan.

This Plan will support the continuation of a co-ordinated and integrated approach to land use and transport planning in the County that will provide people with an opportunity to alter their travel behaviour away from the private car to more sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling and public transport.

7.5.1 Local Transport Plans

As part of its strategy for supporting the integration of land uses and transportation, the RSES includes policy objectives requiring the preparation of Local Transport Plans in selected settlements. Drogheda and Dundalk are included in the list of selected settlements.

These Local Transport Plans will include an analysis of transport flows, movements and investment priorities that will support more sustainable modes of transport.

The Local Transport Plans that will be prepared for Drogheda and Dundalk will inform the Urban Area Plan / Local Area Plan policy and growth strategy for both settlements.

Policy Objective

MOV 3	To facilitate the integration of land use with sustainable transportation infrastructure in accordance with the requirements of RPO 8.1 in the RSES by supporting the creation of a critical mass of population and employment related development that would maximise investment in public transport infrastructure and create compact, sustainable settlements.
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Policy Objective

MOV 4	To promote sustainable higher density development along public transport corridors.
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Policy Objective

MOV 5	To prepare a Local Transport Plan in consultation with the National Transport Authority, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and other relevant stakeholders ¹ for Drogheda and Dundalk as part of the preparation of the Urban Area Plans / Local Area Plans for these settlements. The preparation of these Plans will be based on the guidance note on Area Based Transport Assessments published by the NTA/TII in 2019 and these Plans will be subject to screening for SEA and AA and full assessments will be undertaken if appropriate.
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¹ Including Meath County Council as part of the Joint Plan for Drogheda

Policy Objective

MOV 6	To support the implementation of the Dundalk Local Transport Plan and the projects identified therein. ^{1 2}
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7.6 SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

As people have become more mobile the carbon footprint of transport activities has grown, with the private car becoming the dominant mode of transport.

It is recognised that a greater emphasis will have to be placed on more sustainable modes of transport in order to mitigate against the potential impacts of climate change and to remove congestion from our towns and villages and make them more attractive places to explore. This will require stronger support and increased priority for cycling, walking and public transport infrastructure and a greater uptake in the use of cleaner, low emission vehicles.

The shift towards more sustainable modes of transport will only occur if people are provided with affordable, accessible and cleaner alternatives.

¹ The detail associated with new transport infrastructure projects referred to in this Plan and associated Local Transport Plan, including locations and any associated mapping, that are not already permitted or provided for by existing plans/programmes/etc. is non-binding and indicative. Such new projects shall be subject to feasibility assessment, taking into account the environmental constraints and the objectives of the Plan relating to mobility. A Corridor and Route Selection Process will be undertaken for such projects where appropriate. Proposed interventions will be required to demonstrate that they are consistent with all relevant legislative requirements.

² The provision of active travel routes within new developments may act as ‘greenways’ if they contribute to effective connectivity to the proposed greenway network.

The following sections of this Chapter will set out the various sustainable modes of transport in Louth. Prior to reviewing these modes of transport an analysis of current travel patterns in the County will be carried out.

Policy Objective

MOV 7	To promote and support the principles of universal design ensuring that all environments are inclusive and are accessible to and can be used to the fullest extent possible by all users regardless of age, ability or disability.
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7.6.1 Current Travel Patterns in the County

A summary of the travel patterns by students and workers in the County in 2016 is as follows:

- The car is the dominant mode of transport with over 63% of workers driving to work and over 50% of students travelling to school or college by car (47% get a lift and 3.5% drive);
- Walking is the most popular sustainable mode of transport with almost 26% of students and 10.5% of workers travelling to work, school, or college on foot;
- There are a high proportion of students utilising available bus services at 21.5%;
- There are fewer workers travelling by bus (4.5%) than there are car sharing (6.1%);
- The number of students and workers travelling by train is low (0.5% for students and 1.9% for workers); and

- Only 1.4% of students and 2.2% of workers cycle to college or work. This data confirms and highlights the challenges facing the County with regard to promoting a modal shift away from the car.

This Plan will strive to reduce the reliance on the private car by promoting and facilitating more sustainable modes of transport and supporting development in locations that would reduce the need to travel.

At a settlement level the breakdown of the modal share follows a similar pattern to that at a County level. It is notable however that there is a higher dependence on the private car in the smaller settlements than the larger settlements.

In Drogheda and Dundalk there are higher levels of people walking to school and work, whilst in Dundalk the number of people cycling to work is higher than that of the other settlements and County. In Drogheda the number of workers travelling by train is over twice that in Dundalk.

This is all an indication that in larger urban areas where there are more opportunities to walk and cycle and there are more public transport services available, more people will choose to use these modes of transport.

Fig. 7.1: Modal Share for Students and Workers in Louth in 2016 (Source: Census 2016)

Chart A – Students at school or college

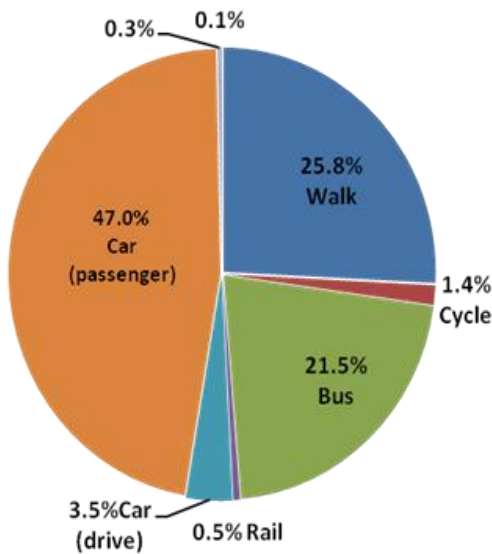


Chart B – Persons at work

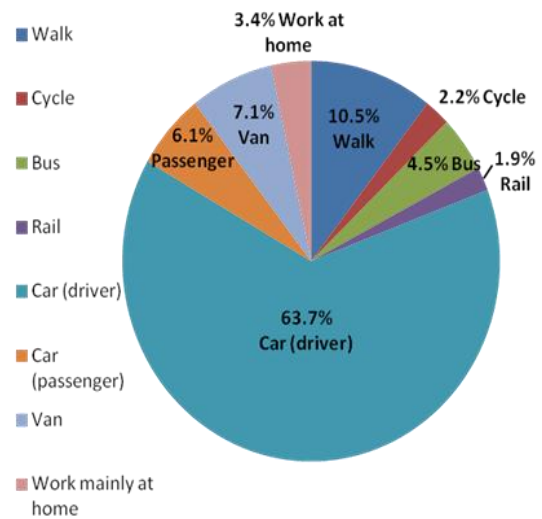


Table 7.1 Modal Share for Students and Workers in Higher Tier Settlements 2016

Mode of Transport	Work				School or College			
	Drogheda	Dundalk	Ardee	Dunleer	Drogheda	Dundalk	Ardee	Dunleer
Walk	16.1%	13.1%	11.5%	10.25%	34.7%	33.6%	33.3%	38.3%
Cycle	1.6%	5.2%	1.7%	0.3%	1.2%	2.6%	1.1%	0.5%
Bus	5.7%	5.9%	4.3%	4%	22%	16.2%	15.3%	12.9%
Rail	3.8%	1.4%	0.2%	0.7%	1.3%	0.2%	0.1%	0%
Car (Driver)	60.4%	60%	64.9%	69.4%	2.4%	3.2%	5.1%	5%
Car (Passenger)	6.2%	8.1%	5.2%	4.8%	38.2%	43.9%	44.1%	42.8%
Van	4.3%	4.3%	9.7%	6.9%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.5%
Work mainly at home	1.9%	2.1%	2.6%	3.7%	0.05%	0.1%	0.8%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 7.2: Modal Share for Students and Workers in Self-Sustaining Towns 2016

Mode of transport	Work					School or College				
	C'ford	C'head	C'bgm	Tmfkn	Tulyln	C'ford	C'head	C'bgm	Tmfkn	Tulyln
Walk	19.7%	3.3%	6.8%	2%	1.7%	20%	34.3%	15.3%	16%	37%
Cycle	1.3%	0.5%	1%	1%	0%	1.3%	1.2%	5.6%	0%	0%
Bus	2.6%	4.5%	5%	2.3%	6.4%	13.2%	32.2%	36.2%	26.6%	26.1%
Rail	2.6%	3.5%	0.8%	3%	1.7%	0%	0.5%	0.5%	0.8%	0%
Car (driver)	60.7%	69.4%	69%	76.4%	77.6%	1.5%	2.8%	2%	2.8%	2.2%
Car (passenger)	2.2%	4.5%	6.4%	3.9%	4.7%	63.8%	29%	39.8%	53%	33.8%
Van	4.9%	11.5%	8%	5.9%	5.8%	0.2%	0%	0.6%	0.8%	0.7%
Work mainly at home	6%	2.8%	3%	5.5%	2.1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 7.3: Modal Share for Students and Workers in Small Towns and Villages 2016

Mode of transport	Work			School or College		
	Annagassan	Collon	Dromiskin	Annagassan	Collon	Dromiskin
Walk	2.5%	3.7%	4%	0%	36.3%	16.6%
Cycle	0%	0.9%	0.2%	0%	0.4%	1.4%
Bus	1.3%	7.1%	1.8%	17.9%	34.2%	31.1%
Rail	1.3%	1.2%	0.4%	0%	0%	0.4%
Car (driver)	73.4%	76.3%	72.9%	3.6%	3.3%	5%
Car (passenger)	8.3%	4.9%	6.8%	78.5%	25.8%	45.5%
Van	7.2%	5.2%	11.1%	0%	0%	0%
Work mainly at home	6%	0.7%	2.8%	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 7.4: Modal Share for Students and Workers in Small Towns and Villages 2016

Mode of transport	Work				School of College			
	Knkbdge	Lth Vge	Omth	Tlnstn	Knkbdge	Lth Vge	Omth	Tlnstn
Walk	1%	5.9%	11.9%	3%	26.5%	26%	16%	27.7%
Cycle	0%	0%	0%	0.4%	0%	0.6%	0.8%	0%
Bus	2.1%	3%	1.6%	4.8%	26.5%	34.3%	27.5%	32.4%
Rail	1.7%	1.5%	0.5%	0%	0.6%	0.6%	0%	0%
Car (driver)	75.7%	70.3%	66.8%	70.4%	6.4%	1.7%	3.8%	0.7%
Car (passenger)	6.3%	4.8%	5.2%	9.2%	40%	37%	51.9%	38.5%
Van	10.1%	12.6%	9.8%	10%	0%	0%	0%	0.7%
Work mainly at home	3.1%	1.9%	4.2%	2.2%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

No data available for Baltray

Policy Objective

MOV 8	To support a modal shift away from the private car to more sustainable forms of transport, such as public transport, cycling and walking and the attainment of any national targets relating to modal change published during the life of this Plan.
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Policy Objective	
MOV 9	To set modal share targets in each new Local Area Plan in cooperation with the NTA, CARO, EMRA and other relevant stakeholders in accordance with any relevant Guidelines or targets published during the life of this Plan.

Policy Objective	
MOV 10	To support investment in sustainable transport infrastructure that will make walking, cycling or public transport more attractive and appealing, and facilitates accessibility for all, regardless of age, physical mobility, or social disadvantage.

7.6.2 Electric Vehicles

Electric Vehicles (EV) include both Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV) and Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEV).

They are low emission vehicles (LEVs) which use low carbon technologies, emit low emissions and offer a more sustainable transport solution.

These clean and energy-efficient vehicles will have an important role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the transport sector and improving air quality and reducing noise pollution in towns and villages.

There are various charging units for EV's around the County. This Plan promotes the further installation and expansion of charging points for these vehicles.

Policy Objective	
MOV 11	To facilitate the switch to Electric Vehicles through the roll-out of additional electric charging points at appropriate locations within the County in association with relevant agencies and stakeholders.

Policy Objective	
MOV 12	To facilitate the provision of electricity charging infrastructure for electric vehicles both on street and in new developments in accordance with car parking standards prescribed in the Development Management Guidelines in Chapter 13.

7.6.3 Compressed Natural Gas (CNG)

CNG is natural gas that has been compressed to fit into a vehicle's tank and is particularly suitable for use in commercial vehicles.

The development of CNG Infrastructure will enable fuel switching from diesel to CNG for heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and buses. CNG is an established technology that is used in many countries around the world. CNG produces less carbon emissions than diesel and leads to improved air quality with 95% less particulate matter, 70% less Nitrogen Oxide, and 80% less Sulphur Dioxide³. CNG vehicles can be run on 100% renewable gas. This is a clean, renewable and carbon neutral fuel, produced using Anaerobic Digestion (AD) technology from existing waste streams and a variety of sustainable biomass sources, including grass, animal waste, crop residues and food waste.

Infrastructure development for CNG is already underway in Ireland, with 14 fast fill CNG stations being installed across the Core TEN-T road network via a project

³ <https://www.ngva.eu/policy-priorities/air-quality/>

called the Causeway Study that is supported by the European Commission through the CEF Transport Fund and the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU).

The Plan will support the use of gas in transport and will facilitate the provision of any refuelling infrastructure in appropriate locations in the County, subject to the requirements set out in Section 13.14.5 ‘Service Stations and Retailing’ and any other relevant planning and environmental considerations.

7.6.4 Car Sharing

Car sharing (also known as car clubs) is based on the principle of a car being available for use when needed. There are a number of companies providing this service across the country.

It is a useful option for people who don’t want to own a car. There are a number of potential benefits to car sharing including reduced congestion, and if there is sufficient uptake/demand for the service, a reduction in car parking requirements.

This Plan recognises the potential role of car sharing in reducing the number of vehicles and associated congestion in the larger urban areas in the County.

Policy Objective	
MOV 13	To facilitate provision of car sharing infrastructure and facilities in appropriately located areas in the County.

7.6.5 Public Transport

Public transport provision in Louth consists of bus, rail and rural transport services in addition to taxi services. There are local services that provide connections between settlements within the County and regional services that provide connections to the wider region, in particular to Dublin.

The provision of public transport is the responsibility of the National Transport Authority (NTA).

The Council will continue to engage with the NTA in seeking to improve transport services and infrastructure in the County that will improve connectivity and assist in addressing issues of exclusion and isolation, particularly in the more rural areas in the County.

Policy Objective	
MOV 14	To engage and work closely with the relevant transport authorities and operators, both public and private in facilitating and securing improvements to and the expansion of public transport infrastructure and services in the County.

Policy Objective	
MOV 15	To encourage a modal shift from use of the private car towards more sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling, and public transport.

7.6.6 Rail Services

The northern rail line travels through Louth, with two stations in the County located in Drogheda and Dundalk. Services operating from these stations include commuter services to Dublin and the Dublin-Belfast Enterprise (Inter-City) service.



At present there are constraints on this line due to the limitation on train paths travelling through the city centre section between Connolly Station and Grand Canal Dock. The City Centre Resignalling Project (CCRP) will provide additional capacity, with the number of train paths increasing from 12 to 20 per hour in each direction.

This project also involves the modernisation of signalling equipment with computer based interlocking to replace the existing relay based signalling systems. The CCRP is to be executed in 4 phases, with 2 phases due for completion in Q4 of 2020.

The DART Expansion Programme, which will include the provision of DART services between Dublin City Centre and Drogheda, will increase capacity and the frequency of services and create a more efficient transport system.

This is a major infrastructure project that will be delivered on a phased basis.

Works required on the northern line include signalling and telecommunications infrastructure, electrification and power supply, bridge reconstructions to facilitate corridor widening, the upgrade of maintenance depots, provision of higher capacity turnback at Drogheda and additional rolling stock.

This project has been included in the National Development Plan 2018-2027.

At the time of writing (Q2 of 2020) the procurement of consultants was ongoing. It is anticipated planning and design works will commence in Q1 of 2021.

Irish Rail, in association with the Northern Ireland public transport provider Translink, published a Strategic Plan in June 2018 outlining proposals for improvements to the Dublin-Belfast Enterprise Service.⁴

⁴ [Better Connecting Dublin and Belfast Enterprise Strategic Development Plan June 2018](#)

This includes the introduction of an hourly service between the two cities, infrastructure enhancements to improve journey times and connections and electrification through investment in infrastructure and rolling stock. The NPF and RSES support improvements to this service.⁵

Whilst the Dublin-Belfast rail line passes through Dunleer there is no rail service in the town. It is recognised that Dunleer offers the potential for an improved rail service for the mid and south Louth areas.

Policy Objective

MOV 16	To support the completion of the City Centre Resignalling Project (CCRP) which will provide additional capacity in the rail network.
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Policy Objective

MOV 17	To support the DART Expansion Programme including new infrastructure and the electrification of existing lines along the northern rail line to Drogheda.
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Policy Objective

MOV 18	To support the provision of a higher speed rail service between Dublin and Belfast and any associated infrastructure investment and works required.
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⁵ [Regional Policy Objective 8.12 supports the delivery of a higher speed rail service between Belfast, Dublin, and Cork](#)

Policy Objective

MOV 19	To secure, in co-operation with Iarnród Éireann and the National Transport Authority, improved rail services for the mid and south Louth areas and in particular to seek to examine the feasibility of re-opening the rail station in Dunleer and providing additional new rail stations for north Drogheda, south Dundalk and the mid-Louth area.
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7.6.7 Rail based Park and Ride Facilities

There are existing Park and Ride facilities at Drogheda and Dundalk Rail Stations. Both facilities are well utilised. As part of the preparation of the Local Transport Plans for Drogheda and Dundalk the requirement for additional capacity will be reviewed.

Policy Objective

MOV 20	To support the improvement of rail based park and ride facilities in Drogheda and Dundalk, including the provision of car charging facilities.
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7.6.8 Bus Services

Bus services in Louth are operated by public and private operators and provide a range of services that provide connections to settlements within the County and the wider region.

There are frequent express coaches and stopping services from Drogheda and Dundalk to Dublin in addition to frequent services linking these towns.

There are also cross border services to Newry where there are opportunities for onward connections.

Ardee is also well served by public and private express bus services to Dublin with services originating in Monaghan, Donegal and Derry travelling through the town. Within Drogheda and Dundalk there are local services that provide links between the town centre and surrounding area. In 2019 there were significant enhancements between Drogheda and Laytown with a high frequency service provided along the route.

Policy Objective

MOV 21	To support the National Transport Authority (NTA) and other stakeholders and community groups in improving bus services and infrastructure in the County.
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Policy Objective

MOV 22	To engage with the National Transport Authority (NTA) and other stakeholders and community groups in encouraging bus operators to provide improved services in and through the County.
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7.6.9 Park and Ride and Park and Share Facilities

As part of the strategy of promoting more sustainable modes of transport and reducing emissions from the transport sector there are opportunities for the development of bus based Park and Ride and car based Park and Share facilities in the County.

The bus based facilities would make public transport more accessible whilst the car based facilities could be utilised by commuters who car pool. Such facilities would reduce traffic congestion and encourage more sustainable modes of transport.

Policy Objective

MOV 23	To work with the National Transport Authority (NTA) and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and any other stakeholders in identifying suitable locations for and the development of bus based park and ride and car based park and share facilities in the County.
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7.6.10 Rural Transport

The National Transport Authority has responsibility for the provision of rural transport services across the country. This is delivered through the [‘Local Link’ Programme](#) and has two main funding streams from the Department of Transport and the Department of Social Protection (Free Travel Pass Scheme).

The objective of this scheme is to reduce rural isolation and social exclusion and integrate rural transport services with other public transport services i.e. scheduled bus and rail services.



The [‘Local Link’ Service](#) for Louth, Meath, and Fingal is currently operated by Flexibus. This includes door to door and scheduled bus services in towns, villages and rural areas in the County. The service is community based with the services developed on a partnership approach between various community organisations, the Local Authority and Agencies responsible for accessible transport provision. Journey types provided by this service include work, shopping, social, education and health related journeys.

This Plan recognises the importance of rural transport in providing a social and economic connection between towns and villages, with the Local Link service having a pivotal role in revitalising rural towns and villages that will improve access to employment, public services and social networks that will support a high quality of life in rural areas.

Public transport in rural areas also has an important role in supporting and developing tourism in towns and villages through the provision of services that can enable and facilitate visitor accessibility.

As part of the national policy of enhancing connectivity and improving sustainable mobility, the National Transport Authority is preparing a Rural Mobility Plan ‘Connecting Ireland’, which will seek to increase connectivity and improve mobility in rural areas. The implementation of this Plan would have social and economic benefits to the rural areas of the County by bringing people closer together and making the rural towns and villages more attractive for economic investment. This Plan is due to be published towards the end of 2021. The Council is working closely with the NTA on the preparation of this Plan and improving connectivity and promoting the use of public transport in rural areas.

Policy Objective

MOV 24	To continue to support the ‘Local Link’ rural transport service and to encourage operators to improve the service to meet the social and economic needs of the rural communities in the County.
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Policy Objective

MOV 25	To support and work with the National Transport Authority in finalising and implementing the Rural Mobility Plan 'Connecting Ireland' in order to improve public transport connectivity and sustainable mobility between towns and villages in the County.
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In addition, cycling and walking require less road space than the private car and the requirement to find a car parking space is also removed.

By implementing the principles of good urban design through the arrangement of land uses and the creation of well connected streets and neighbourhoods between residential areas, neighbourhood centres, schools, and places of work, people will be encouraged to walk and cycle more.

The Council has supported the development of walking and cycling infrastructure throughout the County to encourage a modal shift away from a dependence on the private car.

This Plan will continue to support and facilitate the provision of this infrastructure that would provide a more comfortable and attractive environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

7.6.11 Cycling and Walking

Cycling and walking are a healthy and environmentally friendly mode of transport that have individual and community benefits, which encourage an active lifestyle, improve fitness levels and facilitate greater social interaction between people.

They are also an efficient mode of transport, particularly in urban areas where there are congestion issues.

Policy Objective

MOV 26	To support the retrospective provision of walking and cycling infrastructure in existing settlements, where feasible, to achieve growth in sustainable mobility and strengthen and improve the walking and cycling network.
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Policy Objective

MOV 27	To support permeability and connectivity throughout the Plan area that will improve connections within existing and between existing and and new neighbourhoods. This includes vehicular and/or active travel connections between developed and undeveloped lands. Where such a connection would traverse an area of open space it will only be facilitated where the functionality of the open space will not be undermined. The principle of 'Filtered Permeability' will also be considered where appropriate/feasible.
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Policy Objective

MOV 28	To improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity to schools, third level colleges, major employment areas, bus and rail stations, and other public transport hubs.
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Policy Objective

MOV 29	To review the feasibility and implementation (where deemed necessary) of the 30km/h zones in Drogheda and Dundalk in creating attractive, low speed environments.
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Policy Objective

MOV 30 To promote walking and cycling as a safe, convenient, healthy, efficient, and environmentally friendly mode of transport for all age groups.

Policy Objective

MOV 31 To continue to work and engage with the National Transport Authority, the Department of Transport, any other agencies in developing a modern network of walking and cycling infrastructure in the County.

Policy Objective

MOV 32 To provide, where possible traffic free pedestrian and cyclist routes particularly where such routes would provide a more direct, safer, and more attractive alternative to the car.

Policy Objective

MOV 33 To encourage the provision of secure bicycle parking facilities in town and villages in the County.

Policy Objective

MOV 34 To plan and develop a Louth Coastal Way along the east coast subject to appropriate environmental considerations.

7.6.12 Greenways

Greenways are off-road trails dedicated to non-motorised transport including walking and cycling. They are a valuable recreational amenity that promote an active and healthy lifestyle and are also an important tourism asset.

The Council will support improvements in the links between greenways, town centres and existing walking and cycling infrastructure and is committed to continuing to develop and invest in the network of Greenways in the County as follows:

Great Eastern Greenway: The Great Eastern Greenway currently runs from Carlingford to Omeath along the shore of Carlingford Lough.



It was constructed largely along the former railway line. It is proposed to extend this greenway firstly to Newry and then to Dundalk incorporating Greenore and Templetown which would increase the length of the trail to approx. 55km and significantly improve the recreational infrastructure and cross border links along this unique coastline.

Louth Coastal Way: As part of the Louth Coastal defence project, it is envisaged that elements of the Dundalk to Blackrock Greenway and Baltray to Drogheda Greenway will be incorporated into these defence schemes. These sections of Greenway will form part of the National Cycle Network (Corridor 5, Dundalk to Wexford).

Dundalk – Sligo Greenway: The Dundalk – Sligo Greenway will form part of the National Cycle Network (Corridor 1). The route will run westwards linking Dundalk to Sligo town, extending some 176km through five counties.

The Council will work in cooperation with Monaghan County Council to progress the Dundalk to Castleblayney section of the Greenway.

Boyne Greenway: Phase 1 of the Boyne Greenway runs from Dominic’s Park on the south bank of the River Boyne to the Battle of the Boyne Visitor Centre at Oldbridge via the existing ramparts.

The greenway is a valuable amenity in the southern part of the County. Future phases of this Greenway include an extension from Drogheda to Mornington. It is anticipated that the extended route will pass through Drogheda and follow the southern edge of the Boyne east of the town and out to Mornington.

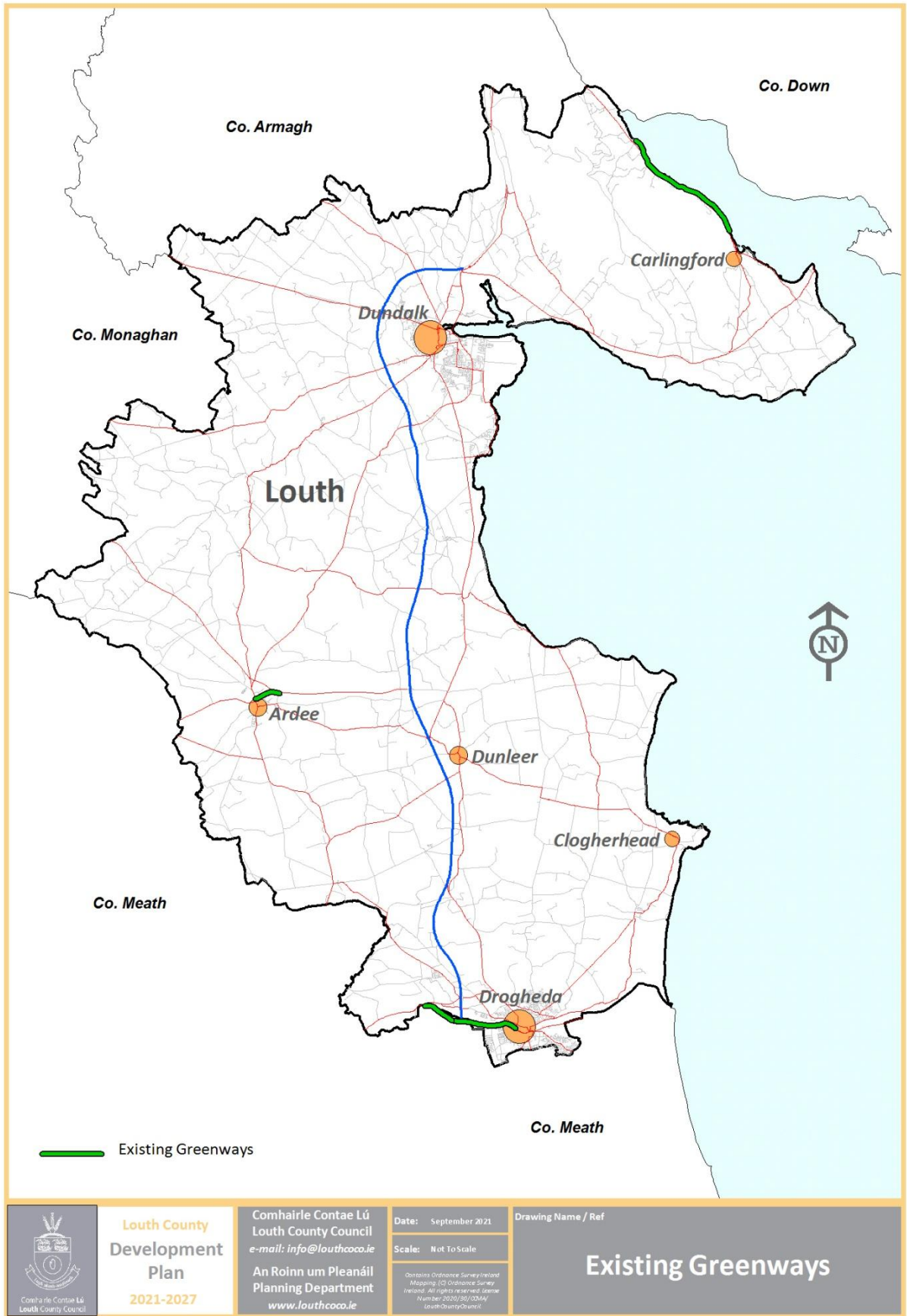
This Greenway will form part of the National Cycle Network (Corridor 5 and 15) linking from the East Coast Trail at Drogheda to the cross country EuroVelo Route 2 from Galway to Dublin south-west of Trim.

The Council will continue to work in conjunction with Meath County Council in progressing the Drogheda to Mornington section of the Boyne Greenway.

Further information on Greenways can be found in Section 6.3.1 of Chapter 6.



Map 7.1: Existing Greenways



Policy Objective

MOV 35	To continue the development of a network of Greenways in the County in accordance with the Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways.
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Policy Objective

MOV 36	To continue to engage and work closely with Meath County Council and other stakeholders in the development and expansion of the Boyne Greenway.
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Policy Objective

MOV 37	To continue to engage and work closely with Newry, Mourne, and Down District Council and other stakeholders in the development and expansion of the Great Eastern Greenway from Carlingford to Newry.
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Policy Objective

MOV 38	To continue to engage and work closely with the OPW and other stakeholders in the development of the Coastal Greenway from Dundalk to Blackrock including the delivery of such infrastructure on both sides of the Castletown River, and Baltray to Drogheda through the Louth Coastal Defence Projects.
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Policy Objective

MOV 39	To continue to engage and work closely with Monaghan County Council and other stakeholders in the development of the Dundalk to Castleblayney section of the Dundalk - Sligo Greenway.
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Policy Objective

MOV 40	To engage in the Compulsory Purchase Order process when required in order to facilitate the timely delivery of the Greenway and Cycleway Projects in the County.
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7.6.13 Green Schools Travel Programme

The Green Schools Programme is an environmental education programme that provides opportunities for schools to take environmental issues and apply them to the day to day operations of the school. The Programme is operated by An Taisce in partnership with Local Authorities with support also provided by Government Departments.

The Green School Travel Programme aims to increase the number of students walking, cycling, carpooling or using public transport to school. It highlights to students the benefits of sustainable transport to the environment whilst also increasing physical activity levels.

Policy Objective

MOV 41	To support the Green School Programme and any other sustainable transport initiative developed by schools across the County through the provision of dedicated walking and cycling infrastructure in close proximity to schools, subject to the availability of funding.
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7.7 PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

The Council is committed to improving public spaces in the towns and villages throughout the County in order to make the urban environment a more attractive place to live, work and do business.



A quality and attractive public realm can also make settlements more attractive locations and venues for hosting and facilitating festivals and events.

These public realm improvements form part of the integrated approach to land use and transport planning in the County.

Examples of recently completed projects include the Clanbrassil Street and St. Nicholas Quarter Public Realm Rejuvenation Scheme in the centre of Dundalk.

These projects will give greater priority to walking and cycling and support the regeneration of town centre areas. Table 7.5 provides details of the public realm projects to be progressed during the life of the Plan.

7.7.1 Accessibility for All

This Plan recognises the importance of creating an external environment that is inclusive and accessible to all that can be used to the fullest extent possible by all users regardless of age, ability or disability. In this regard the design and construction of external areas shall incorporate best practice principles of universal design as far as is practicable to ensure appropriate access is provided for all users.

Table 7.5: Public Realm Projects to be progressed during this Plan

Location	Project
Drogheda	West Gate Vision Urban Regeneration Scheme
	St. Peter's Hill
	St. Laurence's Gate
Dundalk	St. Nicholas Quarter Regeneration Scheme
	Long Walk Urban Regeneration Scheme
	Navy Bank Open Space
	Dundalk Library Quarter
Ardee	Ardee 2040 Rural Regeneration Project
Dunleer	Town Centre Regeneration Project
Carlingford	Carlingford Village Rural Regeneration Project
Omeath	Omeath Village Rural Regeneration Project
Annagassan	Main Street Regeneration
Collon	Village Hall Project

Policy Objective

MOV 42	To support the design and implementation of public realm projects in town and villages throughout the County that will make these locations more attractive and liveable spaces which are climate resilient and facilitates accessibility for all, regardless of age, physical mobility, or social disadvantage.
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7.8 ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

There is a well-developed network of roads in Louth that are a fundamental part of the economic competitiveness of the County facilitating the efficient movement of goods and people. The strategic location of the County along the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor means the County benefits from access to the motorway network in addition to national primary and secondary routes, which provide connectivity with Dublin, Belfast and key service centres in the region and the border area. Below the national roads there is a hierarchy of regional and local roads that connect the towns and villages. These roads have an important role in supporting local economic activity and social and community development.

7.8.1 Motorway

The M1 Motorway, which travels through Louth is a strategically important road link that connects Dublin and Belfast. The M1 intersects with the M50 orbital motorway, which connects the national primary routes which radiate from the M50 to all parts of the country. The M1 forms part of the EU TEN-T Core Network and is an important strategic link within and through the county and region, including providing critical international connectivity and regional accessibility. There are two online motorway service stations in Louth serving northbound and southbound traffic.

The ‘Castlebellingham Services’ are located between Junctions 15 and 16 off the M1. The service areas provide a range of amenities and services including fuel, food, retail, picnic areas, rest areas, rest rooms and showers and provide an important service and function for the travelling public.

7.8.2 Development at Motorway Interchanges

The M1 has the potential to act as a major stimulant of economic development and activity by providing high quality road infrastructure and connectivity to air and sea ports and thereby to domestic and international markets. Motorway interchanges are strategic locations much sought after by developers due to the desirability and benefits of having immediate access to the primary road network. However, uncontrolled and poorly regulated development at interchanges can often be problematic. This can be due to such development being solely dependent on road transport, the possibility of traffic congestion on national routes, the impact on rural landscapes and environments and the costs involved in the provision of other infrastructure such as piped services, electricity and gas. Such development can also detract investment from existing towns and settlements that are much in need of renewal and development. In order to maximise the benefits accruing to the County from the motorway and to regulate development in a sustainable and appropriate manner along its route, the following policies will be applied.

Policy Objective

MOV 43	To promote and facilitate development at urban-related* interchanges in accordance with the zoning provisions for Drogheda and Dundalk as set out on the zoning maps for Drogheda and Dundalk in the Louth County Development Plan and any subsequent Local Area Plans adopted for these settlements. ⁶ Any large scale development proposal in proximity to these interchanges will be required to prepare a Traffic and Transport Assessment in accordance with the requirements of the '2014 Transport and Traffic Assessment Guidelines'.
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Policy Objective

MOV 44	To resist development at rural-related**motorway interchanges. ⁷
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7.8.3 National Roads

The National Primary Roads that travel through Louth are the N2 Dublin-Derry road, N1/A1 Dundalk-Belfast road, and the N33, which runs from the Charleville Interchange (Junction 14 of the M1) to Ardee. These roads are critical in supporting more balanced regional development as they provide a vital connection to the north-west of the country.

The National Secondary Roads in the County are the N51 Drogheda-Slane, the N52 Dundalk-Nenagh (via Ardee and Kells) and the N53 Dundalk-Castleblayney. These roads provide an important level of connectivity between the Regional Growth Centres of Drogheda and Dundalk and key service centres in the wider region and beyond.

Policy Objective

MOV 45	To protect the strategic transport function of national roads, including motorways through the implementation of the 'Spatial Planning and National Roads – Guidelines for Planning Authorities' and any subsequent guidelines.
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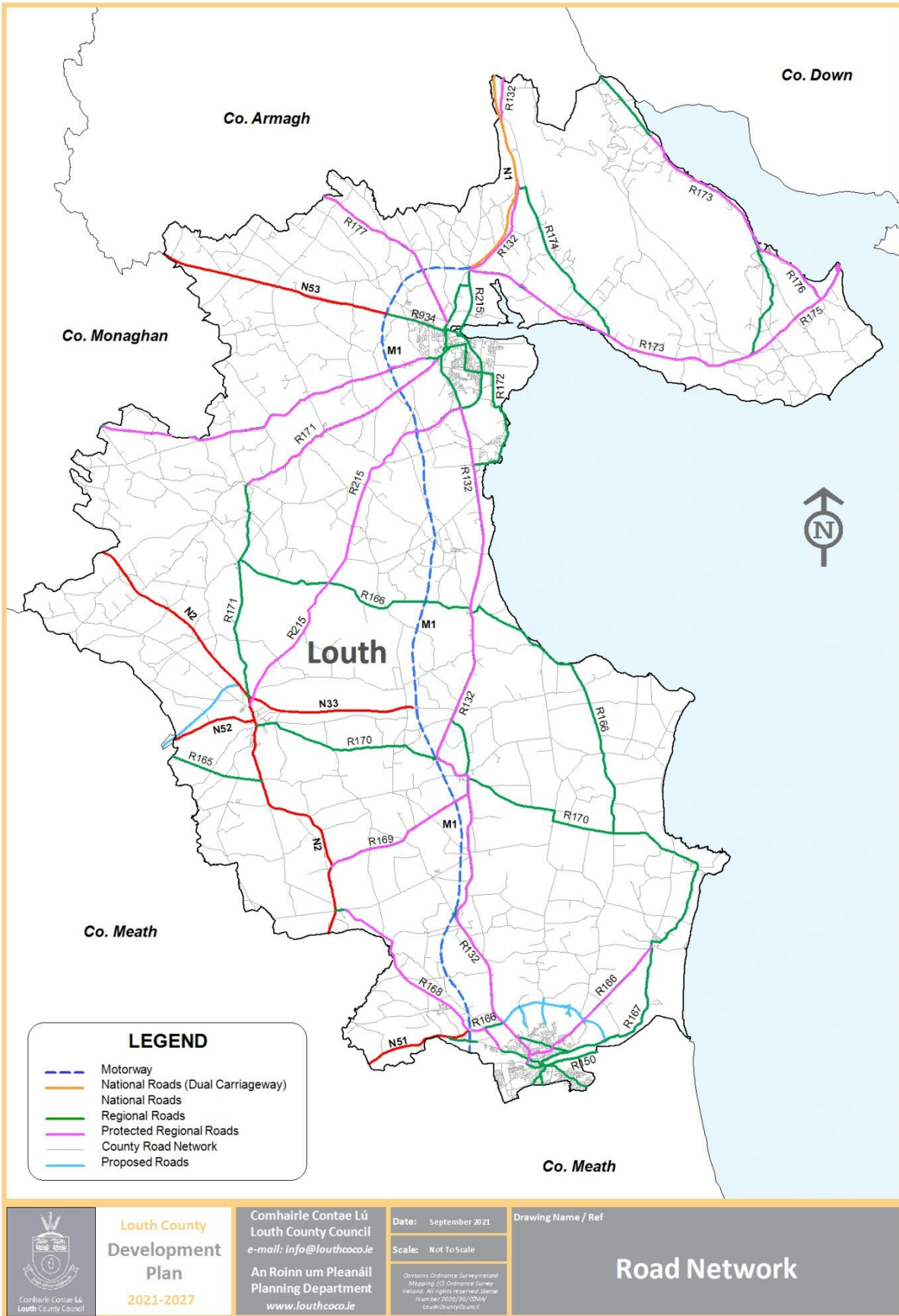
Policy Objective

MOV 46	Support the improvement, and protection, of the EU TEN-T network and the strategic function of the Dublin to Belfast road network.
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⁶ *Urban-related interchanges are Ballymascanlon (Junction 18), Castleblayney Road (Junction 17), Dundalk South interchange (Junction 16) and Drogheda North (Junction 10).

⁷ ** Rural-related interchanges are Carrickarnon (Junction 20), Drumleck (Junction 15), Charleville (Junction 14), Mooremount (Junction 13) and Woodlands (Junction 12).

Map 7.2: Road Network



7.8.4 Regional and Local Roads

Regional and local roads provide access and links to the smaller towns, villages and dispersed rural communities in the County. These roads provide an important function in supporting local jobs and services. They are a vital social and economic link to communities, services and jobs in towns and villages within the County and to neighbouring counties in the wider region including Cavan, Monaghan and Meath.

A high quality and well maintained regional and local road network is critical in ensuring settlements in the County are accessible and well connected in order to maintain economic competitiveness and facilitate opportunities for economic investment in settlements identified for growth.

7.8.5 Local Road - Sustainable Transport and Environmental Improvement Projects

Details of road improvement and maintenance projects for consideration during the lifetime of the plan, including environmental improvements and walking and cycling infrastructures are set out in Table 7.6 below. This list of projects will be periodically reviewed during the plan period and is subject to change.

Table 7.6: Local Road, Sustainable Transport and Environmental Improvement Projects

Location	Proposed Works
St. Laurence's Gate, Drogheda	Environmental Improvement Works
Rathmullan Road /Bridge of Peace	Junction Upgrade
Newtown Road, Drogheda	Upgrading
St. Dominic's Bridge, Drogheda	Bridge Refurbishment
The Obelisk Bridge, Drogheda	Bridge Refurbishment
Leonard's Cross / Collon Road, Drogheda	New Junction
Rathmullan Road Drogheda	Road widening to Meath boundary
Drogheda Cycleways	Implementation of elements of the Drogheda Cycle Strategy
Mornington to Drogheda Greenway along the R150	New Greenway Project, Meath Co. Council
Leonards Cross, Drogheda	Road realignment
Old Slane Road, Drogheda	Widening to facilitate footpaths
L2307 Greenhills to Newfoundwell, Drogheda	Widening to provide general improvements and footpaths to facilitate development
Smarter Travel Projects, Dundalk	Refurbishment
Carrick Road / McEntee Avenue, Dundalk	Junction Upgrade Works
Great Eastern Greenway, Cooley Peninsula	Extensions to Existing Greenway

Location	Proposed Works
Dundalk to Blackrock Greenway	Greenways incorporated as part of Louth Coast Defence Project
Mount Avenue Road upgrade	Combination of upgrade works and new road
Connector road from Hoey's Lane to Tom Bellew Avenue, Dundalk	New Local Street Construction
Removal of Hill Street Bridge and new Junction layout with the Millennium Road, Dundalk	Demolition of existing rail bridge and reconstruction of existing carriageway and new junction works
Sean O'Carroll Street, Ardee	Road Widening and footpaths

Policy Objective

MOV 47	To support investment and improvements to the public road infrastructure in the County including bridges and other ancillary structures, taking into account both car and non-car modes of transport and road safety requirements.
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Policy Objective

MOV 48	To support improvements and upgrades to the road network in the County in accordance with the projects set out in Table 7.6 and any other project identified by the Council or included in any future updated Road Works Programme, subject to the availability of funding.
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Policy Objective

MOV 49	To require the preparation of Transport and Traffic Assessments for new developments in accordance with the requirements set out in the TII Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines.
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7.9 STRATEGIC ROAD PROJECTS

Whilst this Plan promotes and supports a modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport it also recognises that improvements to the existing road infrastructure in the County are required in order to improve connectivity and

support more balanced economic development. This will allow settlements to fulfil their economic potential. The progression of the projects detailed in Tables 7.7 and 7.8, will be supported in the Plan.

Table 7.7: National Road Projects

National Road Projects
N2 Ardee to Castleblayney
N52 Ardee Bypass
N53 Hacksballscross to Rasan
General improvements to the N2, N51, N52 and N53

Table 7.8: Key Road and Bridge Projects

Key Road and Bridge Projects	
Location	Project
Drogheda	Port Access Northern Cross Route (PANCR)
	Bridge at Greenhills to link the Southern Environs of Drogheda with the PANCR
	Bridge Crossing east of South Quay to east of Merchant's Quay
	Bridge Crossing from the PANCR to tie in with the southern M1 link in Meath
Dundalk	East-West Link Cavan to Dundalk
	R215 (Old N52) Realignment Mapastown Bridge
	Link Road from L-3161 Marlbog Roundabout to L-7163 Chapel Road Roundabout
	Link Road from R177 Armagh Rd to R215 old Dublin Road
	Link Road from R934 Castleblayney Road to R178 Carrickmacross Road
	Link Road from R178 Carrickmacross Rd to R171 Old Ardee Road
	Local Road linking R132 through Belfield Estate to the Marlbog Roundabout
	Link Road from upgraded Mount Avenue Road to the proposed Road linking the Castleblayney Road to the Carrickmacross Road
	Marlbog Road roundabout link to Old Golf Links Road, Blackrock
Ardee	Link from N2 Rathgory to Clanmore
Omeath	Narrow Water Bridge

Policy Objective**MOV 50**

To support major road and bridge improvement projects set out in Tables 7.7 and 7.8 and any other project identified by the Council or included in the Roads Programme by reserving the corridors, as and when they are identified, of any such proposed routes, free of development, which would interfere with the provision of such proposals.

7.9.1 N2 Upgrade Ardee to Castleblayney

This project is part of a long term upgrade of the N2 which will improve links between Dublin and the north-west of the country. This scheme will upgrade approximately 32 kilometres of road between Ardee and Castleblayney. In addition to improving the N2/A5 route this scheme will also provide more efficient access to additional strategic routes including the N33/M1, N52 and N53. This project is being progressed in conjunction with Monaghan County Council and Transport Infrastructure Ireland. The scheme has been included in the National Development Plan 2018-2027. The RSES also recognises the benefits of the project and includes support for its progression and delivery in Regional Policy Objective 8.10. At the time of writing the project was at the stage of identifying route options.

Policy Objective

MOV 51	To support the progression of the long term upgrade of the N2; and in particular to protect the preferred route corridor of the upgrade road scheme between Ardee and Castleblayney, and prohibit development that could prejudice its future delivery; and to continue to work closely with Transport Infrastructure Ireland, Monaghan County Council, property owners, and residents affected, and other stakeholders in the delivery of this project.
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Policy Objective

MOV 52	To seek to examine, in consultation with Transport Infrastructure Ireland, the feasibility of progressing and delivering the N2 bypass of Ardee Town.
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7.9.2 N52 Ardee Bypass

The need for a bypass of Ardee has been identified and included in national, regional and local policy for a number of years. However, due to funding constraints the project was not progressed.

The scheme was reactivated in 2018 with a detailed review ongoing at the time of writing. The scheme has been included in the NDP. The RSES also recognises the benefits of the project and includes support for its progression and delivery in Regional Policy Objective 8.10.

Policy Objective

MOV 53	To support the progression of the N52 Ardee Bypass and to continue to work closely with Transport Infrastructure Ireland and Meath County Council and other stakeholders in the delivery of this project.
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7.9.3 The Drogheda Port Access Northern Cross Route (PANCR)

The Drogheda PANCR is a critical piece of enabling infrastructure that would provide a direct link from the M1 Motorway to Drogheda Port, thus removing heavy port related traffic from the town centre. It would also release strategically located employment and residential lands in the northern part of the town. The provision of this link road is a fundamental part of the long term growth strategy of the town. Regional Policy Objective 4.12 in the RSES supports the development of this road.

Policy Objective

MOV 54	To support the progression of the Drogheda Port Access Northern Cross Route and to continue to engage with stakeholders and local landowners in securing the funding to deliver the project.
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7.9.4 Dundalk Link Roads

These link road projects relate to the provision of a new road network linking neighbourhoods or industrial/business areas to the main access roads in and out of Dundalk. These roads will include, where appropriate, provision for priority bus lanes, cycle paths and pedestrian facilities. The delivery of these link roads will be developer driven and are likely to be constructed in sections.

The design of these roads shall be informed through detailed modelling and analysis of existing and projected traffic flows/volumes, trip generations associated with the development of the lands in the vicinity of the proposed roads and the impacts of these developments on the existing road networks in the context of the general growth and development of the town.

Policy Objective

MOV 55	To support the progression of the identified Link Roads required in Dundalk and to continue to engage with stakeholders and local landowners in securing the funding to design and deliver these links.
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7.9.5 The Narrow Water Bridge Project

The Narrow Water Bridge Project is a cross border project that would provide a new connection across the Newry River north of Carlingford Lough. It is identified as a project of historic and symbolic significance that would support local economic and tourism development on both sides of the border. The *National Development Plan 2018-2027* includes support for this project.

Policy Objective

MOV 56	To support the progression of the Narrow Water Bridge Project in association with Newry, Mourne, and Down District Council and key stakeholders and funding agencies subject to the requirements of any environmental assessments.
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7.9.6 The Dundalk – Sligo Road

This road project is considered a key component of inter-regional accessibility and will result in the incremental upgrade of a specified route linking the regional growth centres of Dundalk and Sligo. The improvement of this route over the short and medium term will provide an important strategic cross border transport corridor between the north eastern and north western regions where rail infrastructure is absent. The road project is supported by RPO 6.10 of the Northern and Western Regional Assembly RSES.

Policy Objective

MOV 57	To support the progression of the Dundalk-Sligo Road and to continue to work closely with Transport Infrastructure Ireland and other stakeholders in the delivery of this project.
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7.10 PROTECTED NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ROUTES

In order to maintain the efficiency and functionality of the national and regional road network it is important that the number of new accesses and the intensification of existing accesses are restricted. Such restrictions protect investments in the road network and ensure these roads continue to provide an important function in maintaining economic competitiveness. These restrictions also minimise further risks to road safety as new entrances can result in additional stopping and turning movements, which give rise to the potential for additional traffic accidents. Table 7.9 provides details of the restrictions to accesses on National Roads and Table 7.10 provides details of the restrictions to accesses on Regional Roads in the County. Map 7.2 provides details of the location of these roads in the County.

Table 7.9: Restrictions and Exemptions to Access on National Roads

Road Category	Restrictions	Exemptions
Motorways	No direct access	No exemptions
Dual Carriageways	No direct access	No exemptions
Single Carriageways (National Primary and National Secondary Roads)	No new access or intensification of existing access	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where the new access would eliminate a traffic hazard. 2. Where a new access is required for any major employment generating activity including tourism or a development of national or regional importance. 3. Extensions to an authorised use where the additional traffic would not result in the creation of a traffic hazard. 4. Where a new access is to a fixed natural resource of national or regional importance where no other suitable vehicular access can be provided.

Table 7.10: Restrictions and Exemptions on Protected Regional Roads

Route	Restrictions	Exemptions
R173/R175 Dundalk-Greenore	No new access or intensification of existing access	1. Where the new access would eliminate a traffic hazard.
R173/R176 Greenore-Carlingford-Omeath (Cornamucklagh)		2. Where a new access is required for any major development, including tourism developments, of national, regional, or local importance where the additional traffic generated would not result in the creation of a traffic hazard.
R178 Dundalk-Carrickmacross (Essexford)		3. Extensions to an authorised use where the additional traffic generated would not result in the creation of a traffic hazard.
R171 Dundalk-Louth Village		4. Where a new access is to a fixed natural resource of national or regional importance where no other suitable vehicular access can be provided.
R169 Dunleer-Collon		5. Dwellings required to satisfy the housing needs of persons who have lived for not less than 18 years in the area, where no other site is available off a minor road, and where the existing entrance servicing the family home is used. Where the entrance to the existing family home cannot be used, consideration will be given for one new entrance only onto the adjoining protected regional route. A condition confining occupancy to a family member for a minimum of 7 years will be attached to any permission granted under this exemption.
R168 Drogheda-Collon		
R166 Drogheda-Termonfeckin		
R132 Dundalk-Drogheda		
R132 Dundalk-Feede		
R132 Carrickarnon-Border		
R177 Dundalk-Border		
Port Access Northern Cross Road ⁸		
R215 Jun 16 to Ardee (Former N52)		
R215 from R132 Junction to Junction 16		

⁸ Sections of this road may be constructed during the life of this Plan subject to the availability of funding.

Policy Objective

MOV 58	To safeguard the capacity and safety of the National and Regional Road network by restricting further access onto National Primary, National Secondary, and Protected Regional Roads in accordance with the details set out in Tables 7.9 and 7.10.
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Policy Objective

MOV 59	To restrict development proposals for residential or other use within 100 metres of either the M1 Motorway or N1/A1 National route in all but exceptional circumstances. The exceptional circumstances are where the development is an infill development and located along an established building line. Any development shall be required to comply with the requirements of the <i>Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines (2012)</i> and Policy Objectives ENV 6 and ENV 7 and the costs of implementing any mitigation measures concerned shall be borne by the developer.
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7.11 ROADSIDE SIGNAGE

The primary purpose of signage along roads (other than road traffic and directional signs erected by the Road Authority) is to advertise a business or product or provide directions to a particular location.

Directional signs provide the public with directions to a particular location and can be associated with a business, service, tourist facility or sports club.

These signs are intended to complement, but not replace, pre-planning of a journey and the use of verbal instructions, maps and road atlases.

Advertising signs are designed to market a particular business, product or service.

Whilst it is acknowledged that advertising is a necessary part of operating a business, the Council has a responsibility in protecting visual amenities and avoiding the creation of any traffic hazards associated with signage.

Depending on the location, there are 2 consent processes for advertising and signage as follows:

- Planning permission is required for any signage or advertisement located on private property. It should be noted certain advertisements are exempted under Schedule 2 Part 2 of the *Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)*; and
- The erection of advertising signs on, over or along a public road is licensable under section 254 of the *Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)*. These licences are granted on a temporary basis.

The nature and extent of signage allowable will be determined by its scale, requirement, location and the classification of the road on which it would be located. Signage on National Roads will be strictly controlled and will generally be only permitted in accordance with the provisions set out in section 3.8 of the *'Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines' (2012)* and the TII Policy on the *'Provision of Tourism and Leisure Signage on National Roads' (2011)*.

Further details in relation to Road Signage can be found on the Louth Policy on Non-Regulatory Road Signage, which can be accessed by clicking on this [link](#).

Policy Objective	
MOV 60	Signage on National Roads will be strictly controlled and will generally only be permitted in accordance with the provisions set out in the ' <i>Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines</i> ' (2012) and the TII Policy on the ' <i>Provision of Tourism and Leisure Signage on National Roads</i> ' (2011).

Policy Objective	
MOV 61	To strictly control advertising along or adjacent to public roads in accordance with the Louth Local Authorities Policy on Non-Regulatory Road Signage in order to ensure traffic safety, avoid clutter, and preserve visual amenity.

7.12 PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

A Public Right of Way is a person’s right of passage along a road or path, even if the road or path isn’t in public ownership. They facilitate enjoyment of the landscape and are important for tourism and recreation.

Section 10(2)(o) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires development plans to include an objective for the preservation of public rights of way that provide access to the seashore, mountains, lakeshores, river banks or other places of natural beauty or recreational utility. The Council is not aware of any existing Public Rights of Way but will review this during the course of the Plan and it will be an objective to prepare a map identifying the Public Rights of Way in the County where they exist.

Policy Objective	
MOV 62	To identify and preserve existing accesses and public rights of way to recreational areas including the coast, mountains, riverbanks and other places of natural beauty and recreational utility.

Policy Objective	
MOV 63	To commence the process of mapping and listing public rights of way in the County during the lifetime of this Plan under the provisions of Section 14 of the <i>Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)</i> .