

LOUTH COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2027

CARLINGFORD

Volume 2
Self-Sustaining Towns

1 CARLINGFORD

1.1 TOWN CONTEXT/CHARACTER

Carlingford is a coastal settlement located approximately 28km from Dundalk, 6km from Omeath and 10 km from the border with Northern Ireland.

It is a medieval town renowned for its rich and varied natural and built heritage. Much of Carlingford’s charm derives from its geographical setting within an Area of High Scenic Quality and adjacent to an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is located on the shores of Carlingford Lough with the Cooley Mountains providing a backdrop. Carlingford’s medieval layout with its historic landmark buildings are an integral part of its character. It is Carlingford’s setting and historic built fabric which make the town unique.

The northern approach to the town is characterised by attractive open views of the Mourne Mountains and Carlingford Lough to the east and rugged mountainous land with stone ditches to the west. The narrowing of the public road on approach to King Johns Bridge and views of King Johns Castle provide a pleasant sense of arrival. On approach from the south east there are scenic views of Carlingford Lough and the Mourne Mountains.

Carlingford has a broad offering of shops, restaurants, hotels, and pubs mainly concentrated around the square and adjoining streets.

Table 1.1: Settlement Overview

Settlement Overview	
Position in Settlement Hierarchy	Self-Sustaining Town
2016 Population	1,445
2011 Population	1,045
Percentage Change 2011-2016	38.3 %
Housing Stock 2016	840
Residential Units granted since 2015	4
Housing Allocation 2021-2027	41 units
Population Projection 2027	1,645
Education Facilities	St. Oliver's National School
Community Facilities	St. Michael's Hall Foy Centre
Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)	Carlingford ACA
Protected Structures	54
Zone of Archaeological Potential (ZAP)	Yes
Views and Prospects	Yes
Adjacent to European Sites	Carlingford Lough SPA Carlingford Shore SAC Carlingford Mountain SAC

Settlement Overview	
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	<p>Flood Zones A & B at various locations throughout the settlement and along streams flowing into the settlement.</p> <p>Manage flood risk and development in accordance with the Neagh Bann Flood Risk Management Plan and in line with Policy Objectives as set out in Vol. 1 Chapter 10: Utilities</p> <p>LCC has been allocated funding to implement the Carlingford and Greenore Flood Relief scheme and is working with OPW on their delivery which will be in the lifetime of this Plan.</p>
Water Services Infrastructure/Capacity	<p>Carlingford is located within the Cavan Hill and North Louth Water Resource Zone which had capacity available at the time of writing.</p> <p>There was available capacity in the Carlingford Waste Water Treatment Plant at the time of writing.</p>

1.2 OPPORTUNITIES

- Development of the town as a sustainable tourism destination that will benefit both residents and visitors.
- Improved legibility between the harbour and core medieval area would strengthen the urban fabric of the town.
- Encourage sensitive restoration and reuse of historic and vernacular buildings to ensure the preservation of the towns unique characteristics.
- Enhance streets and spaces within the historic walled townscape connecting to the Market Square.
- Address the issue of congestion through the development of a traffic management plan and identification of an area for parking within walking distance of the town centre.

1.3 LAND USE STRATEGY

The land use strategy for Carlingford seeks to build on the strengths of the town and create a unique sense of place for both local residents and visitors.

This will be achieved through the sensitive treatment of infill development and the conservation of important key buildings particularly within the Architectural Conservation Area. Opportunities to strengthen the tourism potential of the town will continue to be supported.

1.4 SETTLEMENT AND HOUSING

Carlingford experienced significant residential development in the 1990's and early 2000's mainly to the south-east and east of the town centre.

In recent times, residential development has been limited, with the focus being on redevelopment and infill rather than greenfield development.

This Plan will continue to promote a policy of consolidation within the existing footprint of the town.

The 2016 census revealed that on census night, 14.1% of dwelling units were vacant. This was the highest vacancy rate for any settlement in the County and is an indication of the quantity of second/holiday homes located with the town.

1.5 ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT

Carlingford is identified as a Level 4 retail centre in the County Retail Hierarchy. Commercial, retail, and retail service units are mainly located in the vicinity of Market Square and include local shops, pubs, restaurants and cafes, pharmacies, butchers, art and craft shops, and fast food outlets.

Carlingford has a Jobs:Workforce ratio of 0.81 which is the highest ratio of all Self-Sustaining Towns and is also higher than the average for the County (0:71). The tourism and hospitality sector is one of the primary employment sectors in the town.

It is also recognised that certain occupations lend themselves to employees working remotely.

The provision of co-working facilities and digital hubs in Carlingford would facilitate flexible working arrangements meeting the needs of businesses and enabling employees to have a local base.

To encourage residents and visitors to spend locally, the Council will encourage use of smart technology to promote and support local businesses an example of which is the 'Village Pod' which is an App that allows electronic payment to local businesses.

1.6 TOURISM

The attractive setting, medieval layout, and rich built heritage make Carlingford an important tourist destination in the North East.

In addition to the historic streets and natural landscapes, the town is also popular for local events, festivals, and outdoor pursuits. Improvements to the Táin Way, the Slieve Foye Loop and Maeve's Gap Walk have expanded walking and hiking opportunities in the vicinity.

This Plan shall continue to support tourism development by capitalising upon existing heritage assets through the promotion of the heritage trails.

In the longer term, it is envisaged that The Great Eastern Greenway will eventually extend from Newry to Dundalk via Templetown and Greenore. The location of the town along the Carlingford to Omeath section of the Greenway is an important recreational and tourism asset.

Public realm improvements at the waterfront harbour will provide greater connectivity between the Greenway and the town centre thereby enticing more people to visit its medieval centre. It is anticipated that the completion of the Greenway will increase the number of visitors to the town thus strengthening the role of tourism in the economic development of the town.

The provision of the Carlingford Lough Ferry operating between Greenore and Greencastle has increased the accessibility of Carlingford for tourists from Northern Ireland.

Within the town, there is a wide range of accommodation for individuals and groups including hotels, B&B's, guesthouse and self-catering accommodation. It is recognised that there is a need to manage the provision of tourism accommodation and at the same time protect the amenity of existing residents.

1.7 WATER SERVICES INFRASTRUCTURE

Carlingford is served by the following water services infrastructure:

Water: Carlingford is supplied with water from Cavan Hill and North Louth Water Resource Zone, which had capacity available at the time of writing.

Wastewater: Foul water is treated at Carlingford Wastewater Treatment Plant, which had capacity available at the time of writing.

1.8 MOVEMENT

Carlingford is connected to the coastal villages of Omeath and Greenore by the R176 and R173. The increased popularity of Carlingford as a tourist destination has intensified traffic congestion and car dominance, particularly during peak tourist times.

The development of a Traffic Management Plan has been a long-standing objective of the Council. It is also considered that the provision of a car park within walking distance of the town centre would significantly alleviate traffic congestion. The identification of a suitable location(s) for car parking is ongoing.

These measures will assist in addressing the potential negative perception of Carlingford as becoming over-crowded during peak tourist season.

There are various walking and cycling routes in the vicinity of the town including the Great Eastern Greenway, the Táin Way, Slieve Foye Loop and Maeve's Gap Walk.

Bus Éireann operates a limited number of daily bus services to Dundalk and Newry. The Louth Local Link service provides a bi-weekly service between Carlingford and Dundalk.

1.9 NATURAL HERITAGE

Carlingford is surrounded by a picturesque and attractive landscape. There are two Special Areas of Conservation: Carlingford Shore (2306) and Carlingford Mountain (0453), and one Special Protection Area: Carlingford Lough (4078) in the vicinity.

There are also a number of views, both strategic and local, in and around Carlingford, which are of special amenity value and are considered worthy of protection. Their positions are illustrated on the Composite Map.

The public open space adjacent to the tourist office is identified for public realm enhancement.

In addition to this, Carlingford has a network of tree stands and hedgerows, which are identified as having a special amenity value.

1.10 BUILT HERITAGE

Carlingford is a medieval walled town constructed in the 1300's. The distinctive narrow lanes and streets are characteristic of its medieval layout that continues to form part of the urban fabric of the town today. One of the challenges in the development of the town is conserving and managing the heritage assets whilst enabling the town to realise its tourism potential. The historical importance of the town is evident by the identification of an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), a Zone of Archaeological Potential (ZAP), 54 Protected Structures, 2 National Monuments, and a significant number of non-listed vernacular buildings. Table 1.2 lists the Protected Structures in Carlingford.

Carlingford's identity is enhanced by Taaffe's Castle, the Mint and fortifications such as the Tholsel and King John's Castle together with the medieval street pattern. The Holy Trinity Church and the remains of the Dominican Friary represent the settlement's ecclesiastical past.

Carlingford also has an important railway heritage dating back to the existence of the Dundalk, Newry and Greenore railway.

The utilisation of lands to the north of King John's Castle and restoration of the Mill and development of a public park adjacent, would provide additional open space as well as improving pedestrian permeability.

Table 1.2: Protected Structures in Carlingford

ID Number	Name of Structure
LHS 005-006	King Johns Castle c1210
LHS 005-007	Taaffe's Castle late C16th
LHS 005-008	Former Thatch Cottage c1770
LHS 005-009	O'Hare/Anchor Bar Public House c1830
LHS 005-010	The Mint Tower House C16th
LHS 005-011	Carlingford House, Abbeyview c1800
LHS 005-012	The Tholsel c1450
LHS 005-014	Holy Trinity Heritage Centre (former C of I)1821
LHS 005-015	Ghan House C19th rebuild of 1727 house
LHS 005-016	Dominican Friary (Ruin)
LHS 005-017	Railway Bridge 1872
LHS 005-018	House, Newry St c1870

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ID Number	Name of Structure
LHS 005-019	Allure Hair Studio Newry St c1870
LHS 005-020	Marian House Newry St c1920
LHS 005-021	House, Newry St c1880
LHS 005-022	House, Newry St c1870
LHS 005-023	House, Newry St c1870
LHS 005-024	House, Newry St c1870
LHS 005-026	Ceol na Mara, Newry St – House c1920
LHS 005-027	Well, Newry St c1860
LHS 005-028	The Anchorage House, Castlehill c1860 Newry St c1870
LHS 005-029	House, Back Lane c1820
LHS 005-030	Castle View, House, Back Lane c1820
LHS 005-031	House, Back Lane c1860
LHS 005-032	The Spout , Back Lane Well c 1830
LHS 005-033	Walls, River Lane c1800
LHS 005-035	Mountain View – House c1860
LHS 005-037	Kingfisher Bistro, Warehouse, Dundalk St c1820
LHS 005-039	House, Dundalk St c1800
LHS 005-040	House, Dundalk St c1800
LHS 005-041	House, Dundalk St c1800
LHS 005-042	House, Dundalk St c1910
LHS 005-043	House, Dundalk St c1910
LHS 005-044	The Abbey Bar, Dundalk St c.1890
LHS 005-045	Mill Race, Dundalk St. c.1650
LHS 005-046	St Michael’s R.C Church 1870
LHS 005-047	Post Box c1880
LHS 005-048	Parochial House c1920
LHS 005-049	Tourist Office former Railway Station 1876
LHS 005-050	Pier/Jetty c1850
LHS 005-051	Pier/Jetty c1840
LHS 005-052	House, Tholsel St c1760
LHS 005-053	Boathouse c1870
LHS 005-054	House, Newry St c1750
LHS 005-055	House, Newry St c1750
LHS 005-056	Carlingford Courthouse/Library, Newry St c1935
LHS 005-057	Carlingford Presbyterian Church, Newry St 1869
LHS 005-058	St Michaels Hall, Newry St 1925
LHS 005-059	Carlingford Garda Station, Newry St 1848
LHS 005-061	House, Tholsel St c1780

ID Number	Name of Structure
LHS 005-062	McArdles Boutique, Market St. c1780
LHS 005-063	Workers House c1780
LHS 005-064	Railway Workers Home c1870
LHS 005-071	Railway Workers Home, Ghan Road c1870

1.11 SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Carlingford benefits from a broad range of community facilities including St. Michael's Hall, the Foy Centre, a Church, national school, health centre, library, post office, credit union, Garda station, sailing club and adventure centre.

There is a play park located in the heart of the town, the upgrade of which is supported in this Plan. Other recreational amenities located outside the boundary of the town include Carlingford Marina, Slieve Foye Forest and the Cooley Mountains.

1.12 URBAN DESIGN AND PUBLIC REALM

The Town and Village Renewal Scheme is a funding mechanism designed to rejuvenate rural towns and villages throughout Ireland. Projects eligible under this scheme include environmental improvements and public realm projects such as, upgrades to civic spaces and investment in street furniture, footpaths, and cycle ways. This Plan will support any funding applications under this scheme or similar schemes that would enhance the public realm, built environment, and environmental quality of Carlingford.

The Waterfront Harbour and associated public space is one of the key meeting/arrival points in Carlingford.

Improvements to the Waterfront and harbour spaces, the tennis court, town green, parking and play areas will provide legible entry spaces into the historic core thus improving connectivity between these spaces, benefiting both residents and visitors.

The development of a traffic management scheme in conjunction with enhanced public realm will allow for greater pedestrian priority and animation of the streets.

It is recognised that there is a need to provide a cohesive signage and orientation plan for heritage, tourism and greenway access and to develop a plan for accommodation and management of casual traders in Carlingford medieval town.

1.13 POLICY OBJECTIVES

The Policy Objectives set out overleaf are in addition to those included in the Written Statement in Volume 1 of the Plan.

To avoid repetition Policy Objectives have only been restated where they have particular relevance to the settlement.

These should, therefore, be read in conjunction with the Policy Objectives and Development Standards and Guidance set out in Volume 1 of the Plan.

1.13.1 Settlement and Housing

Policy Objective

CAR 1	To support the role of Carlingford as a local service centre and tourist destination by facilitating development that will contribute to the character and structure of the town, and complement and enhance the quality of the town's attractive built and natural environment.
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Policy Objective

CAR 2	To secure the implementation of the Core Strategy of the Plan, in so far as is practicable, by ensuring the housing allocation for Carlingford is not exceeded.
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Policy Objective

CAR 3	To support and encourage residential development on under-utilised land and/or vacant lands including 'infill' and 'brownfield' sites, subject to a high standard of design and layout being achieved.
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Policy Objective

CAR 4	To ensure that the amenities of existing residents are considered and protected, particularly in the design, configuration, and operation of any tourism related development.
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1.13.2 Economy and Employment

Policy Objective

CAR 5	To ensure that the town centre is the priority location for new commercial, retail and mixed use developments thereby creating opportunities to live, work, and shop within the town and reduce the need to travel by private car.
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Policy Objective

CAR 6	To encourage the return of vacant buildings in the town core to uses which complement the existing scale and character of the town.
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Policy Objective

CAR 7	To support the provision of co-working facilities and digital hubs.
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Policy Objective

CAR 8	To support the development of a 'Village Pod' app.
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1.13.3 Tourism

Policy Objective

CAR 9	To seek to support and develop Carlingford as a sustainable tourism hub.
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Policy Objective

CAR 10	To work in conjunction with adjoining authorities including Newry, Mourne and Down District Council to extend and design new walking and cycling routes, such as the Great Eastern Greenway and ensure all proposals include appraisal of environmental impacts and take full account of the potential for negative impacts on European Sites through the process of Habitats Directive Assessment Screening.
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Policy Objective

CAR 11	To support and promote the provision of heritage trails.
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Policy Objective

CAR 12	To support and promote various events and festivals.
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Policy Objective

CAR 13	Develop a plan for accommodation and management of casual traders in Carlingford medieval town.
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1.13.4 Infrastructure

Policy Objective

CAR 14	To identify a suitable location or locations for car parking.
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Policy Objective

CAR 15	To liaise with and support Irish Water to endeavour to provide adequate water services to meet the development needs of Carlingford within the Plan period.
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Policy Objective

CAR 16	To support existing public, community and sporting facilities and the provision of any additional facilities.
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Policy Objective

CAR 17	To support the progression and delivery of social and community projects and the upgrade of the play park, subject to the availability of funding.
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Policy Objective

CAR 18	To avoid land uses or development identified as 'highly vulnerable development' in Table 3.1 of <i>'The Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines (2009)'</i> on lands at risk of flooding and where development in floodplains cannot be avoided, take a sequential approach to flood risk management based on avoidance, reduction and adaptation to the risk.
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1.13.5 Movement

Policy Objective

CAR 19	To seek to alleviate traffic congestion and improve provision for pedestrians through the implementation of an agreed traffic management plan for Carlingford.
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Policy Objective

CAR 20	To promote and facilitate the development of walkways and cycleways at appropriate locations throughout Carlingford.
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Policy Objective

CAR 21	To protect the integrity and scenic quality of existing and future walking and cycling routes and their setting.
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Policy Objective

CAR 22	To promote and facilitate the development and enhancement of footpaths, pedestrian crossing and traffic calming measures which increase pedestrian priority and improve road safety.
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Policy Objective

CAR 23	To facilitate with service providers, an expansion to the existing public transport services including the provision of bus infrastructure within the town.
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1.13.6 Natural and Built Heritage

Policy Objective

CAR 24	To protect Carlingford's Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Area of High Scenic Quality landscape setting.
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Objective

CAR 25	To recognise, protect and enhance the unique characteristics and setting of Carlingford including its archaeological features, Zone of Archaeological Potential, Architectural Conservation Area, and built environment and natural heritage.
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Policy Objective

CAR 26	To protect and preserve the surviving elements of the medieval walled town, including defences, street pattern, building lines and burgage plots.
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Policy Objective

CAR 27	To seek to preserve views identified on the Composite Map from development, which would adversely impact on the character and visual amenity of the landscape.
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Policy Objective

CAR 28	To promote the preservation of significant trees and hedgerows including those identified on the Composite Map and to manage these trees in line with arboricultural best practice.
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1.13.7 Urban Design & Public Realm

Policy Objective

CAR 29	To promote and support the utilisation of available funding and the implementation of any projects or schemes for which funding has been received that would improve and revitalise Carlingford.
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Policy Objective

CAR 30	To preserve the character of the town and its setting by requiring the design, scale and configuration of any proposed development to have regard to the history, heritage and architectural importance of the town.
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Policy Objective

CAR 31	To seek to improve the key area of arrival in Carlingford of the Waterfront Harbour and the public spaces.
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Policy Objective

CAR 32	To seek to enhance the streets and spaces within Carlingford particularly within the medieval walls through public realm improvements, subject to the availability of funding.
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Policy Objective

CAR 33	To develop a cohesive Signage & Orientation Plan for heritage, tourism and Greenways.
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Policy Objective

CAR 34	To seek the restoration of the Mill and Mill Pond and enhance the existing and develop further pedestrian linkages in this area.
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Policy Objective

CAR 35	To facilitate the appropriate utilisation of lands north of King John's Castle for passive recreation that is appropriate to the setting and enjoyment of this iconic historical building.
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LEGEND

Land Category Use

-  A1 Existing Residential
-  A2 New Residential Phase 1
-  B1 Town or Village Centre
-  G1 Community Facilities
-  H1 Open Space
-  I1 Tourism and Leisure
-  J2 Public Infrastructure & Utilities
-  L1 Strategic Reserve
-  SO Spot Objective

Flood Zones

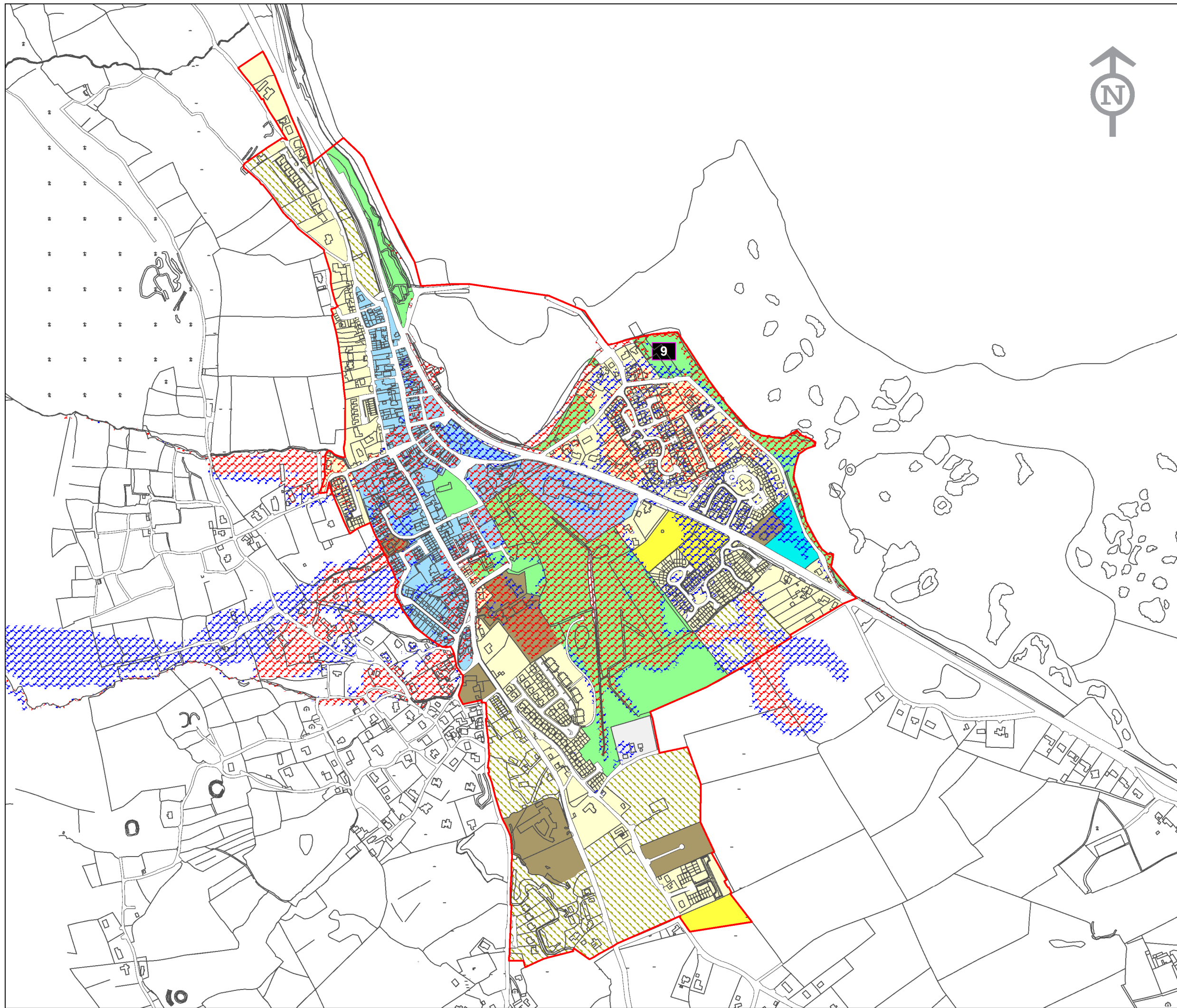
OPW CFRAM Study

-  Flood Zone A
-  Flood Zone B

Osi Vector Mapping









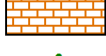



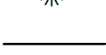



Settlement Boundary



LEGEND

Land Use Category

-  A1 Existing Residential
-  A2 New Residential Phase 1
-  B1 Town or Village Centre
-  G1 Community Facilities
-  H1 Open Space
-  I1 Tourism and Leisure
-  J2 Public Infrastructure & Utilities
-  L1 Strategic Reserve
-  SO Spot Objective

-  Settlement Boundary
-  Special Protection Area (NPWS)
-  Special Area of Conservation (NPWS)
-  Proposed Natural Heritage Area (NPWS)
-  Zone of Archaeological Potential
-  Architectural Conservation Area
-  Potential for Green Infrastructure Enhancement (see Appendix 8)
-  Significant Trees & Hedgerows
-  Stone Walls & Louth Banks
-  Town Walls
-  Sites & Monuments (NMS)
-  Record of Protected Structures
-  Views & Prospects (see Table 8.18)
-  Osi Vector Mapping

Flood Zones for Carlingford are not indicated on this map. They can be viewed on the Carlingford Zoning and Flood Zone map