



Preferred Options Paper

June 2017

Local Development Plan

www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/planning



**Mid & East
Antrim**
Borough Council



Contents

Foreword	7
Have your say	8
Public Consultation and Next Steps	10

1.0 Introduction	12
------------------	----

2.0 Setting the Context	20
-------------------------	----

3.0 District Profile	28
----------------------	----

4.0 Local Development Plan - Vision and Strategic Objectives	34
Vision	36
Strategic Objectives	38
Overarching Principles	41
Developer Contributions (Key Issue 1)	46

5.0 Spatial Growth Strategy	48
Potential Spatial Growth Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy (Key Issues 2–3)	56
Housing Allocation Strategy (Key Issue 4)	62
Economic Development Strategy	70
Retail Strategy (Key Issue 5)	74

6.0 Sustainable Economic Growth	82
Economic Development (Key Issues 6–8)	85
Retailing and Town Centres (Key Issues 9–10)	94
Tourism (Key Issue 11)	104
Minerals Development (Key Issues 12–13)	110

7.0 Building Sustainable Communities	120
Housing (Key Issues 14–15)	124
Open Space, Sport and Leisure (Key Issues 16–19)	136
Health, Education, Community and Cultural Facilities	152

8.0 Transportation, Infrastructure and Connectivity	154
Transportation (Key Issues 20–22)	157
Renewable Energy (Key Issue 23)	168
Flood Risk and Drainage (Key Issue 24)	174
Cemeteries (Key Issue 25)	180
Telecommunications, Power Lines and Overhead Cables (including High Structures)	182
Water and Sewerage Infrastructure	184
Waste Management	185

9.0 Stewardship of our Built Environment and Creating Places	188
Archaeology and Built Heritage (Key Issues 26–28)	190
Place-making and Good Design	201

10.0 Protecting and Accessing our Natural Environment	206
The Mid and East Antrim Coast (Key Issues 29–31)	214
Other Sensitive Landscapes (Key Issues 32–36)	224

11.0 Existing Planning Policy Review	238
Review Process	240
Existing Planning Policy Review Table	242

Abbreviations and Glossary	294
----------------------------	-----

Appendices	306
Appendix A: Supplementary Guidance and Existing Suite of Planning Policy Statements	
Appendix B: Accessibility Maps	
Appendix C: Conservation Area Maps	

List of Maps, Figures and Tables

Maps

Map 3.1	<i>Our Neighbouring Council Areas</i>
Map 3.2	<i>Spatial Context of Mid and East Antrim</i>
Map 5.1	<i>Settlement Hierarchy from existing Area Plans</i>
Map 5.2	<i>Mid and East Antrim Spatial Growth Strategy incorporating proposed Settlement Hierarchy</i>
Map 6.1	<i>Natural and Built Heritage Tourism Assets in Mid and East Antrim</i>
Map 6.2	<i>Areas of Constraint on Mineral Development and Area of Salt Reserve in Mid and East Antrim</i>
Map 6.3	<i>Mineral Resources in Mid and East Antrim</i>
Map 7.1	<i>Open space areas within Mid and East Antrim</i>
Map 7.2	<i>Greenways in Carrickfergus</i>
Map 7.3	<i>Strategic Plan for Greenways</i>
Map 8.1	<i>Key Transport Corridors identified in the RDS in relation to Mid and East Antrim</i>
Map 8.2	<i>Key transportation, infrastructure and connectivity within Mid and East Antrim</i>
Map 8.3	<i>Cumulative impact of wind turbine applications throughout Mid and East Antrim</i>
Map 9.1	<i>Area of Significant Archaeological Interest - Knockdhu</i>
Map 9.2	<i>Areas of Archaeological Potential</i>
Map 10.1	<i>The Southern Glens Coast</i>
Map 10.2	<i>The Islandmagee Peninsula and Gobbins Coast</i>
Map 10.3	<i>The Belfast Lough Shoreline (Mid and East Antrim)</i>
Map 10.4	<i>Lough Beg and the Lower River Bann Corridor</i>

Figures

Figure 1.1	<i>Stages in the Local Development Plan (LDP) Process</i>
Figure 1.2	<i>Structure of our Preferred Options Paper</i>
Figure 6.1	<i>The Sequential Approach</i>
Figure 7.1	<i>Benefits of Open Space</i>
Figure 8.1	<i>Example of how SuDS can be incorporated in new development</i>
Figure 8.2	<i>Waste Hierarchy</i>
Figure 9.1	<i>Model to aid identification of Strategic Focus Areas</i>
Figure 10.1	<i>Ecosystem Services – The Functionality of our Environment</i>

Tables

Table 5.1	<i>RDS Hierarchy of Settlement and Spatial Framework Guidance</i>
Table 5.2	<i>Settlement Hierarchy Classification</i>
Table 5.3	<i>Proposed Settlement Hierarchy for Mid and East Antrim</i>
Table 5.4	<i>Existing Settlement Hierarchy in existing area plans for former Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Larne Boroughs</i>
Table 5.5	<i>Existing Settlement Hierarchy amended with re-classification of existing settlements and addition of new settlements</i>
Table 5.6	<i>Mid and East Antrim Spatial Growth Strategy</i>
Table 5.7	<i>Housing Commitments within existing settlements in Mid and East Antrim as of 31 March 2016</i>
Table 5.8	<i>Employment Land Evaluation Framework</i>
Table 5.9	<i>Proposed Classifications for the Hierarchy of Centres</i>
Table 5.10	<i>Proposed Hierarchy of Centres to align with the proposed settlement hierarchy for Mid and East Antrim but also to include district and local centres</i>
Table 5.11	<i>Proposed Hierarchy of Centres to align with the proposed Settlement Hierarchy for Mid and East Antrim</i>
Table 5.12	<i>Proposed Hierarchy of Centres</i>
Table 6.1	<i>Ballymena Town Centre Health Check</i>
Table 6.2	<i>Larne Town Centre Health Check</i>
Table 6.3	<i>Carrickfergus Town Centre Health Check</i>
Table 6.4	<i>Proposed Categories for Tourism Potential in Mid and East Antrim</i>
Table 8.1	<i>Existing Archaeological and Built Heritage Designations in Mid and East Antrim</i>
Table 10.1	<i>Sites of Nature Conservation Importance within Mid and East Antrim</i>
Table 10.2	<i>Existing Development Plan Landscape and Natural Environment Designations in Mid and East Antrim</i>
Table 11.1	<i>Existing Planning Policies Review Table</i>

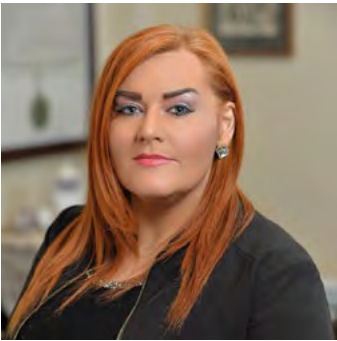
Foreword



Cllr Paul Reid
Mayor of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council



Cllr A.P. Wilson
Chair of Planning Committee



Anne Donaghy
Chief Executive

We are delighted to introduce this Preferred Options Paper as an important early step in the development of the first Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Local Development Plan. This is the first of three main public consultation documents that we will issue during the Plan process and is therefore a significant milestone for the Council in exercising its new planning responsibilities. Public engagement from the earliest stages is at the heart of our new Local Development Plan process and our Statement of Community Involvement published last year provides full details of how people can become involved. We want to encourage as many people as possible to have their say. This Preferred Options Paper seeks to stimulate public debate on a range of planning issues of strategic significance, which are likely to shape the patterns of future development within the Borough through to the year 2030. The main purpose of this consultation is to seek your views on these issues and to make sure they are taken into account in developing the Plan Strategy, which is the next phase of work on the Local Development Plan.

Over the past 12 months there has been considerable consultation completed to assist in the preparation of this document. To focus the debate we have identified Council's Preferred Option for each of the strategic planning issues identified and provided

our reasoning for this. Council's Preferred Option reflects the approach which we consider to be best in promoting sustainable development and economic growth for the Mid and East Antrim Council area. We believe it aligns closely with our recently launched Community Plan - 'Putting People First 2017-2032' - which will ensure the needs of citizens and communities are considered. In most instances, we have also identified a number of alternative options for people to think about in responding to the consultation. This is a unique opportunity for you to shape what our 440 square miles will look like by 2030 through the process of spatial development. Your views are very important to us and we look forward to hearing what you have to say. Through working together, we can deliver on the vision of our Local Development Plan:

"Mid and East Antrim will be shaped by high quality, sustainable and connected places for people to live, work, enjoy, invest and visit, so as to improve the quality of life for all."

Have your say

We welcome your comments on the questions posed in this Preferred Options Paper. There are three types of question, as follows:

- a.** *Questions relating to identified key issues and alternative options*
- b.** *Questions relating to suggested approaches to particular strategic issues*
- c.** *Questions relating to our review of current operational planning policy.*

You can respond (see contact details opposite) by using either:

- The online survey to the **Preferred Options Paper** and **online survey to the Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report** available on the Council's website; or
- The **Preferred Options Paper Response Form** and **Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report Response Form** also available on the Council's website and which can be returned by e-mail or by post.

We welcome comments from everyone with an interest in Mid and East Antrim and its continuing development over the Plan period to 2030. This includes individuals and families who live or work in our Borough. It is also important that we hear from elected representatives and from a wide spectrum of groups who have particular interests in Mid and East Antrim as they will bring a special knowledge to the table and may wish to influence the Local Development Plan so as to address their area of interest. Accordingly, while acknowledging that the list below is not exhaustive, we welcome the engagement of the following groups:

- *Voluntary groups*
- *Residents' groups*
- *Community forums and groups*
- *Environmental groups*
- *Business groups*
- *Developers / landowners*
- *Professional bodies*
- *Academic institutions*

The consultation for the Preferred Options Paper runs from 14 June to 6 September 2017

Contact Details

All responses to this public consultation should be submitted to the Planning team via the following options:

By online survey
consult.midandeantrim.gov.uk

By Email
planning@midandeantrim.gov.uk

By Post:
Local Development Plan Team
County Hall
182 Galgorm Road
Ballymena
BT42 1QF



Public Consultation and Next Steps

Public Consultation

Public Consultation Period

Public consultation on our Preferred Options Paper will commence on **14 June 2017** and run for a period of 12 weeks, ending on **6 September 2017**.

Availability of Preferred Options Paper

A copy of the Preferred Options Paper (POP) and all supporting documentation, including the Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report, is available on the Mid and East Antrim Borough Council website.
www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/pop

The POP and supporting documentation is also available in hard copy or to view during office hours, 9.30am–4.30pm at the following Council offices:

**Planning Department,
County Hall, 182 Galgorm Road,
Ballymena, BT42 1QF**

**The Braid, 1-29 Bridge Street,
Ballymena, BT43 5EJ**

**Carrickfergus Museum and
Civic Centre, 11 Antrim Street,
Carrickfergus, BT38 7DG**

**Smiley Buildings, Victoria Road,
Larne, BT40 1RU**

The POP and supporting documentation can be made available in different formats upon request.

Consultation Events

There will be a series of public meetings and drop-in sessions during the consultation period where exhibition material relating to the POP will be on display and where you will have the opportunity to engage with members of our Development Plan team. Details of these events are set out below:



Next Steps (following the public consultation)

How will we deal with your comments?

This consultation aims:

- To encourage full public participation in this first part of the Local Development Plan process and to stimulate ongoing interest and involvement in the Plan process;
- To promote a sense of ownership of the Local Development Plan; and
- To provide a robust foundation for work on the Plan Strategy, the next stage in the Plan process.

At the end of the **12-week consultation period** your responses and representations will be closely analysed by our Plan team and a Public Consultation Report will be prepared and presented to elected members. While this report will largely deal with the strategic issues raised rather than individual comments, it should be noted that your responses are public documents and may be made available for public scrutiny. All responses will therefore be held on a database used for the preparation of the LDP in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. The Public Consultation Report will be published on our website www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/pop when completed and will be forwarded to the Department for Infrastructure in advance of the

Independent Examination of the Plan Strategy.

Representations should relate to **strategic matters** as these will be used to inform the preparation of the draft Plan Strategy which is strategic in nature. There will be opportunity at Local Policies Plan stage to submit representations of a **site specific nature** and such representations will **only** be considered at that stage.

The Preferred Options Paper is a new feature of the Development Plan process introduced through the Planning (NI) Act 2011. It is intended to give everyone who lives or works in the Council area an opportunity at a very early stage to influence and shape our Local Development Plan for the benefit of everyone.

So, have your say.

Date & Time	Event Type	Location
Thursday 22 June Afternoon (2pm) Evening (7pm)	Public Event	The Braid Ballymena Town Hall 1-29 Bridge St, Ballymena, BT43 5EJ
Thursday 29 June Afternoon (2pm) Evening (7pm)	Public Event	Carrickfergus Town Hall 2B Joymount, Carrickfergus, BT38 7DN
Tuesday 25 July Afternoon (2pm) Evening (7pm)	Public Event	Larne Town Hall 1-9 Upper Cross St, Larne, BT40 1RZ
Wednesday 2 August Evening (7pm-9pm)	Drop-in Session	The Gobbins Visitor Centre Middle Road, Islandmagee, BT40 3SX
Thursday 3 August Evening (7pm – 9pm)	Drop-in Session	Portglenone Community Centre Gortgole Road, Portglenone, Ballymena, BT44 8HT
Wednesday 9 August Evening (7pm-9pm)	Drop-in Session	Glenlough Community Centre 60 Croft Road, Carnlough, Ballymena, BT44 0EX

1.0

Introduction

What is the purpose of the Local Development Plan?

How is the Local Development Plan prepared?

What is the Preferred Options Paper?

Background

Responsibility for planning transferred to local councils from the former Department of Environment (DoE) in April 2015. Since then, we have been working towards the delivery of the Local Development Plan for Mid and East Antrim.

What is the purpose of the Local Development Plan?

The main purpose of the Local Development Plan (LDP) is to inform the general public, statutory authorities, service providers, developers and other interested parties of the policy framework and land use proposals that will guide decisions on planning applications for development in Mid and East Antrim until 2030.

The Plan will aim to provide sufficient land to meet anticipated needs for housing, employment, and services, all supported by adequate infrastructure, over the

Plan period. It will also seek to ensure that all new development is of high quality and located in suitable places - which themselves should be enhanced by the development. A 'suitable place' will generally be a location where the development proposal can help meet economic and social needs without compromising the quality of the environment. This is often referred to as 'sustainable development' which has been defined as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

In seeking to deliver sustainable development, the Plan will serve to implement the regional direction set out in the Regional Development Strategy (RDS), Sustainable Development Strategy and other central government initiatives.





How is the Local Development Plan prepared?

There are four key stages in the LDP process.

Figure 1.1
Stages in the Local Development Plan (LDP) process



Sustainability Appraisal Incorporating SEA

Stages in the Local Development Plan process

Stage 1 Initial Plan Preparation

This initial stage of the process has now been completed and includes the following:

- **Preparation of the evidence base which currently includes 14 topic-based papers**
- **The Housing Monitor report for the period 1 August 2014 to 31 March 2016**
- **Publication of Plan Timetable and Statement of Community Involvement**
- **Informal consultation with Statutory Consultees and Council departments by way of a series of meetings**
- **Informal consultation with Elected Members by way of a series of workshops**
- **Initial stage of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) - incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

This is the approach used to promote sustainable development within the LDP by evaluating the social, environmental and economic effects of all aspects of the Plan throughout its preparation. The Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report (including the Scoping Report) is published in tandem with the POP and the

consultation period is the same.

A baseline Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) has been prepared to accompany the SA Scoping Report. A HRA evaluates the impact of the LDP on Natura 2000 sites and Ramsar sites (these are areas designated and protected for their importance to nature conservation in a European context).

Rural proofing is the process by which all major policies and strategies are assessed to determine whether they have a differential impact on rural areas and, where appropriate, adjustments are made to take account of particular rural circumstances. The SA Scoping Report considers the evidence base for the LDP from the rural perspective and the Interim Report considers how the assessment of various relevant issues in the POP has taken account of the rural dimension.

- **Initial stage of Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)**

This is the approach used in public policy to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people in different groups as set out in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The screening report can be accessed on our website at www.midandeantrim.gov.uk

- **Publication of Preferred Options Paper for public consultation**

The publication of the POP marks the completion of this first phase in the preparation of the LDP. Public consultation on the POP will inform the next stage of the Plan process.

For more information on any of the above reports, please visit www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/planning

Stage 2 Plan Strategy

The Plan Strategy (PS) is the first of two documents, which together will comprise the LDP. The Plan Strategy will set out the LDP vision and strategic planning objectives for the Borough. It will also set out a spatial strategy that will indicate in broad terms, the locations where various types of development (such as housing or retail) will be facilitated. It will also indicate, again in broad terms, the locations which are sensitive or vulnerable to development or certain types of development, where restrictions may apply.

The Plan Strategy will also include a range of strategic

planning policies to properly manage development across the Borough.

Other assessments referred to in Stage 1 will be further applied in Stage 2 and beyond, as more detail emerges about proposals, including how they will be implemented and where they will be located.

The Plan Strategy will be subject to public consultation, independent examination and consideration by the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) before it is adopted by Council.

Once the Plan Strategy is adopted, its strategic planning policies will replace those regional operational policies currently retained within the various topic-based Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) mostly published by the former Department of Environment. It will also replace the corresponding parts of existing development plans relevant to Mid and East Antrim.¹

Stage 3 Local Policies Plan

The Local Policies Plan (LPP) is the second document making up the LDP.

The LPP will be prepared within the framework provided by the adopted

Plan Strategy. It will incorporate site specific proposals and local designations such as land use zonings for housing or economic development, settlement limits for all settlements designated through the Plan Strategy, town centre boundaries and local environmental designations. The LPP will also be subject to public consultation, independent examination and consideration by DfI, before the LDP in its totality is adopted by Council.

Other assessments referred to above will be further applied in Stage 3.

Once the LDP is adopted it will replace existing development plans covering Mid and East Antrim in their entirety.

Stage 4 Monitoring and Review

Once adopted, we will monitor the implementation of our LDP annually to ensure that progress in meeting objectives is being made. An annual monitoring report will be submitted to the Department which will focus on key indicators such as the amount of land zoned for housing and economic development which has been used and housing completions over the year. We will

also undertake regular reviews of the LDP at least every five years from the date of adoption and submit findings to the Department.

The timeframe for key stages and indicative dates is outlined in our Local Development Plan www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/business/planning/local-development-plan/what-is-the-ldp/ timetable agreed between the Council and Central Government

¹ Ballymena Area Plan 1986-2001, Larne Area Plan 2010, Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (relating to former Carrickfergus Borough Council)

What is the Preferred Options Paper?

The Preferred Options Paper (POP) is a new feature of the LDP process specifically brought into effect by Part 3 of The Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

The POP is the first public consultation document to be issued through the LDP. It identifies a range of strategic planning issues that have been identified in the Mid and East Antrim area. Generally, these issues have either emerged from our evidence base or from prior informal consultation with a range of statutory consultees, council officials and Elected Members. In some instances, strategic issues have been identified through normal planning casework in dealing with planning applications. The priorities identified in our Corporate and Community Plans have also helped to define some of these issues.

The main purpose of the POP is to stimulate public debate on these strategic planning issues and will help inform the next stage of Plan Strategy. For most of these issues, the POP will identify a range of alternative options or approaches, as well as setting out our preferred option and the rationale for this. A more detailed explanation of

Alternative Options is included in our Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report. It is important to emphasise that although a preferred option is put forward, no final decision has been made by us at this stage in the process.

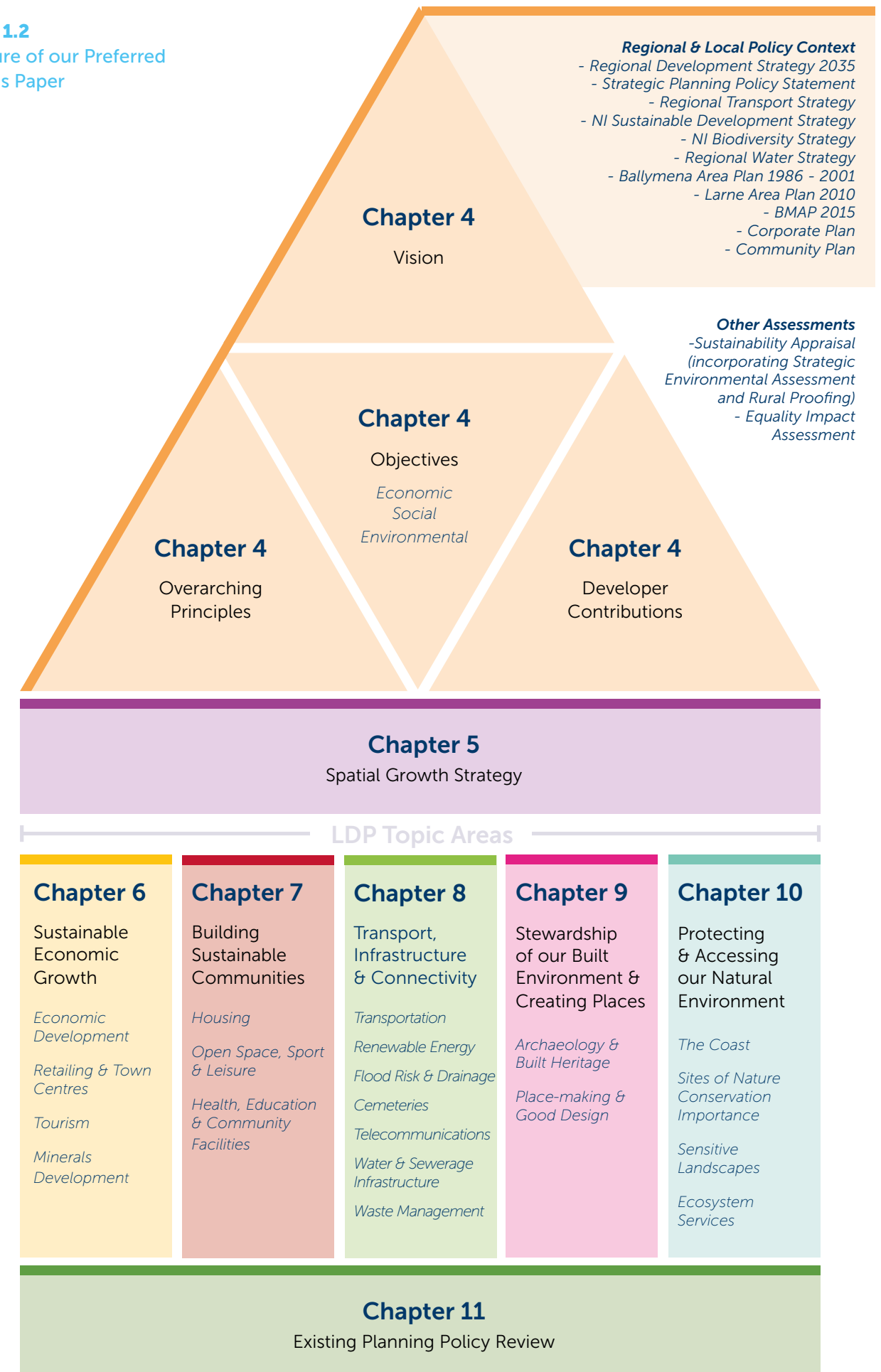
The POP also includes a policy review of existing operational planning policies largely contained within the suite of Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) mostly published by the former Department of Environment (DOE). There is further explanation of this in Chapters 2 and 11 of this paper. Again, the aim is to stimulate public debate on whether the existing policies are 'fit for purpose' for Mid and East Antrim, or whether a different policy approach might be appropriate to bring forward in more detailed form in the Plan Strategy.

In summary, the POP aims to ensure that all interests of the public, stakeholders and other parties are engaged fully and at an

early stage in the plan preparation process. Whilst the focus is on strategic planning matters which apply across the Borough, there will be opportunity at a later stage in the Plan process to engage on matters of a more site specific nature. Details of how to respond to the public consultation are set out on page seven of this paper.

The structure of the POP is shown in Figure 1.2

Figure 1.2
Structure of our Preferred Options Paper



2.0

Setting the Context

Regional Policy Context

Local Policy Context

In preparing the POP, we have had regard to regional policy context and the local policy context, as outlined in the following pages.



Regional Policy Context

Programme for Government

The draft Programme for Government (PfG) 2016 was taken into account in preparing the POP. The ongoing development of the LDP will need to be informed by any final version of the PfG that may be published by government. This is because the Planning (Northern Ireland) Act 2011 specifically requires the LDP to take account of any policies and guidance issued by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister.

Regional Development Strategy 2035

The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) "Building a Better Future" was published by the former Department for Regional Development in March 2012. It is the government's overarching spatial strategy for Northern Ireland up to 2035. The RDS seeks to influence the future distribution of development throughout the Region with a view to achieving sustainable development and social cohesion. It does this by setting out:

- **Strategic Regional Guidance relating to society, the economy and the environment;**
- **A Spatial Framework which divides the Region into five components;**
- **Specific guidance for each of the five regional components;**

- **Regionally Significant Economic Infrastructure considerations; and**
- **Implementation.**

The Planning (Northern Ireland) Act 2011 specifically requires the LDP to take account of policies and guidance issued by the Department for Regional Development, which includes the RDS. Chapter Five of the POP demonstrates how our LDP proposed Spatial Growth Strategy takes account of the RDS Spatial Framework Guidance. Other aspects of how our LDP will take account of the RDS are referred to in succeeding chapters of the POP.

Sustainable Development Strategy

The government's Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS), "Everyone's Involved" was published in May 2010. The aim of the SDS is to identify and develop actions on the part of government and all other stakeholders that will help to grow the economy, promote equality and social cohesion, and utilise natural resources in an environmentally sustainable manner. The SDS sets out six guiding principles of sustainable development which together are intended to deliver the Strategy. These are:

- **Living within environmental limits;**
- **Ensuring a strong, healthy, just and equal society;**
- **Achieving a sustainable economy;**
- **Promoting good governance;**

- **Using sound science responsibly; and**
- **Promoting opportunity and innovation.**

We are required by The Planning (Northern Ireland) Act 2011 to ensure all work relating to our development plan is carried out with the objective of furthering sustainable development. We are also required to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment or SEA) for both the Plan Strategy and the Local Policies Plan. This is to ensure the integration of social, economic and environmental considerations into the Plan preparation process.

Regional Transportation Strategy

Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future (ESTF) – 'A New Approach to Regional Transportation' was published in June 2011. It complements the RDS and contains high level aims and strategic objectives to:

- **support the growth of the economy through transportation;**
- **enhance the quality of life for all; and**
- **reduce the environmental impact of transport.**

The Strategy sets out the Department's (DfI) approach to regional transportation and is intended to be used to guide strategic investment decisions beyond 2015.

Work is progressing on the implementation of the ESTF and we will work closely with DfI to promote key themes such as the integration of land use and transportation and active travel. Future transportation projects relevant to the Plan area as identified in emerging DfI Local Transport studies will be reflected through the LDP as appropriate and in consultation with the Department.

Regional Water Strategy

'Sustainable Water – a Long Term Water Strategy for Northern Ireland (2015 -2040)' was published in March 2016. It sets out a range of initiatives to deliver the Executive's long term goal of a sustainable water sector. The strategy identifies how planning can impact on flood risk and water quality and aims to ensure that such matters as well as existing water and sewerage infrastructure capacity and future investment proposals inform the preparation of the LDP.

Strategic Planning Policy Statement

The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) was published by the former Department of Environment in September 2015. It aims to further sustainable development and improve well-being through the planning system. In pursuit of these aims, the SPPS sets out five core planning principles to underpin the reformed planning system, as follows:

- **Improving health and wellbeing;**
- **Creating and enhancing shared space;**

- **Supporting sustainable economic growth;**
- **Supporting good design and positive place-making; and**
- **Preserving and improving the built and natural environment.**

We will take account of these core principles by ensuring they are reflected in the 'Overarching Principles' for our LDP. In addition, the SPPS incorporates a regional planning policy framework which sets out the strategic direction for all Councils in bringing forward detailed operational policies through their LDPs. This framework sets out regional strategic objectives and associated strategic policy covering 16 subject areas (such as housing, transportation, economic development).

We will take account of this regional planning policy framework at Plan Strategy stage by bringing forward detailed operational planning policies across a similar range of subject area which reflect the general thrust of the SPPS. Chapter 11 of the POP sets out our initial considerations in this regard.

Planning Policy Statements

A suite of retained Planning Policy Statements (mostly published by the former DOE) currently provide operational planning policy across a range of subject areas and apply to the whole of Northern Ireland. The SPPS states that the existing suite of retained PPSs will cease to have effect when we adopt our new Plan Strategy for the whole of the Mid and East Antrim area. Until that time, a transitional period will operate when the PPSs will continue to be applied (along with

other material considerations) in the determination of planning applications.

As indicated above, we reflect this by ensuring that our LDP Plan Strategy brings forward replacement operational policy which takes due account of the SPPS and other relevant considerations, such as the local policy context. Chapter 11 of the POP sets out our initial considerations in this regard.

A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland

A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland (PSRNI) was published in 1993 by the former DOE. It provided a compendium of policies that have gradually been replaced by the subsequent PPSs and SPPS. However, a small number of residual policies remain in operation. As with the PPSs, these residual policies will cease to have effect once we adopt our LDP Plan Strategy for the whole of the Borough. Again, we will reflect this along the same lines as indicated above for the PPSs.

Supplementary Guidance

A range of supplementary guidance supports the regional policies contained in various PPSs and the SPPS. As indicated in the SPPS, these are to be retained as material planning considerations. Details of the current retained guidance are set out in Appendix A.



Local Policy Context

Existing Development Plans

The existing development or area plans that apply to Mid and East Antrim Borough are:

- **Ballymena Area Plan 1986-2001, adopted in 1989;**
- **Larne Area Plan 2010, adopted in 1998; and**
- **Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (insofar as it relates to the former Carrickfergus Borough Council area), adopted in 2014.**

It is worth noting that the Ballymena and Larne Area Plans were adopted before the first version of the RDS was published in 2001 and also before the publication of any of the PPS documents. Accordingly, these older plans are not based upon the principles of sustainable development which underpins the more recent regional direction. This can present some difficulty in the current context of a plan-led system. Nevertheless, these plans, along with the more recent Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP), provide the starting point for the review of spatial planning options for the LDP and therefore are an important consideration in the preparation of this POP.

Corporate Plan 2015-2019 – ‘Realising our Potential’

Our Corporate Plan sets out the Council’s vision, aims and ambitions for the Borough over the four-year period, along with the key principles needed to realise our vision of “Mid and East Antrim working together to create a better future for all”. Strategic priorities in the Corporate Plan are identified under five key themes:

- **Growing the economy;**
- **Developing our tourism potential;**
- **Building stronger, safe and healthy communities;**
- **Delivering excellent services; and**
- **Developing a high-performing Council.**

The Corporate Plan acknowledges that the LDP, along with the Community Plan and the Integrated Economic Development Strategy, will be key mechanisms to assist in meeting our Council’s priorities.

Community Plan

Our Community Plan – ‘Putting People First’ was published in

March 2017 and covers the period from 2017 to 2032. The vision of the Community Plan is that: “Mid and East Antrim will be a strong, safe and inclusive community, where people work together to improve the quality of life for all”. The strategic priorities set out in the Community Plan have been identified through joint working with 12 statutory partner organisations and informed by extensive consultation with the public and community and stakeholder groups. The strategic priorities are developed around five key themes, as follows:

- **Sustainable jobs and developing our tourism potential;**
- **Good health and wellbeing;**
- **Progress in education and improving aspirations for all;**
- **Improving community safety and cohesion; and**
- **Our environment.**

The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 sets out a statutory link between the Community Plan and the LDP, in that the preparation of the LDP must take account of the Community Plan.

Indeed these priorities have already been taken into consideration in the issues and options contained in this paper. As work on the LDP progresses, we will seek to deliver on any community planning outcomes where there is an identified spatial land use or local planning policy solution.

Emerging Integrated Economic Development Strategy

Work on the Integrated Economic Development Strategy (IEDS) is ongoing. The IEDS will include a Strategic Framework that will act as a ‘route map’ on how our local economy should be managed up to 2030. As an ‘integrated’ strategy it will ensure an integrated approach to economic development in the Borough and dovetail with the Programme for Government and Northern Ireland Economic Strategy when these have been finalised. The IEDS will also include an Action Plan setting out details of economic development projects to be advanced during the period in order to deliver on the Strategy.

Again, the LDP will seek to take account of the strategic priorities of the emerging IEDS as well as any individual actions which can be assisted through the mechanism of the Plan.



3.0

District Profile

Spatial Characteristics

Neighbouring Councils

Population and Society

Economy

Environment

Infrastructure

Spatial Characteristics

The Mid and East Antrim area is beautiful, welcoming, industrious and unique.

As a Council, we benefit from an excellent location on the edge of the Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area and have good links to Larne and Belfast ports and Belfast International and City airports. There are also strong linkages with south-west Scotland and the Trans-European Networks (TENs) Route from Cork through Dublin and Belfast to Stranraer in Scotland.

Our position on the Causeway Coastal Route and our wealth

of heritage assets provides the foundations for a vibrant tourism industry, high quality living environments and a sense of place. These diverse assets include Carrickfergus Castle and Marina, the Garron Plateau, the Gobbins, Slemish mountain and Lough Beg/ Lower Bann river corridor.

Our population is largely urban, with 60% concentrated in the three main towns of Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Larne and the remaining 40% located in small towns, villages, small settlements and the open countryside.



Neighbouring Councils

Our Borough extends to 1,045km² and shares a common land boundary with three Council areas: Mid Ulster District Council, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council and Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

We continue to liaise with our neighbouring councils to ensure cross-cutting issues are considered appropriately through the plan process.

Population and Society

According to census figures, our population increased by 6.5% between 2001 and 2011 from 127,101 to 135,338, with projections of an increase of 3.6% by 2030 to a total of 142,164.

Our population is ageing, with the number of over 65 year olds set to increase by 41% by the end of the plan period. This will mean 25% of our citizens will be 65+. The growing number of elderly is a key factor in a

declining average household size. The average household size is expected to fall from 2.47 in 2011 to 2.37 by 2030. The Plan will take account of the implications of these trends, for example in the delivery of appropriate housing in areas accessible to health and community services.

The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (2010) is a spatial measure of local level inequalities based on multiple indicators.

Indicators include access to services, employment, education and living environment. Mid and East Antrim is ranked sixth out of the eleven new councils in terms of deprivation, largely due to a relatively low level of access to services such as Jobs and Benefits offices, A&E hospitals, leisure centres or Post Offices.

The most commonly recorded medical conditions in our Borough are high blood pressure (15%), obesity (12%), diabetes (6%) and asthma (6%) and these are among the highest prevalence rates when compared with other council areas. In 2011, one in five people in our Borough were living with a life-limiting long term illness, which was slightly higher than 2001.

There were 4,190 Carers Allowance claims made in 2016, a 2.7% increase on 2015. Of these, 67% were female. Caring in the home is likely to become more prevalent given the ageing population of our Borough.

The number of citizens aged between 0-15 is expected to fall by 5% between 2014 and 2030. This reduction may have implications for the provision of education facilities in some areas.

The 2011 Census shows that almost 41% of our residents have no or low qualifications. Education has an important role to play in sustaining Mid and East Antrim as a vibrant economy, as highly skilled people will be needed to take advantage of opportunities, particularly in newly emerging sectors.

Economy

In 2015, 74% of Mid and East Antrim's working age population (16-64) were in employment. The manufacturing sector is a key employer in Mid and East Antrim and accounts for almost 21% of all jobs, compared to 11% for Northern Ireland as a whole. The agriculture, wholesale, health and social care sectors are also important contributors to our employment market.

There has been significant investment from companies who recognise the benefits of our strategic location and highly skilled workforce. These include Wrightbus, Ryobi, Caterpillar and Moy Park. Two of Northern Ireland's three power stations are also located within our Borough. Ballylumford Power Station is situated on the north western tip of Islandmagee, whilst Kilroot Power Station is in Carrickfergus. Both are operated by AES and provide both significant employment opportunities and business rates contributions.

Micro-businesses, employing less than 10 people, play an important role in our economy with much of their labour and materials coming from the local market.

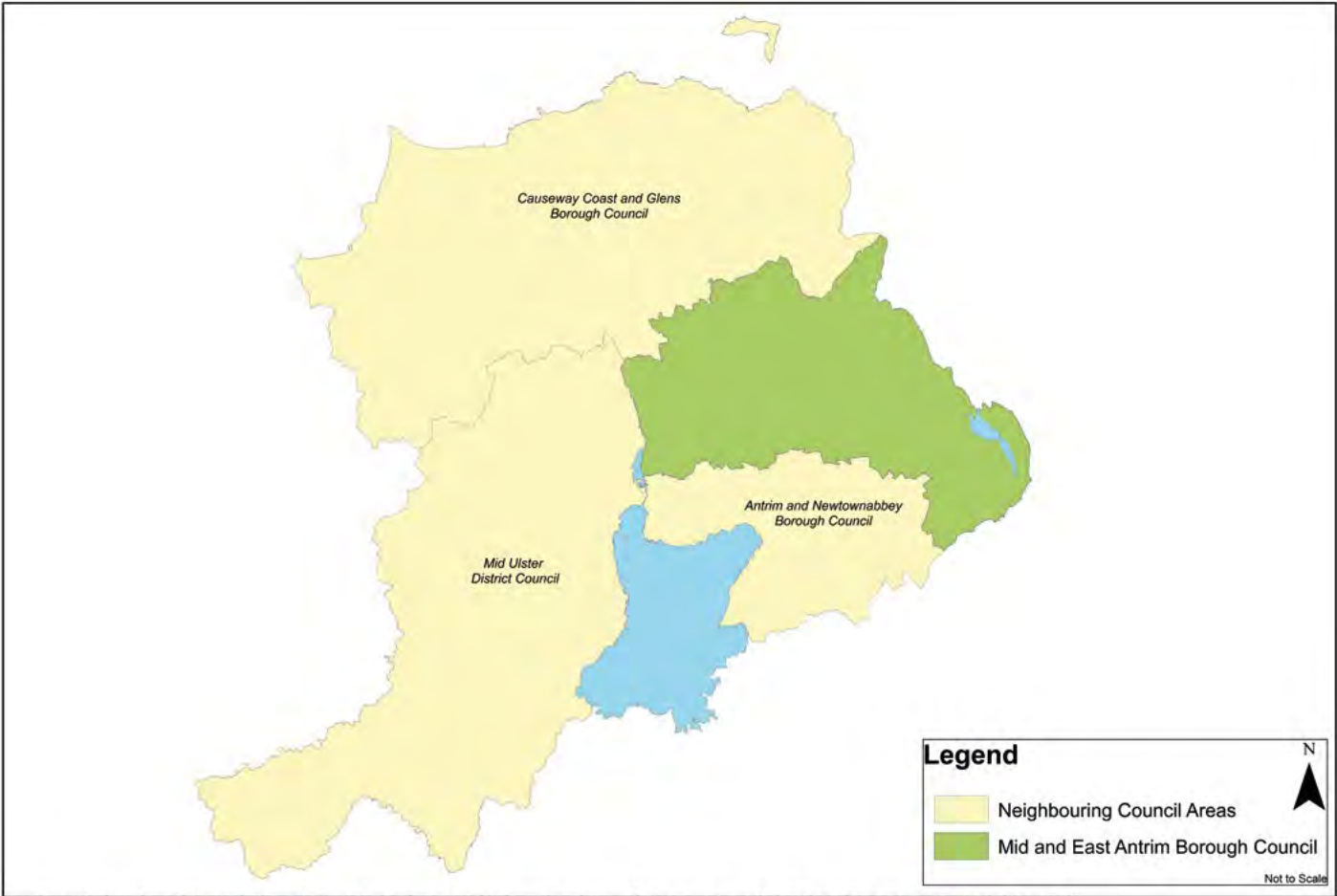
Ballymena has a large town centre and benefits from a diverse range of retail units, formats and sizes and has good representation from independent retailers as well as national multiples. Larne is renowned as a premier port, handling over 300,000 freight

units, 220,000 tourist vehicles and 845,000 passengers a year. It also has a relatively good retail sector having a high concentration of small units comprising independent retailers and service uses. Carrickfergus town centre is distinctive in terms of its historic environment including the castle, St. Nicholas' Church and town walls. This, combined with its coastal location and marina, offers significant tourism potential.

Tourism has important benefits for our local economy and community. Attractions such as coastal paths, spa hotels and castles contributed to a total visitor spend of £45.6m in 2015 and provide in excess of 3,678 jobs. The LDP will manage tourism development to facilitate high quality development whilst protecting our most sensitive environmental assets which we have to attract tourists.

Our countryside is an important resource for the mineral and agriculture sectors. Our Borough has always enjoyed a rich mining history, from the mining of iron ore in the early 19th Century to today's regionally important salt and basalt mines. Quarries in the area contribute an estimated £13.7million per annum, with aggregate used as road base, concrete aggregate, railroad ballast, filter stone and many other purposes. In 2015, 81,570 hectares of land were being farmed in the Mid and East Antrim area, contributing 3,448 jobs to the local economy.

Map 3.1 Our Neighbouring Council Areas



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Environment

Our natural environment is made up of a diverse range of scenic landscapes, stunning coastlines and impressive vistas. It is also home to a range of habitats, wildlife and species. These natural environment assets will require appropriate protection through the policies of our new LDP.

At present, these environmental and landscape assets are protected by various designations. Among these are four Ramsar sites, three Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), five Special Protection Areas (SPA), two National Nature Reserves, 39 Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs), the Antrim Coast and Glens Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (approximately 370 km² within Mid and East Antrim), four Local Nature Reserves, 23 Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCI).

Our historic environment and built heritage includes buildings of architectural significance, historic monuments and archaeological, military and industrial sites. We have 157 scheduled monuments, eight State Care Monuments, 20 Historic Parks, 637 Listed Buildings and one Area of Special Archaeological Interest at Knockdhu. In addition, there are five Areas of Townscape Character and five Conservation Areas which contribute to the distinct character and quality of the settlements in which they are designated.

There are many more assets that are not given special protection at present but require sensitive management for tourism, cultural or leisure purposes. These include

civic parks at Carnfunnock Country Park, areas of woodland, unlisted vernacular buildings or historic buildings of local importance and landmarks such as Slemish.

Existing pathways, disused railways and historic rights of way occur throughout the Borough and offer opportunities for outdoor amenity space and recreation, therefore enhancing the health and wellbeing of our citizens. The LDP will consider the potential for increasing access to these assets and for using them to develop broader green networks.

Our water environment, including coastline, rivers and reservoirs, is an important resource for recreation, amenity and tourism. It offers specialised habitats, adding to biodiversity.

Infrastructure

Good transportation links are important to the local economy and attracting inward investment as well as connecting residents to community, retail and leisure services, employment, and educational facilities.

We have a comprehensive network of transport infrastructure and services in the area. Roads of regional importance include the A26, linking Ballymena to Coleraine and Antrim; the A8 Larne towards Newtownabbey and on to the M2 Belfast; and the A2 Shore Road. There has been significant investment in the upgrading of the A8 and A2 in recent years. While north/south road connectivity is considered good, that between the east and west of the Borough is weaker.

There is an extensive footpath system in most designated settlements, with elements of the National Cycle Network also passing through our Borough. The LDP will take account of this in promoting connectivity and active travel (walking and cycling).

Public transport provision consists of a network of urban and rural bus and rail services with stations in the three main towns and some rural villages. Rural roads also have a role in accessibility for those living in isolated rural areas. However, according to the 2011 Census, 76% of residents still travel to work by car. Whilst transport planning remains the function of

the Department for Infrastructure (DfI), the LDP will play an important role in integrating transportation and land use to encourage more sustainable forms of transport and active travel.

Energy within our Borough is primarily produced by the use of fossil fuels to generate electricity. Northern Ireland has three major electricity generating stations, two of which are located within our Borough. Ballylumford Power Station is located in Islandmagee, whilst Kilroot Power Station is located in Carrickfergus.

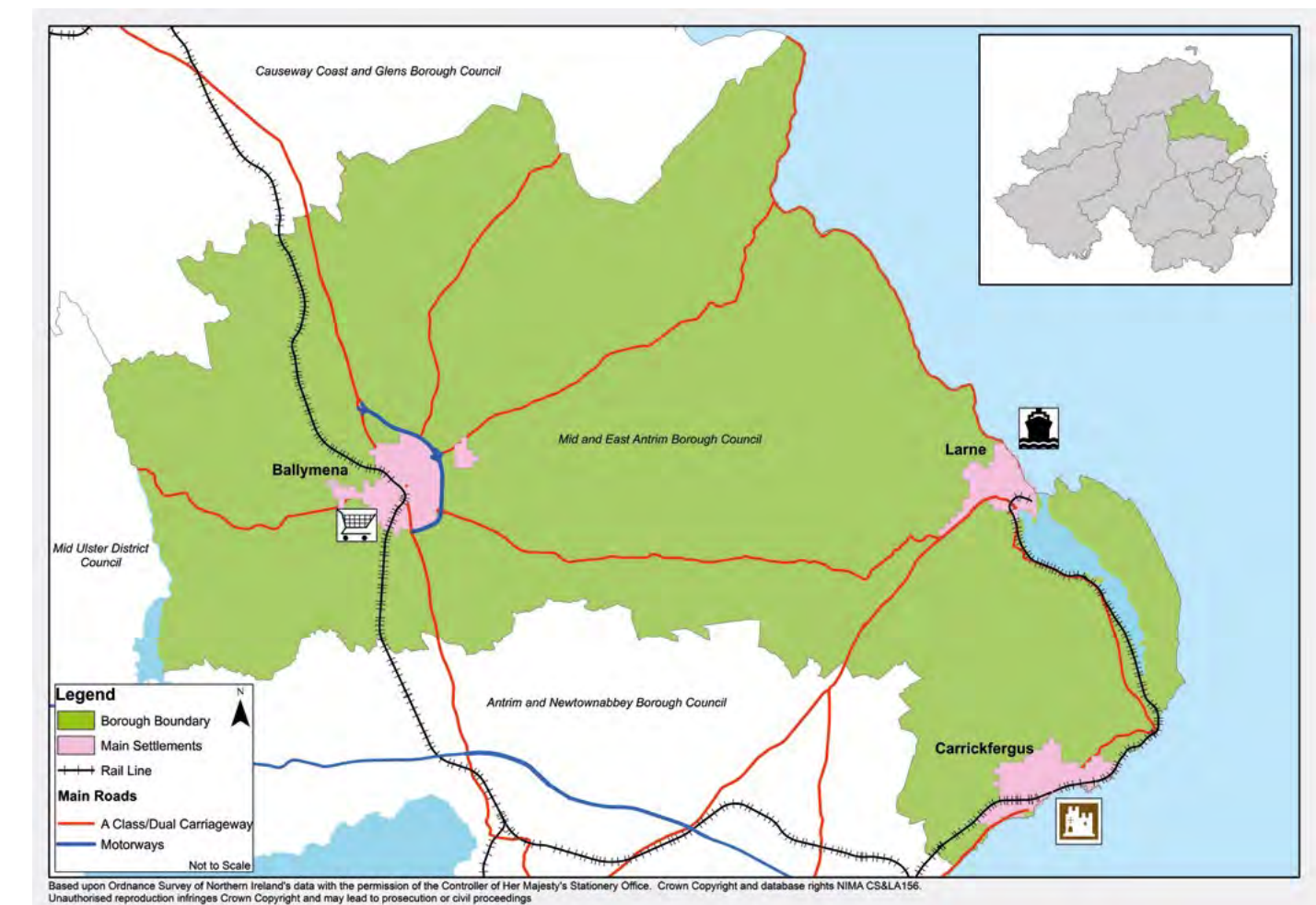
Access to high speed broadband is important in terms of economic

development and addressing social isolation. Improvements to the existing broadband infrastructure have taken place in recent years. In relation to superfast broadband services (>30Mbps), availability ranges from 82% to 97% across our main towns.

There are 31 Waste Water Treatment facilities in our area. These are the responsibility of NI Water. Three have been identified in the NI Water Capital Works Programme 2015-2021 for upgrade.

There are five Household Recycling Centres in our Borough, with an additional 24 smaller 'Bring Centres'.

Map 3.2 Spatial Context of Mid and East Antrim



4.0

Local Development Plan

Vision

Strategic Objectives

Overarching Principles

Developer Contributions



Vision

Council has a key role in meeting the needs of the citizens of Mid and East Antrim both directly in the services we provide and in partnership with an array of other statutory and voluntary bodies. Our Corporate Plan makes it clear that we, as a council, are citizen focused and that we will use our new planning powers to promote Mid and East Antrim as a place to invest, work and live, whilst protecting our extraordinary natural environment. This ethos is reflected in the Vision of our recently published Community Plan:

“Mid and East Antrim will be a strong, vibrant, safe and inclusive community, where people work together to improve the quality of life for all.”

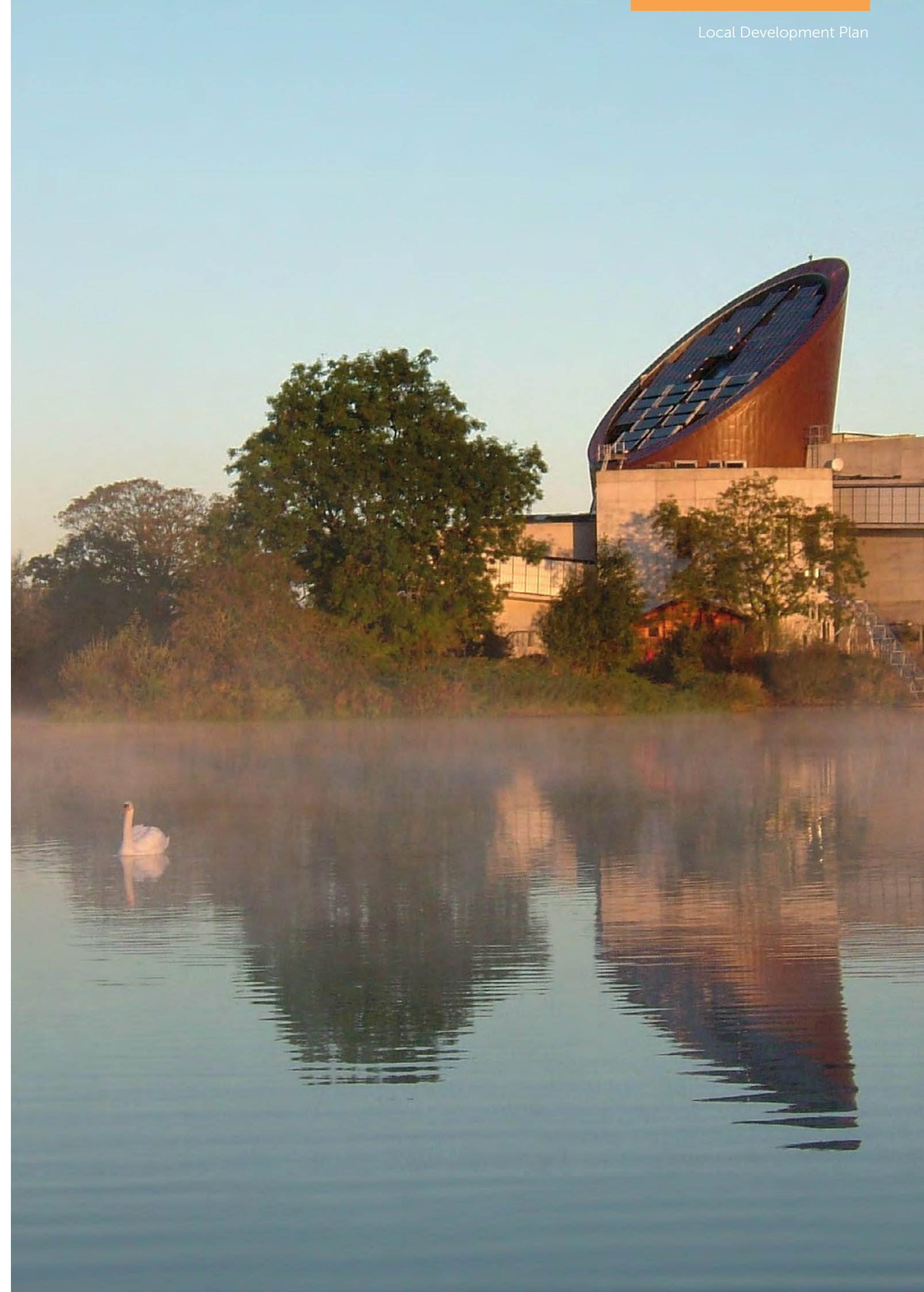
Our Community Plan focuses on working together with partners (for example public bodies such as health, education, sport and police) to address the issues that organisations working individually cannot address alone. We call this “collaborative gain”. In a similar way, the Community Plan and the Local Development Plan (LDP) need to work together for the overall benefit of our citizens. Indeed, as stated in Chapter Two, the LDP is legally required to take account of the Community Plan and will therefore be informed by it. In particular, our LDP will form the spatial reflection of our Community Plan in that it will seek to shape future patterns of development and land use in ways that will offer the most benefit for our citizens.

Given the close inter-relationship between the two Plans, our vision for the LDP is based on the Community Plan vision, in that it aspires to improve the quality of life for everyone. However, it is adapted to place special emphasis on the particular place-making role

of the LDP. The vision for the LDP is:

“Mid and East Antrim will be shaped by high quality, sustainable and connected places for people to live, work, enjoy, invest and visit, so as to improve the quality of life for all.”

Q1. Do you agree with our Vision for the LDP?



Strategic Objectives

The strategic objectives are designed to assist in the delivery of the complementary visions of the Community Plan and the Local Development Plan whilst taking full account of the regional direction set out in the Regional Development Strategy (RDS), the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) and other government strategies such as the Sustainable Development Strategy. The LDP strategic objectives encompass the three ‘pillars’ of sustainable development which embrace economic, social and environmental priorities. The SPPS requires planning authorities to deliver on all these themes in a balanced way. Accordingly, in setting out these strategic objectives for the LDP, no one objective or theme is regarded as having priority over any other. This recognises that all are to some degree inter-related and mutually beneficial - for example meeting environmental objectives is also likely to have positive benefits for tourism which helps the economy. Rather, the LDP strategic objectives should be seen as collectively contributing to meeting “the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.²

The strategic objectives, along with other considerations, have informed the preferred options set out in this Preferred Options Paper.

The following **LDP Strategic Objectives** have been identified:

Social objectives

LDP Topic Area:

Building Sustainable Communities

Most Related Community Plan Themes:

Improving Health and Wellbeing

Improving Community Safety and Cohesion

a. To develop the particular strengths of Ballymena, Larne and Carrickfergus, so as to enable them to realise their full potential as the main centres of population, employment and services in Mid and East Antrim.

b. To support the role of small towns, villages, and small settlements as local service centres and commensurate with their place in the settlement hierarchy.

c. To support rural communities by providing appropriate and sustainable opportunities for development in the countryside.

d. To provide a sufficient supply of land for new housing by 2030 in convenient locations to meet general housing needs.

e. To meet the diverse range of specific housing needs and anticipated changes over the Plan period.

f. To improve community safety and cohesion through the layout and design of new housing and other development.

g. To facilitate confirmed needs for the development of new social, educational, recreational and community services at

locations accessible to local communities through various modes of transportation and in accordance with the Community Plan.

h. To facilitate the provision and integration of public open space within housing developments and linked open spaces (green infrastructure) within and beyond the wider urban fabric.

i. To support the recreation and leisure offer within Mid and East Antrim.

j. To promote active travel and increased opportunities for walking and cycling.

k. To provide for quality public places and ‘shared spaces’ that are accessible to and valued by everyone.

Economic objectives

LDP Topic Areas:

Sustainable Economic Growth

Transportation, Infrastructure and Connectivity

Most Related Community Plan Theme:

Sustainable Jobs and Tourism

a. To encourage existing and new businesses to invest with confidence in Mid and East Antrim.

b. To provide a sufficient supply and choice of sites for business and employment uses so as to assist in promoting economic growth in Mid and East Antrim.

c. To promote diversity in economic activity and jobcreation, through matching sites to the locational needs of particular sectors, including new and emerging sectors.

d. To recognise the value of entrepreneurship and innovation to economic development and to encourage this through supportive planning policy.

e. To support and sustain vibrant town centres in Ballymena, Larne and Carrickfergus.

f. To protect strategically important transportation and public utilities infrastructure and where possible enhance connectivity within Mid and East Antrim and between the Borough and other centres.

g. To assist with economic regeneration and physical renewal, particularly where this will benefit disadvantaged communities.

h. To support tourism as a key growth sector in Mid and East Antrim by creating and identifying opportunities for sustainable tourism development and by safeguarding key tourism assets from inappropriate development.

i. To facilitate economic development of an appropriate nature, scale and location in the countryside; including within the traditional primary sectors (agriculture, forestry and mining), while recognising the growing importance of self-employment, homeworking and farm diversification.

j. To manage the use of energy, water, waste and mineral

resources in an efficient and sustainable manner.

k. To support the generation of energy from renewable sources in a balanced way that takes due account of environmental impacts and on sensitive or vulnerable landscapes.

Environmental objectives

LDP Topic Areas:

Stewardship of our Built Environment and Creating Places

Protecting and Accessing our Natural Environment

Most Related Community Plan Themes:

Our Environment

Good Health and Wellbeing

a. To conserve, protect and, where possible, enhance environmental quality and biodiversity in Mid and East Antrim.

b. To protect and enhance our landscape and natural heritage assets including the Antrim Coast and Glens Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and areas designated for their nature conservation and /or scientific importance.

c. To safeguard the unique character and amenity of our coastline, particularly the undeveloped coastline.

d. To conserve and where possible enhance our Conservation Areas and Areas of Townscape / Village Character, and other assets of our built and archaeological heritage, recognising their links with the historical evolution of Mid and East Antrim.

e. To promote improved public access to all heritage assets.

f. To prevent new development in areas known to be at significant risk from flooding, coastal erosion or land instability, taking account of increased vulnerability associated with climate change.

g. To support development that furthers local adaptation to climate change, for example through reduced carbon emissions and the efficient and sustainable use of water, energy, waste and mineral resources.

h. To promote high quality design standards in all development so as to reflect local distinctiveness and further positive place-making.

i. To facilitate networks of green and blue spaces (or green / blue infrastructure) so as to secure environmental and social benefits.

j. To promote integration between transportation and new development so as to reduce the need for travel and to reduce dependency upon travel by private car generally.

Q2. Do you agree with our LDP Strategic Objectives?

² This is the United Nations Assembly definition of sustainable development, which in turn is reflected in the RDS 2035 and supported by the SPPS.

Overarching Principles

The purpose of Overarching Principles is to set out general criteria that all development proposals must have regard to. These Overarching Principles will seek to promote sustainable development and high quality design.

The overarching principles of the Local Development Plan (LDP) are primarily guided by our LDP Strategic Objectives and also by the five core planning principles set out in the SPPS.

Sustainable development and the development of healthy, safe and inclusive communities are key themes in the RDS, SPPS and our Community Plan. The layout and design of our urban areas can have various related impacts. For example, on how safe a place is, how safe a place is perceived to be, and on recreation and activity levels. Perhaps more indirectly, design in our built environment can influence health and wellbeing through its contribution to factors such as helping create a vibrant economy, promoting more sustainable modes of travel and active travel, and potentially mitigating against exposure of people to air, noise and water pollution.

Sustainable development requires that all development proposals contribute to conserving, protecting and enhancing our built and natural environment and consider the local and wider area beyond the boundaries of the development site. Therefore, a development proposal's external appearance, visual impact, how a scheme complements or enhances the local built and natural environment, and seeks to promote community health and wellbeing, should be considered holistically when determining planning applications.

The **Overarching Principles** are guided by the principles of Sustainable Development, Good Design and Positive Place-Making. They will be taken account of when assessing all development proposals.

Overarching Principle 1 Promoting High Quality Design

High quality design helps to make a place attractive, inviting and sustainable, and can help create safe environments for domestic, social and economic activity. Quality design and attractive places induce civic pride and encourage civic stewardship whereby places are maintained, managed and enhanced. Therefore, all development proposals will be required to adopt a design-led approach with the aim of achieving high quality design.

In order to ensure that a development proposal is appropriate for a locality and

respects the local context and setting, any development proposal will be required to have regard to the following factors:

- **Sense of place -** *development proposals should utilise the built and natural heritage assets and layout of a place in order to help a place realise its potential;*
- **Local distinctiveness -** *development proposals should respect the character, context, built heritage, and landscape setting of a place in order to maintain its distinctive character and achieve suitable integration;*
- **Materials and detailing -** *local building form, features and materials should be respected and complemented;*
- **Amenity -** *development proposals should demonstrate that they will not have a detrimental impact on nearby residents and that the proposed use is compatible with adjacent uses;*
- **Sustainable design -** *buildings should be energy efficient and innovations to mitigate climate change are encouraged; and*
- **Community safety through design -** *safety should be incorporated into development proposals e.g. passive surveillance, consideration of vulnerable members of society, consideration of safety of pedestrians.*



Overarching Principle 2 Promoting Accessibility and Connectivity

Good design contributes to enhancing accessibility and connectivity. Consideration of access within and to a site, movement within and to a site, and a site's connectivity with the surrounding area, requires a holistic approach in order to achieve optimal solutions i.e. all of the interlinkages between these elements and the potential impacts need to be considered together at the design stage of a development proposal.

To ensure a design-led approach to accessibility and connectivity, all development proposals shall have regard to the following factors:

- **Enhanced connectivity** - particularly between places, with account taken of the road network, and existing and potential links to green and blue infrastructure;
- **Permeability** - increasing accessibility through and within neighbourhood-scale areas, particularly where there are severed connections and poor connectivity;
- **Sustainable transport modes** - enhancement of walking, cycling and public transport facilities and linkages between these;
- **Mobility impaired** - provision of appropriate facilities and consideration of movement

patterns that will benefit the mobility impaired; and

- Accessibility for **all sections** of the community.

Overarching Principle 3 Promoting Legibility and a Quality Public Realm

Legibility is related to how people interact with and understand places. Legibility is a key component in place-making and takes account of the relationships between different buildings, and between buildings and surrounding spaces. A place should have a clear image, with recognisable streets, spaces and landscape features e.g. open space and waterways. The quality of the public domain is a key consideration in good design and place-making. Public space should be safe, attractive and functional for all users. Legibility and the quality of the public realm impact on the established and potential movement and activity patterns of people, and consequently the local economy.

In consideration of legibility and the development of a quality public realm, development proposals shall have regard to the following:

- **Enhancement of the public realm** while respecting the context and setting of the locality and built heritage;
- **Ease of Movement** - development proposals should

seek to improve connectivity and prioritise pedestrians and cyclists over motorised transport modes;

- **Key nodes** (e.g. squares and other meeting places) in the public realm should be inviting and encourage interaction; and
- **Linkages** between key buildings and key nodes should be enhanced.

Overarching Principle 4 Promoting Community Health and Wellbeing

The SPSS (para 4.3) adopts the World Health Organisation's definition of health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". The SPSS recognises that well-designed buildings and successful places can have a positive impact on how people feel, and can influence the choices we make which may contribute positively to improving our health and wellbeing e.g. whether to walk or cycle, or whether to stay longer in a good place. In recognition of these potential positive benefits, all development proposals shall have regard to the following:

- **Sustainable travel** - improved access to sustainable transport modes;
- **Pollution mitigation** - e.g. innovations to reduce noise and air pollution; and

- **Healthy and active lifestyles** - promotion of healthy and active lifestyles e.g improved accessibility to green and blue infrastructure and provision for active travel by walking and cycling.

Overarching Principle 5 Promoting Inclusive Communities

Particularly in the Northern Ireland context, it is essential that design and civic stewardship in the built environment must give careful attention to the shared use of space and enabling access for everyone regardless of differences in religious and political backgrounds. "Access for all" is critical to the long term objective of a shared future and will avoid the creation of physical or perceived barriers in urban areas. The SPPS (para 4.13) states that: "Shared spaces are places where there is a sense of belonging for everyone, where relationships between people from different backgrounds are most likely to be positive, and where differences are valued and respected". Therefore, all

development proposals should have regard to the following:

- Promotion of **shared space**; and
- Provision of **shared community infrastructure**.

Overarching Principle 6 Protection and Enhancement of the Built and Natural Environment

The SPPS (para 4.37) recognises the importance of our local environment and states that its exceptional quality "provides an important contribution to our sense of place, history and cultural identity [and plays a critical role in supporting the local economy]." The SPPS (para 4.38) states that our environment must therefore be managed in a sustainable manner in order to preserve and improve the built and natural environment and halt the loss of biodiversity.

Some buildings and their settings are protected through the listing process or through being included within designations such as Conservation Areas. However others may not have such

protection but still have important value in themselves and also contribute to the wider character and culture of a place. Protecting, conserving and enhancing the built and natural environment can contribute significantly to the unique identity and character of a place.

In recognition of the importance of built and natural heritage to the identity and character of a place, all development proposals shall have regard to the following:

- The protection, conservation and, where possible, the enhancement of the Borough's **built and archaeological heritage**;
- The protection, conservation and, where possible, the enhancement of **landscape character and local distinctiveness** of the landscape;
- The protection, conservation, and, where possible, the enhancement of **biodiversity and natural heritage features of importance**; and
- Promote sustainable development and environmental **stewardship** of all landscape and heritage assets.

Q3. Do you agree with our LDP Overarching Principles?





Preferred Option

Option 1 (a):

Provide strategic policy on developer contributions through the Local Development Plan.

This option would mean developing a policy that would clarify the types and threshold sizes of development for which developer contributions are required, the anticipated level of contribution and any exemptions. It would apply across the Borough.

This option would provide a high level of certainty for developers and

others involved in the development process at an early stage.

The policy details brought forward under this option will be important as an excessive level of developer contribution may deter investment in development. In addition it should be noted that this option is less amenable than other

options to enabling developers to contribute 'in kind', i.e. through direct provision, as opposed to cash payment. The resource demands placed upon Council (and indirectly, the rate payer) in the administration of developer contributions needs to be factored in to any decision to proceed with this option.

Key Issue 1 Developer Contributions

Background

Provision for developer contributions arises from the principle that developers should be required to bear the reasonable or proportionate costs of works required to facilitate their development proposals. Developer contributions are secured through a legally binding agreement between the relevant planning authority (usually Council) and a landowner and/or developer. The Department for Infrastructure's recently published Development Management Practice Note 21 advises that Council LDPs should include policy on the use of planning agreements, including the expected nature, scope and levels of contributions that may be

sought from developers, so as to provide certainty at an early stage.

The SPPS sets out examples of circumstances where developer contributions may be required. In practice, developer contributions are likely to be most commonly required where a development (such as a housing scheme) would create deficiencies in or add to existing problems with regard to infrastructure needed to serve the development. This could, for example, include roads, sewerage, or public open space. It could also include necessary community facilities. In such circumstances, the SPPS advises that developer contributions could be sought where there is no planned provision on the part of public

bodies, or if earlier than planned implementation of a programmed scheme is required in order to facilitate the development.

Developer contributions is not included as an overarching principle in this Paper because it is unlikely to be sought for all development proposals. However, given the regional direction referred to above, we consider it necessary to gauge local public opinion as to whether it is appropriate to seek developer contributions and, if so, how this should be applied through the LDP.

Accordingly, the first key issue to be considered in the Preferred Options Paper relates to developer contributions.

Alternative Options

Option 1 (b):

Developer contributions to be stipulated for sites zoned for housing and/or economic development through the Local Policies Plan, and not sought elsewhere.

Option 1 (c):

Developer contributions to be negotiated on a site-by-site basis at the time of any planning application.

Option 1 (d):

Do not seek developer contributions under any circumstances.

Q4. Do you agree with our Preferred Option to securing developer contributions from landowners and/or developers?

5.0

Spatial Growth Strategy

Potential Spatial
Growth Strategy and
Settlement Hierarchy

Housing Allocation
Strategy

Economic
Development Strategy

Retail Strategy

As highlighted in Chapter Three, a number of factors contribute to quality of life and help make Mid and East Antrim a good place to live and work. To assure continued progress, it is important that our new Local Development Plan provides for the appropriate level of growth in the right places and that it meets the needs of the present without compromising those of future generations. The Spatial Growth Strategy will provide a strategic framework for realising the vision and objectives of our LDP and will take account of the Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS) and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS), in addition to the existing area plans for the Borough and the findings from our suite of evidence papers.

The Spatial Growth Strategy will broadly consider where growth should be directed, in terms of housing, employment and commercial development over the plan period. The allocation

of land for development in the Local Policies Plan will ultimately be informed by this strategy. The strategy will acknowledge the role of our settlements within Mid and East Antrim, the regional importance of our larger settlements, and the need to sustain rural communities living in our smaller settlements and the open countryside.

To inform our Spatial Growth Strategy we have taken account of the following factors, the first two of which are examined in greater detail in this chapter:

- Regional Development Strategy 2035
- Existing Area Plans (Growth Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy)
- LDP evidence base as contained in the relevant topic-based papers www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/plan-preparation-process



Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS)

The Regional Development Strategy contains a Spatial Framework that divides Northern Ireland into five components based on functions and geography.

In effect, the RDS identifies a hierarchy of settlement types and provides Spatial Framework Guidance that is a key factor influencing the future distribution of development across the region.

The guidance in this regional strategy has been one of the main building blocks in developing our Spatial Growth Strategy. The RDS Spatial Framework and accompanying guidance and specific reference to places within Mid and East Antrim are summarised in Table 5.1.

The RDS Spatial Framework identifies Ballymena and Larne towns as Main Hubs. Larne is also identified as a Gateway due to its strategic coastal location and important port functions. Carrickfergus is grouped within the major conurbation of Belfast

Metropolitan Urban Area. The remaining settlements in our Borough are considered by RDS as part of the Rural Area where, ‘the aim is to sustain the overall strength of the rural community living in small towns, villages and small rural settlements and the open countryside’. The RDS also acknowledges that a strong network of smaller towns supported by villages helps to sustain and service the rural community. A sustainable approach to further development is sought so as to ensure that growth does not exceed the capacity of the essential infrastructure expected for modern living.

The Hierarchy of Settlements and Related Infrastructure Wheel in the RDS 2035 illustrates the patterns of service provision that are likely to be appropriate at different

spatial levels including villages, small towns, regional towns and cities (Table 5.2). Small settlements and the rural area complete the hierarchy of locations where development may take place. The model recognises the strong relationship between settlement size and the levels of service that can be supported.

Table 5.1 RDS Hierarchy of Settlement and Spatial Framework Guidance

RDS Hierarchy	Spatial Framework Guidance (SFG)	SFG detailed comments relevant to Mid & East Antrim
Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area (BMUA) includes Carrickfergus	SFG1: Promote urban economic development at key locations throughout the BMUA and ensure sufficient land is available for jobs. SFG4: Manage the movement of people and goods within the BMUA. SFG5: Protect and enhance the quality of the setting of the BMUA and its environmental assets.	<p>Promote the regeneration of Carrickfergus town centre.</p> <p>Protect areas of high scenic value, undeveloped coastline, Belfast Lough and the hills around the BMUA from development.</p> <p>Protect and enhance the network of open spaces in BMUA.</p> <p>Make use of green space to help manage access to important wildlife sites and minimise the potential for damage due to visitor pressure.</p>
Hubs and Clusters of Hubs includes Ballymena and Larne	SFG10: Identify and consolidate the roles and functions of settlements within the clusters. SFG11: Promote economic development opportunities at Hubs. SFG12: Grow the population in the Hubs.	<p>Ballymena benefits from an excellent location on the edge of the BMUA with easy access to the International and City airports and Ports of Larne and Belfast. It has a significant retail centre which is complimented by nearby tourism attractions, including the Causeway Coast and Glens.</p> <p>Larne is situated in a strategic coastal location. It provides strong linkages between NI and Scotland. Its road and rail links form part of the Trans-European Networks. Its position on the Causeway Coastal Route has potential to create a centre for tourism.</p> <p>The towns of Ballymena, Larne and Antrim, in our neighbouring council, have the potential to cluster.</p>
Rural Area includes: Small towns Villages Small settlements Open countryside in Mid and East Antrim	SFG13: Sustain rural communities living in smaller settlements and the open countryside. SFG14: Improve accessibility for rural communities.	<p>Establish the role of multi-functional town centres as the prime location for business, housing, administration, leisure and cultural facilities for both urban and rural communities.</p> <p>Revitalise small towns and villages.</p> <p>Facilitate the development of rural industries, businesses and enterprises in appropriate locations.</p> <p>Encourage sustainable and sensitive development.</p>
Gateways and Corridors includes Larne, A8 and A26	SFG15: Strengthen the Gateways for regional competitiveness.	<p>Larne has the second largest sea port in NI and is also an important location for power generation and for gas and electricity interconnectors with Scotland.</p> <p>Key transport corridors (A8 Larne-Belfast and A26 Ballymena-Antrim) are essential for providing access to the gateways development.</p>

Table 5.2 Settlement Hierarchy Classification

Infrastructure	Principal City	Regional Town	Smaller Towns	Villages
Skills	University	Further Education, Special Schools	Library, Post Primary	Nursery, Primary School
Health	Acute Hospital, A&E, Maternity	A&E Hospital, Children’s Home, Minor Injuries, Outpatients	Pharmacy, Health Centres, Social Services, Day Care Centres	Doctor, Ambulance, Outreach Services
Social	Museums/Galleries, Conference/ Concert Arena	Leisure Centre (pool), Visitor Centre, Advice Centres, Arts & Culture Centre	Community Centre, Sports Facility, Welfare Services	Local Hall, Play Areas
Environment	Power Generation, AONB/ASSI	Water & Sewage Treatment Plants, Waste-landfill, Waste-recycle	Recycling, Renewables, Water & Sewers Supply	Access to clean water, Sewage disposal
Commercial	Department Stores, Specialist Shops, Arts & Cultural Facilities	Shopping Centres, Retail Warehousing, Range of Restaurants	Supermarket, Restaurants, Mix of Retail Facilities	Shop, Pub, Post Office, Petrol Station
Justice	Police HQ, High Court, Prison, Forensic Science	Police District, County Court, Probation Service	Police Station	Neighbourhood Watch
Productive	Tourism Signature Projects, Science Centre, Major Industrial parks, Strategic Development Zones	Industrial Park, Tourism Office	Enterprise Centre, Information Office	Workshop/ Business Unit
Networks	Ports & Airports, Key Transport Nodes, Energy Generation Interconnector	Major Roads, Bus/Rail, Park & Ride, Cycle Network	Link Corridors/ Trunk Roads, Bus/Rail to larger centres	Local Roads, Broadband, Urban Street Lighting, Local Bus, Cycle

The RDS also recognises that:

- Settlements often provide either a greater or lesser range of services than the core population may dictate. It is not appropriate therefore to consider ‘urban’ population alone in classifying settlements within the district – the population of rural hinterlands can also support services in urban centres;
- Service centres tend to be hierarchical, with a large number of centres providing a smaller range of services, and a smaller number of centres providing a wider range. Each class of settlement provides services lower down in the hierarchy; and
- Access to services and facilities is important. Creating a critical mass to support a level of services raises challenges for service providers in meeting the needs of spatially dispersed populations.

Source Extracted from RDS 2035 Diagram No. 2.2: The Hierarchy of Settlements and Related Infrastructure Wheel Pg. 24



Existing Area Plans (Growth Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy)

The Ballymena Area Plan 1986-2001 and the Larne Area Plan 2010 are now well past their notional end-by dates and were prepared before the introduction of the first version of the RDS and in very different social and economic climates. Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP), that covers the former Carrickfergus Borough, was adopted in September 2014 and is in general conformity with the RDS 2035. Each plan established a settlement hierarchy upon which future development or growth was based (see Map 5.1).

In each of the three plans, the main town is identified as the focus for most development, with the smaller towns and villages seen as local centres serving the needs of their rural hinterlands. The fourth tier in the hierarchy comprised of the small settlements. These small settlements were recognised as having potential to accommodate small groups of dwellings or single dwellings, as long as their

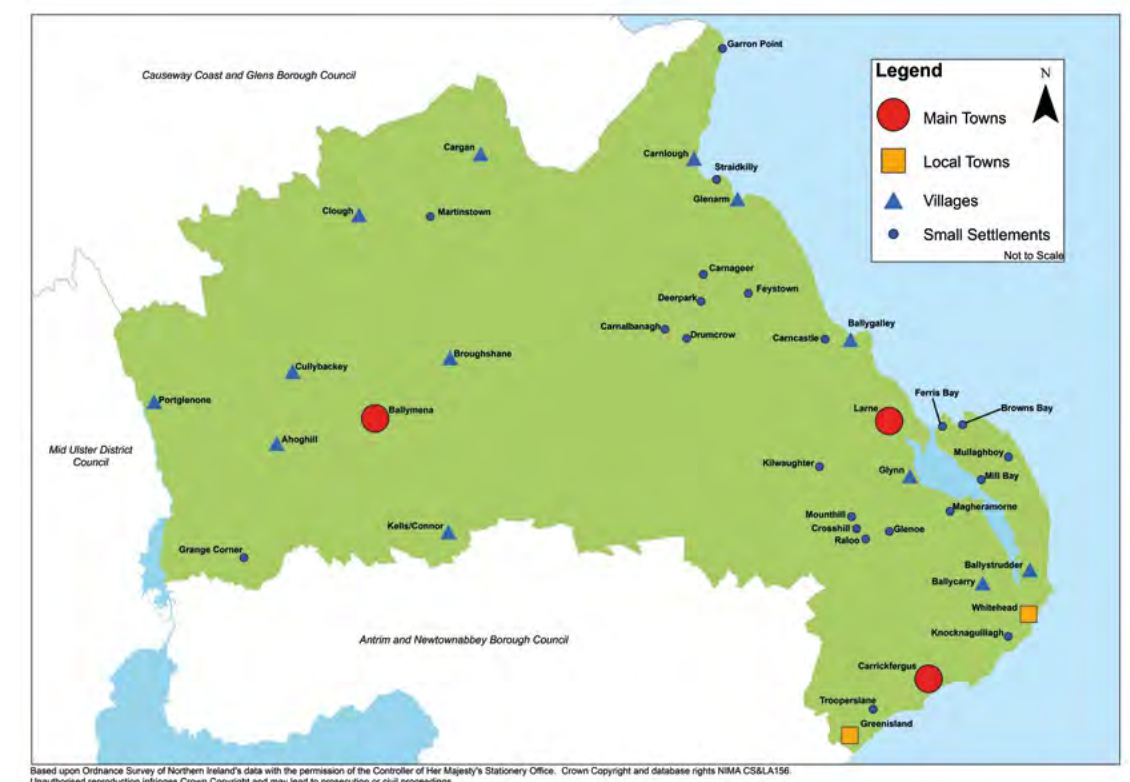
size, character and identity were preserved.

Carrickfergus is the only area to have local towns designated but has no villages and only two small settlements. Ballymena and Larne have a similar number of villages (seven and six respectively) but these vary in terms of size, form, function and capacity to accommodate growth. The majority of villages in the Ballymena Borough are larger in terms of population and range of services compared to those in Larne. Some of the larger settlements, such as Ahoghill, Cullybackey and Broughshane are quite urban in character, accommodating small business centres and a range of shops and services. The smaller villages have a more restricted range of shops and services.

In relation to small settlements, the former Larne Borough has 18 in comparison to only two in Ballymena and two in the

Carrickfergus area. Martinstown and Grange Corner, in the former Ballymena Borough, both have a greater population and range of services than those designated in Larne and Carrickfergus. One reason for the designation of a high number of small settlements with very limited facilities in Larne may be explained by the relatively restrictive rural policy formerly in place across the open countryside within the Larne Area Plan. At that time designating small settlements throughout the Green Belt and Countryside Policy Areas of the Borough allowed opportunities for small scale development in predetermined locations to help sustain rural communities. However, the publication of PPS 21 effectively removed these policy areas (save for the Undeveloped Coast) and has generally provided further opportunities for suitable development in the open countryside.

Map 5.1
Settlement
Hierarchy
from existing
Area Plans



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Our Potential Spatial Growth Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy

Key Issue 2 Settlement Hierarchy

Q5. Do you agree with the Preferred Option for our Settlement Hierarchy?

A successful growth strategy must be based on the foundation of a settlement hierarchy which is appropriate for Mid and East Antrim and its position within the Regional Spatial Framework.

Our new settlement hierarchy should be aligned to the RDS direction as set out in Table 5.1. It should also ensure that the settlements within the Borough are sustainable places to live and work. This means places which integrate housing, employment and essential services such as schools, shops, community and recreational facilities and public transport close together, and readily accessible by local communities.

Bringing housing, employment and services closer together in settlements will contribute to their viability by:

- Supporting existing and new services and facilities;
- Helping to create vibrant and lively places; and
- Improving accessibility for communities, by reducing the need for travel and providing the critical mass to support public transport services.

The settlement hierarchy will help us to decide the location of future development in the Borough and the broad proportion of housing and economic development that is appropriate for each tier (main

towns, small towns, villages etc.). At Plan Strategy stage, we will then use other technical studies to determine the right amount of new development that is appropriate for each settlement within a given tier. This will help to ensure that the scale of any new development planned through the LDP is appropriate for the particular settlement and that it is adequately supported by physical infrastructure and services.

The following evidence was used to inform the new settlement hierarchy and the options overleaf:

- Table 5.1: RDS Hierarchy of Settlement and Spatial Framework Guidance classified our largest settlements, (Ballymena and Larne) as hubs and recognises Carrickfergus as a town within the BMUA;
- Detailed settlement evaluation which examined the settlement hierarchy in existing area plans and assessed each settlement, below the top tier of the 3 main towns, to rank its sustainability (see Evidence Paper 11: Strategic Settlement Evaluation); and
- Analysis of built up nodes in the countryside to identify any potential new settlements that have a concentration of buildings displaying an obvious sense of cohesion and place and offering one or more community facility.



Preferred Option

Option 2 (a):
Adopt a new settlement hierarchy for the Borough, which includes amending the settlement hierarchy within the existing area plans through re-classification of existing settlements, addition of new settlements and de-designation of selected small settlements (see Table 5.3).

This would mean a new four-tier hierarchy that identifies three main towns, six small towns, 10 villages and 17 small settlements.

This option retains Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Larne at the top tier of the hierarchy as the three main towns. It also provides for re-classification of selected villages to small towns i.e. Ahoghill, Broughshane, Cullybackey and Portglenone and for the re-classification of the small settlement of Martinstown to a village. In addition, eight new

candidate small settlements are proposed.

This option would also de-designate twelve existing small settlements as it has been found that these settlements do not appear to have grown and offer little in the way of service provision. Some even lack any physical cohesion in the existing built form and any type of focal point that might indicate any sense of place. Also, due to the proximity of the existing small settlement of Trooperslane to the existing

development limits of Carrickfergus town it is proposed that it is subsumed into Carrickfergus.

This approach will omit the inconsistencies between the settlement hierarchies of the three legacy councils. It will provide a holistic and consistent approach across the Borough therefore ensuring a more equitable and sustainable approach to future growth and development.

Table 5.3 Proposed Settlement Hierarchy for Mid and East Antrim

Settlement Hierarchy

Main Towns	Ballymena Carrickfergus Larne			
Small Towns	Greenisland Whitehead Ahoghill	Broughshane Cullybackey Portglenone		
Villages	Cargan Clough Kells/Connor	Martinstown Ballycarry Ballygalley	Ballystrudder Carnlough Glenarm	Glynn
Small Settlements	Grange Corner Newtowncrommelin Moorfields Buckna Glarryford	Woodgreen Milltown Slaght Craigwarren	Carnalbanagh Carncastle Crosshill Glenoe	Magheramorne Mounthill Mullaghboy Raloo

Alternative Options

Option 2 (b):

Retain existing settlement hierarchy within existing area plans (see Table 5.4).

Table 5.4 Existing settlement hierarchy in existing area plans for former Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Larne Boroughs

Settlement Hierarchy	Ballymena	Larne	Carrickfergus
Main Towns	Ballymena	Larne	Carrickfergus
Local Towns			Whitehead Greenisland
Villages	Ahoghill Broughshane Cargan Clough Cullybackey Kells/Connor Portglenone	Ballycarry Ballygalley Ballystrudder Carnlough Glenarm Glynn	
Small Settlements	Grange Corner Martinstown	Browns Bay Carnageer Carnalbanagh Carncastle Crosshill Deerpark Drumcrow Ferris Bay Feystown Garron Point Glenoe Kilwaughter Magheramorne Mill Bay Mounthill Mullaghboy Raloo Straidkilly	Knocknagulliagh Trooperslane

Option 2 (c):

Amend existing settlement hierarchy within existing area plans through re-classification of existing settlements and addition of new settlements (see Table 5.5).

Table 5.5 Existing Settlement Hierarchy amended with re-classification of existing settlements and addition of new settlements

Settlement Hierarchy	Ballymena	Larne	Carrickfergus
Main Towns	Ballymena	Larne	Carrickfergus
Small Towns / Local Towns	Ahoghill Broughshane Cullybackey Portglenone		Whitehead Greenisland
Villages	Cargan Clough Kells/Connor Martinstown	Ballycarry Ballygalley Ballystrudder Carnlough Glenarm Glynn	
Small Settlements	Grange Corner Newtowncrommelin Moorfields Bucka Glarryford Woodgreen Milltown Slaght Craigyarwarren	Carnalbanagh Carncastle Crosshill Glenoe Magheramorne Mounthill Mullaghboy Browns Bay Carnageer Deerpark Drumcrow Ferris Bay Feystown Garron Point Kilwaughter Mill Bay Raloo Straidkilly	Knocknagulliagh Trooperslane

NOTE Green text - elevated settlements Pink text - new candidate settlements

Key Issue 4 Housing Allocation Strategy

The Housing Allocation Strategy is the first key component of our Spatial Growth Strategy.

Planning for future housing growth across the Borough is one of the core functions of the Local Development Plan as the provision of housing is key to population growth which in turn provides the critical mass to support the provision of infrastructure and services such as health, education and community facilities.

The RDS sets policy directions for the provision of housing that aim to deliver development in a more sustainable manner. Generally, this means providing additional housing in the Hubs (SFG 12) and sustaining rural communities living in smaller settlements (i.e. smaller towns and villages) and the open countryside (SFG 13). While the emphasis in the RDS is on directing most housing growth to the larger urban areas (or hubs), it also recognises the importance of supporting rural communities so that they remain vibrant and sustainable. The allocation of housing growth to specific locations within the district is a matter for decision through the development plan process.

In accordance with its objective to manage housing growth so as to achieve sustainable patterns of residential development, the RDS sets a regional target of 60% of new housing to be located in appropriate ‘brownfield’ sites (see Glossary) within the urban footprints (see Glossary) of settlements greater than 5,000 population (RG 8). In Mid & East Antrim, there are four settlements

which have a population greater than 5,000 – Ballymena (29,467), Carrickfergus (27,903), Larne (18,705) and Greenisland (5,484).

The SPPS underpins the regional guidelines in the RDS by promoting sustainable housing development. This includes encouraging more housing within existing urban areas, promoting good design and achieving balanced communities. The SPPS advises that housing allocation in Local Development Plans should be informed by:

The RDS Housing Growth Indicators (HGI's)

The RDS housing evaluation framework – which takes account of the varying capacities of settlements and will assist councils in making judgements on the allocation of housing growth.

Allowance for existing housing commitments – i.e. dwellings already constructed from the base date³, approvals not yet commenced and residential development proposals likely to be approved.

Urban Capacity Studies – an assessment of the potential of brownfield sites to provide housing land, the availability of infill sites and the potential to reuse existing urban buildings.

³ The base date associated with the revised HGI is 2012

Windfall housing – an estimate of the potential housing returns from previously developed land within the urban footprint which may become available for housing during the lifespan of the Local Development Plan.

Application of a sequential approach and identification of suitable sites for settlements in excess of 5,000 population.

Housing Needs Assessment/ Housing Market Analysis (HNA/ HMA) – carried out by NIHE, these studies provide an evidence base to guide the amount of land required to facilitate the right mix of housing tenures including open market and special housing needs such as affordable housing, social housing, supported housing and travellers’ accommodation.

Transport Assessments – these may be required for certain sites for residential use to achieve integration with public transport and other alternatives to the car.

Some of these steps need to be employed at a later stage in the Plan process. At this early stage, those most relevant to supporting the Spatial Growth Strategy are:

- The RDS Housing Growth Indicators (HGI's); and
- Existing Housing Commitments.

Housing Growth Indicators (HGI's)

The RDS expresses regional housing needs as Housing Growth Indicators (HGI's), which are produced as a guide for the preparation of Local Development Plans. The HGI is an estimate of the new dwelling requirement for the Council area over most of the Plan period. The figures are based on current population/household formation trends making the assumption that these trends will continue in the future. They are therefore guidance, rather than a cap on housing development in the area or a target to be achieved.

In April 2016, the Department for Infrastructure published a revised HGI figure of 5,400 dwellings for Mid and East Antrim Borough for the period 2012-2025, using 2012-based household projections. This is a significant reduction on the previous HGI for the period 2008 to 2025 which allocated a total of 14,000 dwellings (approximately) across the three legacy Councils. Projecting the figure of 5,400 on a pro rata basis to 2030 for the period 2012-2030 gives a figure of 7,477. This translates to 6,230 for the plan period 2015-2030.

Options for Housing Allocation

At this stage in the plan process, it is not considered necessary to set out the precise allocation for any given settlement but it is reasonable to consider how housing should be apportioned across the various tiers of settlement. The precise number of dwellings that will be allocated to each settlement will be set out in the draft Plan Strategy, taking account of the size of the settlement, the availability of services and facilities and its environmental capacity for development. All the housing allocation options below take into account RDS direction, including the RDS Hierarchy of Settlement and Spatial Framework Guidance (see Table 5.1), the HGI figure of 6,230 for the plan period and our proposed settlement hierarchy. However, our preferred option is seen as the most supportive of our proposed Spatial Growth Strategy.





Preferred Option

Option 4 (a):

Maintain the status quo in terms of housing allocation based on the proportion of households living in main towns and small towns at the time of the 2011 Census and increase the percentage of housing growth to villages and small settlements at the expense of the open countryside.

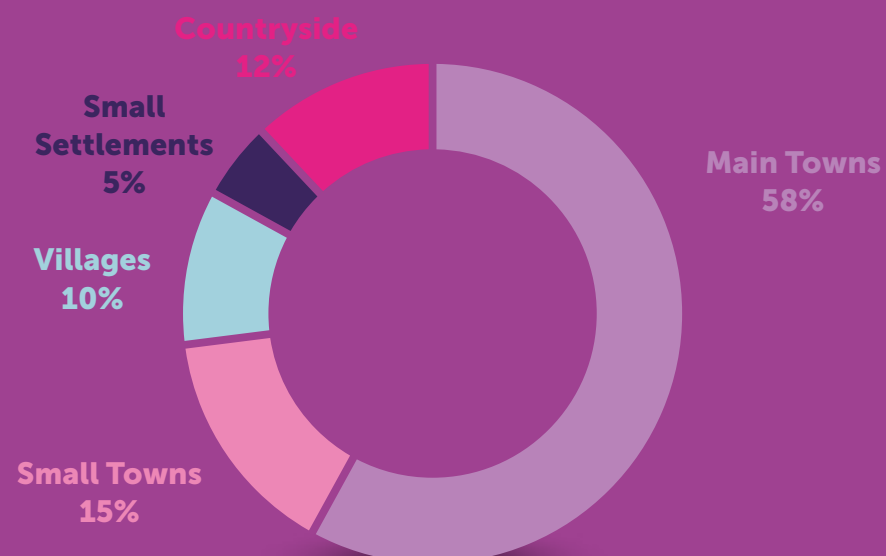
Therefore allocate 58.5% of the projected HGI figure to main towns, 14.9% to small towns, 9.6% to villages, 5% to small settlements and 12% to the countryside. This would result in an allocation of 3,645 houses between the main towns, 928 across the small towns, 598 to the villages, 312 to the small settlements and 748 across the open countryside.

Under this option the main towns and small towns will receive a

housing allocation based on the existing share of households in the 2011 Census, the percentage of housing to be allocated to villages and small settlement however, will be increased above this existing share at the expense of the open countryside. This option aims to conform with the RDS in that most housing growth is directed to the main towns of Ballymena, Larne and Carrickfergus whilst ensuring that the needs of the rural community are met in a sustainable

manner. By directing more housing growth to villages and small settlements than the other options, this preferred option also supports that element of the Spatial Growth Strategy to, 'sustain rural communities living in and around villages and small settlements'. The impact this could have on new dwellings in the open countryside is further considered in the Rural Housing paragraph below.

Increase villages and small settlements at the expense of open countryside

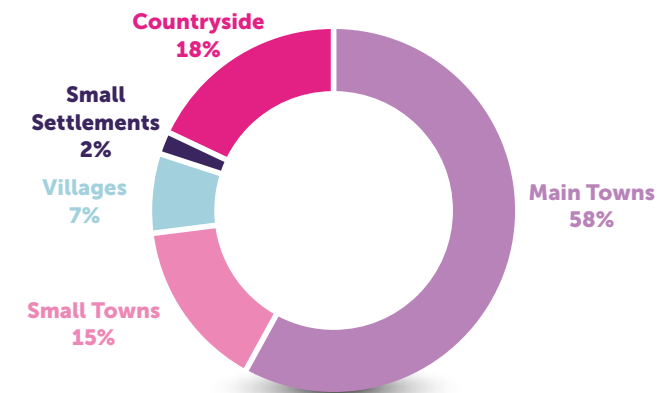


Alternative Options

Option 4 (b):

Maintain the status quo in terms of housing allocation based on the proportion of households living in the main towns, small towns, villages, small settlements and countryside at the time of the 2011 Census.

Status Quo - based on location of 2011 Households in the Borough

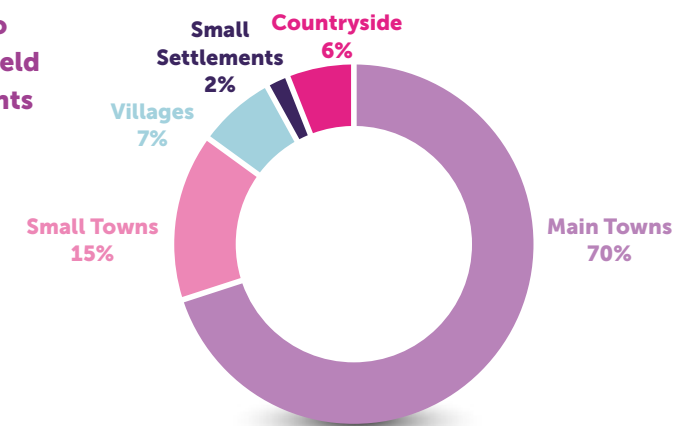


Therefore allocate 58.5% of the projected HGI figure to main towns, 14.9% to small towns, 6.6% to villages, 1.8% to small settlements and 18.2% to the countryside.

Option 4 (c):

Increase the ability to meet the RDS 60% brownfield target in settlements over 5,000.

Increases ability to meet 60% brownfield target in settlements over 5,000



Therefore allocate 70% of the projected HGI figure to main towns, 14.9% to small towns, 6.6% to villages, 2.5% to small settlements and 6% to the countryside.

Q7. Do you agree with our Preferred Option for allocating housing growth across the Borough?

Existing Housing Commitments

Our latest Housing Monitor is reflected in the Housing Land Availability 2016 Report⁴ and covers the period from 1 August 2014 to 31 March 2016.

It provides the most up-to-date evidence on current housing supply through indicating the approximate remaining capacity within all currently designated settlements and for all the settlements in total.

The Housing Monitor shows remaining capacity for approximately 12,636 units in all settlements (Table 5.7). Significant housing capacity is particularly evident in the three main towns (Ballymena: 3,614 units; Carrickfergus: 2,794 units; and Larne: 2,869 units). Much of this capacity arises from the potential to develop land zoned by existing area plans which is currently undeveloped. Further details on this are set out below.

The Ballymena Plan 1986-2001 zoned 150 hectares of land for housing within Ballymena town. The Housing Monitor indicates that 87.17 hectares of zoned housing land remains undeveloped in Ballymena town and this has capacity for approximately 2,125

units. Land was not specifically zoned for housing in the lower tier settlements but rather Housing Land Use Policy Areas were designated across five of the villages, and the 21.53 hectares that remain undeveloped have the capacity to accommodate approximately 591 units. These undeveloped hectares and potential units can be broken down as follows within the five villages: Ahoghill: 4.71 hectares/120 units, Broughshane: 3.28 hectares/83 units, Cullybackey: 9.24 hectares/238 units, Kells/Connor: 2.9 hectares/115 units and Portglenone: 1.40 hectares/35 units.

The Larne Area Plan 2010 zoned 145.2 hectares of land for housing within Larne town. Land was not zoned for housing within the villages and small settlements. The latest Housing Monitor indicates that 63 hectares of zoned housing land remains undeveloped in Larne town and this has capacity for approximately 1,760 units.

The Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan zoned a total of 181 hectares housing land across the Carrickfergus district. 131 hectares were allocated to Carrickfergus Town, 41 hectares to Greenisland and nine hectares to Whitehead. The Housing Monitor indicates that within Carrickfergus town 80.16 hectares of zoned housing land remains undeveloped and this has the capacity for approximately

2,070 units. Out of the 51 housing sites identified within Carrickfergus town in BMAP 32 are complete, 11 are committed on which development is not started or ongoing and 8 are uncommitted. Of the 41 hectares allocated within Greenisland 16.07 hectares of the housing land remains undeveloped and this has the capacity for approximately 384 units. From the original designations 9 housing sites are complete, 6 could be classed as active with development either on going or subject to an extant approval and 5 sites remain uncommitted with no planning history.

Of the nine hectares zoned for housing in Whitehead, 1.5 hectares of land remains undeveloped and this has the capacity for 30 units. However, five out of the seven zoned housing sites are complete in terms of development and the remaining two are subject to extant approvals, therefore at present there is no remaining designated housing land available within Whitehead.

Therefore, the 247.9 hectares of undeveloped zoned land within the existing three main towns and two local towns have the potential capacity to accommodate some 6,369 units, in addition to the 21.53 hectares and 591 unit potential capacity within the Housing Land Use Policy Areas in five of the Ballymena villages.

Of the remaining sites within the Housing Monitor, outside of housing zonings, it is estimated that there are currently 1,430 units benefitting from live permission or development is ongoing within them (i.e. excluding expired permissions).

When comparison is made between the HGI figure of 6,230 and the potential 12,636 units from Housing Monitor sites within settlements, with live/expired permissions and potential on unimplemented housing zonings, it would appear to demonstrate that there is an excessive supply of land across the Borough to meet housing need over the plan period. However, of the 12,636 units, the current realistic potential from these monitored sites is reduced to 8,390 units (i.e. 6,960 units from zoned housing land or Housing Land Use Policy Areas and 1,430 units from live permissions) which is 35% higher than the HGI for the plan period. Further studies will be required to investigate the spatial distribution of these existing commitments to ensure housing growth aligns with our proposed Spatial Growth Strategy.

⁴ www.midandeanstrim.gov.uk/downloads/HM2016_REPORT.pdf



Table 5.7 Housing Commitments within existing settlements in Mid and East Antrim as of 31 March 2016

	Undeveloped Hectares	Undeveloped Units
Zoned housing sites in Ballymena town	87.17	2,125
Zoned housing sites in Larne town	63	1,760
Zoned housing sites in Carrickfergus town	80.06	2,070
Zoned housing sites in Greenisland	16.07	384
Zoned housing sites in Whitehead	1.5	30
Housing Land Use Policy Areas in 5 villages	21.53	591
Total	269.43	6,690
Unzoned Housing Monitor sites with live permissions	47.6	1,430
Total Housing Monitor sites (including potential on unimplemented housing zonings and sites not started or ongoing with live & expired housing permissions)	454.8	12,636



Rural Housing

There is currently no rural housing monitor undertaken to assess the quantum of houses being built in the countryside, outside existing settlements, and therefore an estimate can only be made based on the number of rural planning applications approved. Rural dwelling approvals are currently influenced by policy set out in Planning Policy Statement 21, which came into effect in June

2010. This policy has been for the most part carried forward in the SPPS. Between the years 2010 to 2016, a total of 763 dwellings were approved in the rural area across the Borough, and this reduces to 468 dwellings when approvals for replacement dwellings are excluded. This represents an average of 78 new single dwellings per annum in the open countryside. Assuming this rate remains constant over the 15 year plan period, under the current

policy context this would represent an additional 1,170 new dwellings in the rural area. Our Housing Allocation preferred option allocates 748 units to the open countryside (this is a difference of 422 units, which equates to a difference of 28 units per year). Amendments to existing rural policy may therefore be appropriate in order to better align patterns of rural housing development with our Housing Allocation Strategy.

Q8. Taking account of the HGI for the Borough, our proposed Housing Allocation Strategy and existing commitments do you think there is:

- a) sufficient land currently zoned for housing?**
- b) insufficient land currently zoned for housing?**
- c) too much land zoned for housing?**

Economic Development Strategy

The Economic Development Strategy (EDS) is the second key component of our Spatial Growth Strategy.

Basically the EDS will determine in broad terms how much land is needed for economic development and where it should be located.

The top priority of our Corporate Plan is to grow and diversify the economy, particularly in the wake of the recent loss of some 2,000 manufacturing jobs. Our Community Plan ‘Putting People First’ includes Sustainable Jobs as one of its five key themes and reinforces the imperative to increase the employment base in the Borough.

Our Local Development Plan has a key role to play in achieving a vibrant economy and facilitating employment whether through the zoning of land or the development of planning policy to support business development and job growth. The Plan also has an important role in supporting the vision and aims of the emerging Integrated Economic Development Strategy (IEDS) for Mid and East Antrim (‘Amplify’) by ensuring that sufficient and suitable land is provided in the appropriate places to retain existing businesses and attract new investment to

our Borough. ‘Amplify’ has a vision for Mid and East Antrim to become Northern Ireland’s leading centre for Advanced Manufacturing and Agri-Food with recognised capabilities in Tourism, Financial and Business Services, and Digital Technologies.

The Plan’s Economic Development Strategy will be the foundation for moving forward in this manner. However, in seeking to meet local aspirations, the Strategy must also take due account of the regional direction.

The Regional Development Strategy seeks to promote a balanced spread of economic opportunities across Northern Ireland. RG1 seeks to ensure an adequate supply of land to facilitate sustainable economic growth, whilst SFG11 seeks to promote economic development opportunities at hubs and states that hubs, or clusters of hubs, should be considered first in decision making concerning new development. SFG13 aims to sustain rural communities living in small settlements and the countryside and facilitate the development of rural industry, business and enterprise in appropriate locations.

The SPSS has six regional strategic objectives for facilitating economic development through the planning system. The most relevant for the Economic Development Strategy of the LDP are highlighted:

- **tackle disadvantage and facilitate job creation by ensuring the**

provision of a generous supply of land suitable for economic development and a choice and range in terms of quality;

- **sustain a vibrant rural community by supporting rural economic development of an appropriate nature and scale;**
- **support the re-use of previously developed economic development sites and buildings where they meet the needs of particular economic sectors;**
- **promote mixed-use development and improve integration between transport, economic development and other land uses, including housing.**

Employment Land Evaluation Framework

Our Economic Development Strategy will be finalised after further study and brought forward through the Plan Strategy, which is the next phase of work on the LDP. In this POP we will set out the likely approach based on current evidence.

In all of this, we will utilise the Employment Land Evaluation Framework (ELEF) as set out in the RDS and Table 5.8 below. This will be used to assess both the quantities of land needed and inform decisions on where it should be zoned or otherwise identified at Local Policies Plan stage.

Table 5.8 Employment Land Evaluation Framework

Stage 1 Taking stock of the existing situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An initial assessment of the ‘fitness for purpose’ including the environmental implications of the existing employment land portfolio.• This is principally in order to identify the ‘best’ employment sites to be retained & protected and identifying sites that should clearly be released for other uses.
Stage 2 Understanding future requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quantify the amount of employment land required across the main business sectors during the development plan period.• This is achieved by assessing both demand and supply elements and assessing how they can be met in aggregate by the existing stock of business premises and by allocated sites.• Account should also be taken of turnover of existing sites due to relocation or closures. Both short/medium term and strategic provision need to be considered in this process.
Stage 3 Identifying a ‘new’ portfolio of sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Devise qualitative site appraisal criteria to determine which sites meet the occupier or developer needs.• Confirm the existing sites to be retained, replaced or released, and any gaps in the portfolio.• In this allocation, consideration should be given to previously used sites, and in the reallocation, the environmental impact of one site relative to others should be included.• The results of Stage 2, together with this site appraisal should provide a robust justification for altering allocations for employment land.

Supply of Economic Development Land

Stage 1 in the RDS ELEF refers to “Taking stock of the existing situation”. We have now taken stock in regard to the gross supply of zoned economic land not yet developed. An assessment of individual sites in terms of their ‘fitness for purpose’ (e.g. to exclude those subject to significant development constraints such as flooding) will be conducted during the next phase of work on the LDP. Nevertheless, from work carried out to date, it has been ascertained that the supply of currently undeveloped zoned

land is considerable. Results are summarised below:

- There was 308 hectares (ha) of land zoned for economic development across our Borough within the three existing Area Plans and this land was centred primarily on the three main towns.
- The most recent survey of industrial land concluded that approximately 162ha of this remains undeveloped.
- The Larne Area Plan 2010 zoned 84ha of land for economic development (industry), with approximately 47ha remaining undeveloped.
- BMAP 2015 zoned 151ha of land for economic development

(employment land) in Carrickfergus. Approximately 76ha remains undeveloped.

- The Ballymena Area Plan 1986-2001 zoned 73ha of land for economic development (industry). Approximately 38ha remains undeveloped.

It should also be noted that vacant lands that were last used for economic development, but not zoned as such in existing development plans, also contribute to the existing supply. Some of these areas, such as the Michelin site in Ballymena, are substantial.

Need for Economic Development Land

Stage 2 of the RDS ELEF requires an “Understanding of future requirements”. Part of this involves ‘quantifying the amount’ of employment land required across the main business sectors during the development plan period. Again, this is a relatively detailed assessment that will be carried out during the next phase of work on the LDP, and subsequent to the publication of our IEDS. Nevertheless some less detailed initial work has been carried out to inform the POP. This provides a very broad indication of the quantum of land that could be needed for economic development over the Plan period.

Estimates based on Method One are based on an assessment of annual take up rates of zoned land which is then projected forward over the Plan period, as an indication of future requirements.

The average take up of zoned economic land in the Ballymena Area Plan since adoption is 1.33ha per annum, suggesting that 20ha will be needed up to 2030. Theoretically, there is sufficient land zoned in the Ballymena Area Plan to meet demand beyond 2030 based on these past rates of uptake (with 18ha surplus). In the Larne Area Plan, the average take up of land zoned for industry has been 2.18ha per annum to date, suggesting some 33ha will be needed up to 2030. Approximately 47ha remain undeveloped therefore

it would appear there would be sufficient land zoned to meet demand, with approximately 15ha surplus. In Carrickfergus, BMAP zoned 151ha for employment use and 76ha remain undeveloped. In the former Carrickfergus Area Plan, the average take up of land zoned for industry was 0.6ha per annum over the Plan period. Based on this figure it would suggest some 9ha may be needed in Carrickfergus up to 2030. Therefore, based on these figures, the zonings in BMAP would meet the potential demand with around 67ha surplus at the end of the Plan period.

Borough wide, this would equate to a total of approximately 62ha of zoned economic land being needed over the Plan period. Given that some 162ha remains undeveloped, it is considered potential demand would be met, with a surplus of approximately 100ha. However, in applying such a broad-brush approach, recognition is not given to the disparities between take up on serviced sites brought forward by Invest NI and un-serviced land in private ownership. Furthermore, with this method of assessment, take up rates can also be skewed by the development of one single site.

Estimates based on Method Two involve taking account of anticipated job creation to the year 2021 as envisaged by the emerging Integrated Economic Development Strategy (IEDS), and amending this for the Plan period. The IEDS targets an estimated 2,200 net jobs between 2017 and 2021. Over the

15 year plan period this equates to a net increase of approximately 8,250 jobs.

Previous surveys of employment on industrial estates carried out by DOE Planning Service in 2006 suggested that for every hectare of operational industrial land, approximately 50 jobs are provided. If the 8,250 job opportunities targeted in the IEDS were to be provided on zoned economic land only, this would mean that approximately 165ha would be required over the Plan period. It is however acknowledged that all new jobs will not be on zoned economic land given that many businesses will be able to expand within their current footprint or use vacant properties in town centres or other suitable locations.

Given that approximately 162ha of zoned economic land remains undeveloped throughout our Borough, it may be considered that additional economic zonings would not be required over the Plan period, irrespective of which of the two methods is used. However, the SPPS requires that Plans provide not only an ample supply of economic development land for the Plan period, but also a range and choice of sites in terms of size and location to promote flexibility and provide for the varying types of economic activity.

Assessing New Sites for Economic Development

Stage Three of the RDS ELEF requires the LDP to “Identify a new portfolio of sites” in order to meet previously identified needs. This also includes assessment of existing sites. Whilst current evidence would suggest that there is likely to be a sufficient supply of land across the main towns, this may not be in the most appropriate locations. For example, our current zonings may fail in some instances to meet the needs of emerging new sectors such as Advanced Manufacturing, Agri-food, Financial and Business services, Tourism, and Digital Technology. Accordingly, if it is considered that there is a need for additional land, our Plan will need to consider the best locations for new sites.

We will do this in accordance with Stage Three of the ELEF in setting out appropriate site appraisal criteria in the Plan Strategy. These criteria will aim to meet developer needs – for example for traditional industrial sites, business park locations, town centre office space,

or mixed use development. They will also seek to take advantage of existing infrastructure such as proximity to the strategic transport network, and to align with wider sustainability objectives.

It will be a key task of our Plan to deliver sites and to facilitate development that will increase the employment base in our Borough. Recent road improvements such as the A8 and A2 upgrades have made out-commuting easier, but have also made Larne and Carrickfergus an easier place to commute in to. We will aim to take advantage of Ballymena’s location on a key Transport Corridor in close proximity to Belfast and the International Airport, whilst also promoting Larne as a key Gateway as identified in the RDS.

Economic Development Strategy Proposed Approach

Pending further detailed studies along the lines previously indicated, the Preferred Option for the Economic Development Strategy for the purposes of the POP is based on an extrapolation of the

2017-2021 IEDS target. Therefore, the LDP will consider the potential need for approximately an additional 8,000 net jobs over the Plan period. The suggested approach includes the following elements:

- Subject to further assessment, retain the existing supply of undeveloped zoned land and vacant/under-used land that was last used for economic development in the three main towns.
- Make provision for additional land in Ballymena, where there is currently limited choice in the range of zoned sites.
- Make additional provision for sites for small business units for start-up/grow-on business, where there is an established need in main and small towns (Chapter Six refers).
- Assess the role for Town Centres in meeting economic development needs.
- Facilitate economic development needs in villages, small settlements and the open countryside in line with the policy direction of the SPPS and the LDP.

Q9. Do you agree with our suggested approach to developing the LDP Economic Development Strategy?

Retail Strategy

The Retail Strategy is the third key component of our Spatial Growth Strategy. Retailing is an important economic driver and making provision for retail growth in line with our Spatial Growth Strategy will offer maximum benefit to our local economy.

Given that most retailing is focused in our town centres, protecting and enhancing the retail function in these locations is a key component of our proposed retail strategy. This in turn will serve to underpin our Spatial Growth Strategy and aim to focus major economic development in the three main towns.

Increasingly, town centres can no longer depend only on retail development. Town centres are important hubs for a range of land uses and activities and can have a positive impact on those who live, work and visit them. While they do provide a wide variety of retailing and related facilities, they also accommodate employment, leisure and cultural uses.

Our LDP has a key part to play in supporting the diversity and vitality of town centres and contributing to their success. In seeking to focus retail growth and facilitate appropriate diversity in town centres our retail strategy will align with the regional direction,

in particular with the aim of the SPPS “to support and sustain vibrant town centres across Northern Ireland through their promotion as the appropriate first choice locations for retailing and other complementary functions, consistent with the RDS”.

Accordingly, a ‘town centre first’ approach for the location of future retailing and other main town centre uses lies at the heart of our retail strategy.

While the focus of our retail strategy is on promoting retail growth and diversity in town centres, other smaller settlements must be catered for in accordance with the regional direction. Our retail strategy therefore takes account of the RDS aim (SFG 13) ‘to sustain rural communities living in smaller settlements and the open countryside’. It also reflects the approach of the SPPS to retailing in smaller rural settlements and the countryside (paragraph 6.278 of SPPS refers).

Informing the Retail Strategy

Town centres

The SPPS advises that in preparing the LDP, we must undertake an assessment of the need or capacity for retail and other main town centre uses across the plan area. The most recent formal assessment was commissioned by DOE in 2009 to inform the floorspace need/ capacity of Ballymena and Larne town centres. A similar study was carried out for Carrickfergus town centre in 2003 (updated in 2006) to inform the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP). We must also prepare town centre health checks and regularly review these, preferably once every five years. Full town centre health checks were completed for Ballymena and Larne Borough Councils in 2009. In 2013 a ‘snap shot’ health check was carried out for all main towns in Northern Ireland to inform the SPPS town centres and retailing policy. At Plan Strategy stage we will update these assessments to determine the right amount of new floorspace required for retail and other uses within each town centre. These studies will also highlight current strengths and opportunities to be exploited as well as weaknesses and threats which need to be addressed.

Network and Hierarchy of Centres

The SPPS also indicates that our LDP should define a network and hierarchy of centres for the Plan area, including – town, district and local centres, and acknowledging the role of rural centres. This process is similar to that of defining the settlement hierarchy where centres are classified according to their role and function. This will inform decisions about where commercial growth and development should take place. It is important that this is set out in our retail strategy and, in turn, reflected in our Spatial Growth Strategy.

Our new LDP therefore provides the opportunity to reassess the existing hierarchy of centres and potentially make adjustments to the classifications that currently apply.

Existing centres

The Ballymena Area Plan designates the main town centre and defines commercial centres in the villages. Larne Area Plan and BMAP only designate town centres. Our Borough does not contain any district or local centres (see Table 5.9 for the role of such centres) at present. It is considered that retaining these existing classifications fails to recognise the present roles performed by our various commercial centres across the Borough in terms of the range and quantity of shops and services that they provide; nor do they reflect the potential for our small towns and village centres. It is therefore proposed that the Plan should develop a revised retail hierarchy which aligns more closely with our Spatial Growth Strategy, so as to manage retail growth in a coherent manner for the overall benefit of citizens. We propose the following classification and roles of centres in our new hierarchy:



Table 5.9 Proposed classifications for the Hierarchy of Centres

Tier	Classification	Role
Tier 1	Main Town Centre	A large range of shops, businesses and community facilities to serve a significant hinterland which includes smaller neighbouring towns. Could include shopping centres, retail warehousing, a range of restaurants, a leisure centre with pool, visitors/tourism centre, advice centre, arts and culture centre.
Tier 2	Small Town Centre	A range of shops businesses and community facilities to serve a hinterland which includes neighbouring villages.
Tier 3	Village Centre	A limited range of shops, generally comprising a grocery store, occasionally petrol filling station and other small shops of a local nature.
Tier 4	District Centre	A localised area with a group of shops, separate from the town centre, usually containing at least one food supermarket or superstore and non-retail services such as banks, bars and food outlets.
Tier 5	Local Centre	A localised area having a small grouping of shops, generally comprising a general grocery store, a sub-post office, occasionally a pharmacy and other small shops of a local nature.

- Q10.** Do you agree with the proposed classification for our centres and their suggested roles?
- Q11.** Can you identify any groupings of retail and associated development that could be considered for designation as
- a) District centres and b) Local centres?

This leads to alternative options to be considered in defining the hierarchy of centres.





Key Issue 5 Hierarchy of Centres

Preferred Option

Option 5 (a):
Align the Hierarchy of Centres with the proposed Settlement Hierarchy, but also include district and/or local centres

Table 5.10 Proposed Hierarchy of Centres to align with the proposed Settlement Hierarchy for Mid and East Antrim but also to include district and local centres

Hierarchy of Centres				
Main Towns	Ballymena Carrickfergus Larne			
Small Towns	Greenisland Whitehead Ahoghill	Broughshane Cullybackey Portglenone		
Villages	Cargan Clough Kells/Connor	Martinstown Ballycarry Ballygalley	Ballystrudder Carnlough Glenarm	Glynn
District/Local Centres	Braidwater Retail Park (Ballymena) Galgorm (Ballymena) Harryville (Ballymena) Redlands (Larne) Larne town centre south of Harbour Highway Waterfront Marina (Carrickfergus)			

This option would enable the LDP to bring forward a full network and hierarchy of centres to reflect the specific circumstances of Mid and East Antrim.

The three main towns of Ballymena, Larne and Carrickfergus would be promoted as the first choice locations for uses similar to tier one in the hierarchy of centres (see Table 5.9).

In keeping with the proposed settlement hierarchy, the preferred option would acknowledge the proposed re-classification of Ahoghill, Broughshane, Cullybackey and Portglenone from villages to small towns as well as the re-categorisation of Greenisland and Whitehead from local towns to small towns. These settlements would be promoted as suitable

locations for uses similar to tier two of the hierarchy of centres (see Table 5.9).

Established clusters of retail and associated uses which are located outside of designated town centre boundaries (e.g. Galgorm and parts of Harryville in Ballymena and Redlands in Larne) may have potential to be designated as district or local “centres”. Appropriate uses would be those specified in Table 5.9.

This option could also provide opportunity to re-designate, as local or district centres, some areas currently within established town centre boundaries, if considered appropriate. For example areas cut off from the town centre by major roads such as Braidwater Retail Park (Ballymena), land to the south of Harbour Highway (Larne) and the Castle and Waterfront Area (Carrickfergus).

Policy Implications

This option will enable us to tailor policy to introduce a sequential approach in relation to retailing and other town centre uses. This will mean that such developments will have to demonstrate that there is no appropriate site within the desired town centre before they can be permitted to locate on an edge of centre or out of centre site.

It would also enable us to tailor policy which would aim to retain and consolidate existing district and local centres as a focus for local everyday shopping, ensuring their role is complementary to the role and function of other settlements at higher levels in the Hierarchy of Centres.

Alternative Options

Option 5 (b):

Align the Hierarchy of Centres with the proposed Settlement Hierarchy for Mid and East Antrim.

Table 5.11
Proposed Hierarchy of Centres to align with the proposed Settlement Hierarchy for Mid and East Antrim

Hierarchy of Centres				
Main Towns	Ballymena Carrickfergus Larne			
Small Towns	Greenisland Whitehead Ahoghill	Broughshane Cullybackey Portglenone		
Villages	Cargan Clough Kells/Connor	Martinstown Ballycarry Ballygalley	Ballystrudder Carnlough Glenarm	Glynn

Option 5 (c):

Designate only Ballymena, Larne and Carrickfergus town centres (as designated or amended) as the main focus of retail development and have minimal intervention by the LDP below this level.

Table 5.12 Proposed Hierarchy of Centres

Hierarchy of Centres	
Main Towns	Ballymena Carrickfergus Larne

Q12. Do you agree with the Preferred Option for defining our network and hierarchy of centres?

Balancing the Spatial Growth Strategy with Environmental Considerations

The Spatial Growth Strategy and associated sectoral strategies set out in this chapter are aimed at promoting sustainable housing and economic growth throughout our Borough. This in turn will have positive social implications for our citizens.

However, as indicated in Chapter One, sustainable development must also pay due regard to environmental considerations. This is necessary because our unique environment in itself is worthy of protection. However, the safeguarding and enhancement of our environment also has positive economic and social implications. For example, our special coastline, upland landscapes, and built and archaeological heritage are all vital to our growing tourism economy. These environmental assets coupled with the general cleanliness of our environment also support public health and wellbeing.

Accordingly it is important to consider this chapter of the POP alongside the context of later chapters, particularly Chapter Nine on ‘Stewardship of our Built Environment and Creating Places’ and Chapter 10 on ‘Protecting and Accessing our Natural Environment’.



6.0

Sustainable Economic Growth

Economic Development

Retailing and Town Centres

Tourism

Minerals Development

This theme is derived from the LDP objectives set out in Chapter Four:

- To encourage existing and new businesses to invest with confidence in Mid and East Antrim.
- To provide a sufficient supply and choice of sites for business and employment uses so as to assist in promoting economic growth in Mid and East Antrim.
- To promote diversity in economic activity and job creation, through matching sites to the locational needs of particular sectors, including new and emerging sectors.
- To recognise the value of entrepreneurship and innovation to economic development and to encourage this through supportive planning policy.
- To support and sustain vibrant town centres in Ballymena, Larne and Carrickfergus.
- To assist with economic regeneration and physical renewal, particularly where this will benefit disadvantaged communities.
- To support tourism as a key growth sector in Mid and East Antrim by creating and identifying

opportunities for sustainable tourism development and by safeguarding key tourism assets from inappropriate development.

- To facilitate economic development of an appropriate nature, scale and location in the countryside; including within the traditional primary sectors (agriculture, forestry and mining), while recognising the growing importance of self-employment, homeworking and farm diversification.
- To manage the use of energy, water, waste and mineral resources in an efficient and sustainable manner.

This theme is also informed by the Sustainability Appraisal objectives as set out in the scoping report, particularly the following:

- enable sustainable economic growth; and
- protect physical resources and use sustainably.

These objectives plus the regional and local policy context, relating to sustainable economic growth and our evidence base, have all informed the issues set out in this chapter.



Growing a sustainable economy and investing in the future is a key strategic priority of both the Northern Ireland Executive and our Council. Long term economic growth will be achieved by improving competitiveness and building a larger and more export driven sector. This will involve a rebalancing of our local economy to meet the challenges of a highly competitive global environment, so as to create more employment and higher paid jobs thereby enhancing the health and living standards of everyone.

We will also seek to grow our local economy by building on existing strengths in other economic sectors such as our agricultural, tourism and mineral resources and through enabling our town centres to fulfil their economic potential.

Growing a sustainable and vibrant economy in Mid and East Antrim will require ongoing significant inputs from a wide range of organisations and stakeholders, in order to continue to build a reservoir of expertise in such fields as education, skills training, marketing, finance etc. However, the planning system is also a vital ingredient in this mix. Through the LDP, we will seek to ensure that the locational and land use needs of the various economic sectors are met in a sustainable manner for the benefit of all our citizens.

Regional Policy Context

The regional policy context

for economic development is largely set out in the Regional Development Strategy (RDS 2035) and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS). This is dealt with in Chapter Five, in so far as it applies to the economic development aspects of our Spatial Growth Strategy. Where the regional policy context is specific to particular economic sectors (such as industry, retail, tourism, or minerals development) then it is referenced in this chapter in the relevant sections.

Local Policy Context

The local policy context for economic development includes:

- Our Corporate Plan
- Our Community Plan
- Our emerging Integrated Economic Development Strategy
- Our emerging Tourism Strategy
- Existing development plans covering our legacy Council areas.

At this point it is sufficient to note that the top priority of our Corporate Plan is to grow the economy of Mid and East Antrim. The local policy context is referred to in more detail later in this chapter, where it is particularly relevant to the various economic sectors discussed.

The Evidence Base

High-level statistics relating to the economy and employment in Mid and East Antrim are referred to in Chapter Three (District Profile). More detailed information emerging from our evidence base

is set out later in this chapter, where it is particularly relevant to the various economic sectors under consideration.

For further details relating to the evidence base please refer to LDP Position Paper 3 (Employment and Economic Development), Position Paper 4 (Town Centre and Opportunity Sites), Position Paper 7 (Tourism) and Position Paper 12 (Minerals Development).

Available at www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/plan-preparation-process

Identification of Key Issues

In order to ensure that the LDP brings forward an appropriate strategic framework, the remainder of this section sets out key issues that have emerged from the evidence base, consultee engagement, Council aims and objectives and other sources. These issues are particular to various economic sectors and are considered with reference to alternative options that might be adopted through the LDP and amendments to existing regional planning policy that may be necessary. The sectors discussed are as follows:

- Economic Development
- Retailing and Town Centres
- Tourism
- Minerals Development

Economic Development

- In 2013 there were 50,243 jobs in Mid and East Antrim.
- In 2015, 77% of the working age population in our Borough were economically active.
- In 2015, there were 4,530 registered businesses in our Borough (7% of all businesses in NI). The largest sectors are Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (30%), Construction (12%) and Retail (9%).
- Our Borough is over-represented in Manufacturing (21% which is nearly double the NI level of 11%), but under-represented in Information and Communication (1% vs 4%) and Professional, Scientific & Technical (2% vs 8%).
- Our Borough has proved to be an attractive location for investment and business. Our key employers include Wrightbus and Moy Park in Ballymena, Caterpillar and Terumo in Larne, and AES and Ryobi in Carrickfergus.
- The employment rate for those aged 16-64 in our Borough was 74% (NI 68%).
- Employment levels in our Borough are expected not to return to 2010 levels until after 2030, with between 4,700 and 6,600 replacement jobs needed to replace the 2,000+ manufacturing jobs recently lost within our Borough.

Regional Policy Context

The implication of the RDS and SPPS for the economic development aspects of our Spatial Growth Strategy are set out in

Chapter Five. More specifically for ‘mainstream’ economic development (as defined in PPS 4), the SPPS highlights the importance of retaining land and buildings which are well located and suited for such purposes so as to ensure a sufficient ongoing supply. It states that planning permission should not normally be granted for proposals that would result in the loss of land zoned for economic development use, or for proposals that may be incompatible with nearby economic development enterprises.

Our LDP will therefore specify the type or range of economic development uses that will be acceptable within zoned sites or broader areas of economic activity. Where appropriate, our LDP will also provide direction as to where particular types of economic development should be located in order to meet Plan objectives. In accordance with the SPPS, previously developed land within settlements last used for economic development will normally be identified and protected for such use, where it remains suitable.

Local Policy Context

Within our Corporate Plan, Council’s top strategic priority is to grow the economy. Attracting jobs and investment to our Borough is key to achieving that. We are also committed to growing our economy by creating the conditions which attract inward investment, support sustainable employment, expand existing businesses, and promote

entrepreneurship and innovation. Our Community Plan highlights the local challenges and opportunities in relation to jobs and employment. Under the key theme of Sustainable Jobs, we highlight our Borough as a leading and competitive place to start and grow business in a culture of entrepreneurship, skills development and vocational training, and where businesses flourish in a business friendly environment which attracts and retains employment.

Identification of Key Issues

Taking account of the regional and local policy context and informed by our evidence base, the key strategic economic development issues to be addressed through the LDP are:

- Key Issue 6: Location of Class B1 Business Uses
- Key Issue 7: Improve availability of start-up and grow-on business space
- Key Issue 8: Ensure appropriate and compatible uses on land zoned for Economic Development

Key Issue 6 Location of Class B1 Business Uses

Class B1 Business Uses include offices (other than financial, professional and other services), call centres, and ‘clean’ research and development (R&D) facilities.

Background

Our Borough is under represented in a number of sectors including information and communications; financial and insurance activities; professional, scientific and technical; and business administration and support services. Our emerging Integrated Economic Development Strategy considers these sectors to have strong potential to increase Gross Value Added (GVA) and employment

within our Borough. We will seek to capitalise on the locational opportunities, presented by our Borough being in close proximity to both Belfast and the International Airport, in order to attract more investment in these sectors.

Our LDP will therefore consider where, in broad terms, Class B1 offices, call centres and R&D facilities should be located.



Preferred Option

Option 6 (a):

Allow such development in Town Centres, District Centres or Local Centres, and within economic development zonings (or identified parts thereof) as part of a sequential approach (as identified in Figure 6.1 below).

This would ensure a flexible approach to facilitating businesses within these sectors across our Borough, whilst also capturing appropriate opportunities to enhance the vitality and viability of our town centres.

Table 6.1 The Sequential Approach



Policy Implications

This option will enable us to tailor policy to introduce a sequential approach in relation to offices, call centres and R&D facilities. This will mean that new proposals will have to demonstrate that there is no appropriate site within the town centre, district centre or local centre, before they can be located within an economic development zoning.

Alternative Options

Option 6 (b):

Restrict Class B1 Business uses to Town Centres only.

Option 6 (c):

Only allow such development in Town Centres, and District and Local Centres that may be brought forward through the Plan.

Option 6 (d):

Allow such development anywhere within settlement limits where a need can be demonstrated.

Q13. Do you agree with our suggested sequential approach for Class B1 Business Uses?

Key Issue 7 Availability of start-up and grow-on business space across the Borough

- Key elements emerging from our evidence base leading to the identification of this issue include:
- *Strong business survival rates within our Borough – 63% of businesses set up in 2009 were still trading after three years and 41% after five years.*
 - *In 2015, our Borough had 552 businesses per 10,000 working population, lower than both NI and the UK.*
 - *Poor business birth rate within our Borough. In 2014, there were 35 start-ups per 10,000 working age population (NI average 43 and UK average 89).*
 - *Ballymena Business Centres, Carrickfergus Enterprise and LEDCOM (Larne) all nearing capacity of occupancy levels.*
 - *Over 90% of businesses in our Borough classed as micro businesses employing less than 10 people.*
 - *Significant job losses through recent closures of large enterprises (e.g. Michelin and JTI).*

Background

Given the decline of larger scale manufacturing generally, and also within our Borough, the need to grow small business enterprise in key growth sectors must be an economic priority. Whilst

strong business survival rates in our Borough is an indication of resilience, a low business birth rate is a cause for concern. The development of small business growth is also necessary to promote a culture of entrepreneurship and is therefore likely to be part of the broader solution of enhancing skills in local people, so as to take advantage of future opportunities.

A key challenge in this is the shortage of business start-up and grow-on space in our Borough. Currently, Ballymena Business Centres have a 96.3% occupancy rate, and Carrickfergus Enterprise has a 97% occupancy rate with 100% occupancy in their hi-tech offices. In Larne, 'LEDCOM' has an 80%-90% occupancy rate across their sites. Small business enterprise space is therefore at a premium in all of the main towns and larger urban centres.

Our emerging Integrated Economic Development Strategy for Mid and East Antrim clearly identifies the need for additional investment in start-up and grow-on workspace accommodation to support the establishment and growth of local businesses.

There is therefore a need to identify sites or buildings to stimulate small business enterprise or to provide skills training.



Preferred Option

Option 7 (a):
Provide for start-up and grow-on business space within economic development land/zonings by identifying land to be used specifically for start-up and grow-on business space, and utilise redundant buildings or land last used for economic development within settlements.

This option allows us to identify new economic development land within settlements, and if appropriate on the edge of settlements, specifically for these types of businesses. We would also identify vacant or redundant land and buildings last used as economic and employment land in appropriate and accessible locations which would be suitable for conversion to small business start-up work space to help

stimulate local enterprise and investment in these areas. We will also continue to support appropriate rural development opportunities and maintain an appropriate level of sustainable economic development in the countryside. This will be facilitated through bringing forward in the LDP the relevant economic development in the countryside policies currently contained within PPS 4 and PPS 21.

Policy Implications

Policy will support the re-use of previously developed economic development sites and buildings to help meet the needs of particular economic sectors, as well as ensuring that land is zoned specifically for the provision of start-up and grow-on business space.

Alternative Options

Option 7 (b):
Only utilise redundant buildings or land last used for economic development.

Option 7 (c):
Only provide for start-up and grow-on business space specifically within economic development land/zonings by identifying land to be used specifically for start-up and grow-on business space.

Option 7 (d):
Tailor policies to enable a more flexible approach in the countryside.

Q14. Do you agree with our suggested approach to improve the availability of start-up and grow-on business space across our Borough?

Key Issue 8 Alternative Uses on land zoned for Economic Development

Regional Policy Context

The regional direction of the RDS and the SPPS is that economic development land is a valuable resource which should be protected from other forms of development to ensure a sufficient ongoing supply of suitable land and buildings which are well located and suited to such purposes.

Background

There has been pressure across our Borough to utilise land zoned for economic development for

uses outside the remit of the traditional industrial and business uses. Of the 308 hectares of land zoned for economic development across the Borough, approximately 146ha has been developed – and of that, 23ha has been developed for non-industrial uses, including retail, crèches, commercial leisure and other non-conforming uses. Similar proposals continue to come forward and can be difficult to resist because of the low take-up of land by the target uses. Many such uses seek locations in industrial estates because of the availability of large buildings with lower rates tariffs

than town centres, and with large areas of car parking. However, this can deplete the reserve of economic development land as well as give rise to incompatibility issues between land uses.

It is therefore considered important that our LDP should actively seek to address such issues by indicating the types of economic development that will be appropriate on zoned land, and seek to avoid uses that would be incompatible with each other or have a detrimental impact on our town centres, environment, or residential amenity.

Alternative Options

Option 8 (b):
Safeguard land zoned for economic development use for industrial, business and storage and distribution uses only (currently defined in Part B ‘Industrial and Business Uses’ of the Planning (Use Classes) Order (NI) 2015).

Option 8 (c):
Allow retail, commercial leisure and other alternative uses falling outside Part B ‘Industrial and Business Uses’ within zoned economic development land.



Preferred Option

Option 8 (a):
Allow alternative compatible economic uses/business falling outside Part B ‘Industrial and Business Uses’ (of the Planning (Use Classes) Order (NI) 2015) within zoned economic development land. This would include for the sale or display of motor vehicles; as a scrapyard; or a yard for the storage or distribution of minerals; or the breaking of motor vehicles.

This option would offer greater flexibility for other uses over and above what is defined under Part B ‘Industrial and Business Uses’. It would also provide for uses that are likely to be compatible with most industrial and business uses, yet difficult to accommodate elsewhere. The onus would then be on the applicant to provide

evidence that the proposed business use is appropriate to be situated within economic development land and compatible with other business uses within the zoning.

Policy Implications

Policy will be more flexible permitting alternative compatible

business uses to the traditional Class B Industrial and Business uses within economic development zonings. Policy will also be clear that retail, commercial leisure and other uses which are not considered appropriate within land zoned for economic development will not be permitted.

Q15. Do you agree with our suggested approach for allowing alternative compatible economic uses/businesses within zoned economic development land?

Q16. Do you think we should consider any other alternative compatible uses/businesses within zoned economic development land?

Planning Policy Review of existing relevant PPSs

Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning and Economic Development (PPS 4) and Planning Policy Statement 21: Sustainable Development in the Countryside (PPS 21)

A full review and recommendations for amendments to PPS 4 and economic development policies within PPS 21 is available in Chapter 11.

Q17. Do you agree that the suggested amendments to the policy approach of Policy PED 7 (Retention of Zoned Land and Economic Development Uses) and PED 8 (Development incompatible with Economic Development Uses) in PPS 4 are sufficient to ensure the protection of the Borough's economic development land from inappropriate development?

Q18. Do you agree that the suggested amendments to the policy approach of Policy CTY 4 (The Conversion and Reuse of Existing Buildings) and CTY 8 (Ribbon Development) in PPS 21 are sufficient to ensure the protection of sustainable economic development within the countryside?



Retailing and Town Centres

Town centres, as the focus of retail and other business uses such as offices and retail services, are important hubs for our local economy. However, as elsewhere, the retail sector in Mid and East Antrim has been faced with a range of challenges. These include changing consumer and lifestyle trends that require the retail sector to adapt, the rise of electronic commerce and internet shopping, competition from out of town shopping centres/retail parks, and the change in fortunes of the general economy which can have a dampening effect on retail spending.

It is now generally accepted that in order to remain economically competitive and vibrant, town centres need to offer an experience over and above an average functional shopping trip, which might otherwise be carried out online or at out of town retail parks. The emphasis therefore needs to be on promoting diversification of uses within town centres and to making them more attractive, viable and sustainable.

The Evidence Base

The most recent sources informing our evidence base are referred to in Chapter Five. Generally the information relates to two discrete areas of study:

- *An assessment of the need or capacity for retail and other main town centre uses (most recent evidence dates from 2009); and*
- *Preparation of town centre health checks with reference to a number of indicators (e.g. vacancy rates, footfall and commercial yields) (Most recent evidence dates from 2013).*

The evidence base referred to above will be updated during the next phase of the LDP.

Ballymena

The average town centre gross floorspace size in Northern Ireland outside of Belfast was 68,800 sq.m. Ballymena was almost double that at 132,490 sq.m in 2009 with only Newry, Derry/Derry/Londonderry and Belfast having greater gross floorspace.

Assessment of floorspace need/capacity

Convenience shopping

- Convenience stores inside the town centre were underperforming for main food shopping, whilst supermarkets just outside the town centre were grossly overtrading.

There is a good town centre convenience offer with Lidl, Iceland, M&S food hall and Spar and a strong local independent offer of bakers, butchers, greengrocers etc.

Comparison shopping

- Comparison outlets comprised 48% of overall floorspace.
- The town centre had 89.3% comparison goods market share of its catchment area in addition to significant expenditure inflow from Carnlough, Antrim, Ballymoney and Ballycastle catchment zones with only a minor outflow to Belfast. Braidwater Retail Park, which is also inside the town centre boundary,

performs a secondary role and had a 7.3% market share.

Bulky Goods Shopping

- The town centre had 71.7% of the total bulky goods expenditure available within the immediate Ballymena catchment with Braidwater Retail Park having a further 16.2%.
- Significant inflows from the wider sub-region include Carnlough and Antrim catchment zones. Outflows to Belfast are negligible.

Table 6.1 Ballymena Town Centre Health Check

Strengths/Opportunities	Weaknesses/Threats
<div>+ Good diversity of town centres uses</div> <div>+ Recognised sub-regional town with strong market share in comparison and bulky goods sectors</div> <div>+ Strong national multiples and local independent retail offer (24/29 national multiples trading in 2013)</div> <div>+ Good availability of town centre parking provision</div> <div>+ Good accessibility and public transport links to town</div> <div>+ Business Improvement District</div> <div>+ Recent Public Realm improvements</div> <div>+ Good commercial leisure offer with cinema, leisure centre and private gyms</div>	<div>- Train/ Bus Station detached from town centre</div> <div>- Increasing vacancy rates in the town centres as a whole and potential obsolesce of some floorspace</div> <div>- Amount and profile of out of centre convenience retailing</div> <div>- Limited private sector town centre investment/ development</div> <div>- Low footfall on secondary streets</div> <div>- Limited town centre evening economy</div>

Larne

Compared to the average town centre gross floorspace size in Northern Ireland (outside of Belfast) of 68,800 sq. m. Larne is close to the average, having 57,070 sq. m.

Assessment of town centre floorspace need/capacity

Convenience shopping

- There was an identified need for additional convenience choice and floorspace within the town centre. However this would need to be re-assessed given the opening of the Asda foodstore in 2010, outside Larne town centre.

Comparison shopping

- Comparison goods sector was performing relatively well, securing 50% of the comparison goods spend from the immediate catchment zone, most likely attributed to the geographical location of Larne town, rather than the strength of its retail offer.
- Local residents found the existing town centre comparison offer to be deficient and lacking quality national multiples with a significant number of local residents in the Larne catchment looking to larger centres in the retail hierarchy for comparison shopping.

Bulky Goods Shopping

- Larne town centre retained 48.4% of the total bulky goods expenditure available within the immediate Larne catchment area as well as notable market shares from Ballyclare and Carnlough. However there was significant outflow to Belfast, Ballymena and Newtownabbey.
- The breakdown of the bulky goods expenditure arising within the Larne catchment area was: Furniture/flooring 47.4%, DIY goods 33.7%, major household appliances 55.7%; large electrical 59.1%.

Carrickfergus

Carrickfergus town centre is the fourth largest town centre within the Belfast Metropolitan Area, after Belfast, Lisburn and Bangor. The gross floorspace size in 2013 was 48,270 sq. m., i.e. 20,000 sq. m less than the Northern Ireland town centre average.

Assessment of floorspace need/capacity

Convenience Shopping

- Convenience outlets accounted for 4.5% of the 177 units surveyed in Carrickfergus town centre and included a mix of

national foodstore operators and local independent food retailers mainly comprised of butchers, greengrocers, bakeries /confectioners and small convenience stores.

- The assessment did not demonstrate an over or under supply of convenience goods floorspace in Carrickfergus Town Centre.

Comparison Shopping

- Considerable leakage of comparison goods expenditure to Belfast City Centre and Abbey Centre was identified.
- 23% of town centre outlets were comparison goods outlets.

- Carrickfergus had six out of the 29 national multiples operating in Northern Ireland in 2013.

No specific findings were presented in relation to Bulky Goods Shopping in Carrickfergus.

Table 6.2 Larne Town Centre Health Check

Strengths/Opportunities

+ Good road access to get to the town
+ Good public transport links, albeit that the bus and train stations are detached from main shopping area
+ Steady investment in environmental improvement in the town centre
+ Comprehensive 15-year Masterplan in place
+ High % of those in Larne catchment area who socialise in bars/pubs and restaurants do so in Larne Town
+ Reasonable diversity of shops, retail services offices and other businesses

Weaknesses/Threats

- Train/Bus Station detached from town centre
- Diversity and performance of the various retail sectors not as robust as it might be
- Major leakage of Bulky Goods expenditure to other towns
- Poor pedestrian linkages between town centre and Asda/Cinema
- Limited town centre family leisure activities
- Low footfall and high vacancy rates on secondary streets
- Tourist spend in this coastal and ferry port location not fully exploited

Table 6.3 Carrickfergus Town Centre Health Check

Strengths/Opportunities

+ Availability of town centre parking
+ Good accessibility and public transport to get to town
+ Good environmental quality
+ Potential to exploit tourism spend if marketed as a specialist unique retail and leisure centre given the historic setting

Weaknesses/Threats

- Significant vacancies and potential obsolesce of some floorspace
- Poor level of retailer representation in all sectors including national multiples
- Low footfall generally
- Separation of the town centre generally from the Castle/Waterfront by the Marine Highway



Regional Policy Context

Ballymena is the only town centre in our Borough that is recognised in the RDS as having a well-established sub-regional role in relation to retailing. Larne and Carrickfergus are noted for their tourism potential.

The overall aim of the SPPS in relation to town centres is to support and sustain vibrant town centres across Northern Ireland through their promotion as the appropriate first choice locations for retailing and other complementary uses.

The key policy requirement of the SPPS is that planning authorities must adopt a town centre first approach for retail and main town centre uses.

Key objectives in meeting this aim are to:

- *Secure a town centre first approach for the location of future retailing and other main town centre uses (these are defined as cultural and community facilities, leisure, entertainment and business); and*
- *Protect and enhance diversity in the range of town centre uses appropriate to their role and*

function, such as leisure, cultural and community facilities, housing and business.

In order to deliver these objectives, the SPPS sets out a range of actions which should be implemented through LDPs, as follows:

- 1.** Define a network and hierarchy of centres, town, district and local centres acknowledging the role and function of rural centres;
- 2.** Define the spatial extent of town centres and primary retail cores;
- 3.** Set out appropriate policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in the hierarchy of centres and other locations and factors that will be taken into account for decision taking;
- 4.** Provide for a diverse offer and mix of uses which reflect local circumstances; and
- 5.** Allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and form of retail and other town centre uses.

Local Policy Context

As previously indicated the top strategic priority of our Corporate Plan is to grow the economy. Protecting and enhancing retail and business growth in our town centres will be a key part of this. The Corporate Plan draws particular attention to the important role of Ballymena in achieving this – *“Retail is a major strength within the town of Ballymena, which is one of Northern Ireland’s top retail destinations, providing a vibrant mix of both national and independent business”*.

The Community Plan does not refer specifically to retailing and town centres. However, the emerging Integrated Economic Development Strategy will refer to the ongoing need to regenerate town centres and develop the evening economy. The three main towns have all recently benefitted from Council investment in their public realm infrastructure. However given the challenges faced by the retail sector and the limited night-life offering, further actions will be required by a range of stakeholders and organisations to ensure that our town centres perform to their optimum potential.

Identification of Key Issues

Taking account of the regional and local policy context and informed by our evidence base, the key retail and town centre issues to be addressed through the LDP are:

- *Key Issue 9: Range of town centre uses*
- *Key Issue 10: Protecting and promoting other town centre uses*

Key Issue 9 Range of town centre uses

Background

The SPPS defines main town centre uses as including cultural and community facilities, retail, leisure, entertainment, housing and businesses (e.g. retail services such as hairdressers, beauticians and laundrettes, and financial services such as estate agents, banks and solicitors).

We need to consider how our LDP can secure an appropriate balance between promoting retail development and enhancing diversity in the range of town centre uses appropriate to each town.



Preferred Option

Option 9 (a):
Define a Primary Retail Core (within some or all town centres) accompanied by policy to substantially protect and promote retail uses on ground floor frontages in these areas. Designate specific sites in the town centres for mixed use development (retail and other town centre uses).

This option would seek to strengthen the retail offer in core streets for the overall benefit of the town centre, whilst directing uses such as leisure and entertainment, which do not require a location within the core area, to other appropriate locations within or at the edge of the town centre. In conjunction with this, this option will seek to ensure that appropriate sites within the town centre boundary are designated to provide a diverse offer and mix of uses when being developed or re-developed, to reflect local circumstances. Such opportunity sites will be assessed to gauge the best mix of town centre uses,

taking account of a range of planning related criteria and other factors such as economic viability.

Policy Implications

This preferred option will require a new bespoke policy as none of the main towns in Mid and East Antrim have Primary Retail Cores designated in their extant plans. This would enable us to direct new retail uses to core shopping streets. It will also give us the opportunity to tailor policy to manage situations where there are pressures for changes of use which might threaten to undermine the primary retail function of the core

areas. For example such policy could be applied where there is a clustering of non-retail uses or where the area overall is tending to be dominated by non-retail uses. This option would require new policy to be set out in the Plan Strategy so as to enable the designation of opportunity sites in the town centres through the Local Policies Plan. The appropriate mix of town centre uses for each site would be indicated through key site requirements. This will provide certainty for developers.

Alternative Options

Option 9 (b):
Set out strategic criteria applicable to all town centres in relation to the protection and enhancement of diversity of uses, including retail and main town centre uses.

Option 9 (c):
Define primary retail cores in some or all town centres accompanied by policy to substantially protect and promote retail uses on ground floor frontages in these areas.

Option 9 (d):
Designate specific sites in town centres for mixed use development (retail and other town centre uses).

Option 9 (e):
Have minimal Plan intervention allowing flexibility by assessing planning applications on their merits.

Q19. Do you agree with our suggested approach to promoting retail development and enhancing diversity in the range of town centre uses?

Q20. If so, should Primary Retail Cores be designated in all town centres, or specify which?

Key Issue 10 Protecting and promoting other town centre uses

Background

Aside from retailing and main town centre uses, the SPPS recognises housing and business as 'other' town centre uses in addition to leisure, cultural and community services.

Housing protection areas and associated policies are currently defined in the extant BMAP and

Ballymena Areas plans for Carrickfergus and Ballymena town centres, respectively. BMAP has also zoned land for housing at the waterfront within the Carrickfergus town centre boundary.

As discussed previously in Key Issue 6, our Borough has the opportunity to capitalise on investment in Class B1 Business Uses (such as office development) given our proximity

to Belfast and the International Airport. The preferred option for location of Class B1 Business Uses in Key Issue 6 included town centres.

We therefore need to consider what other land uses/forms of development the LDP should seek to protect and/or promote in the town centres.



Preferred Option

Option 10 (a):

Facilitate residential use through the protection of existing housing areas and/or include housing as part of the development mix in opportunity sites. Facilitate Class B1 Business Uses on upper floor levels in town centres.

This option would protect the existing town centre housing stock for established communities and provide an opportunity for adding to the town centre housing stock through provision as part of mixed use development on suitable opportunity sites. Facilitating town centre living is likely to enhance the vitality of the area, help to stimulate the evening economy and reduce vandalism.

The second part of this option to facilitate Class B1 business uses in the town centre, increases the opportunity to create town centre synergy through mixed land uses and activities, and, to underpin

the economic vitality and viability of town centres by increasing footfall during office hours. The BMA Office Strategy includes Policy OF 1 which promotes Carrickfergus town centre as a main location for expanding service employment within the district. The rationale being that as town centres (mostly) lie at the heart of local transport networks, office development would support sustainable development through offering greater opportunity to avail of public transport services. Other benefits considered likely to accrue, relate to more efficient use of buildings, less vacancy and more jobs in the town centre.

Policy Implications

The first part of this option would require new policy to be set out in the Plan Strategy so as to enable designations of protected housing areas in the town centre through the Local Policies Plan.

This second part of this option would require amended wording to Policy PED 1 of PPS 4 to promote a town centre first approach for Class B1 uses with a sequential approach to be applied for such proposals outside the town centre.

Alternative Options

Option 10 (b):

Facilitate residential use through protection of existing housing areas and / or include housing as part of the development mix in opportunity sites.

Option 10 (c):

Facilitate Class B1 Business Uses on upper floor levels in town centres (other than Class A2 uses), including call centres, and research and development facilities.

Option 10 (d):

Restrict these 'other' uses so as to reduce competition for land/buildings in the town centre, focusing on retailing and associated uses.

Option 10 (e):

Have minimal Plan intervention, allowing flexibility by assessing planning applications on their merits, taking account of the SPPS.

Q21. Do you agree with our suggested approach to protecting/promoting other land uses in town centres?

Q22. Do you think we should promote any other compatible uses within the town centre?

Planning Policy Review of existing relevant PPSs

As Planning Policy Statement 5: Retailing and Town Centres (PPS 5) was cancelled by the introduction of the SPPS, the policy review in Chapter 11 is only relevant insofar as it applies to 'other' uses within the town centres. The policy implications in regard to PPS 4 have already been referred to.



Key Issue 11 Accommodating Future Tourism Demand

Preferred Option

Option 11 (a):

Retain current strategic policy approach set out in PPS 16: Tourism (with minor amendments) for accommodating tourism development in both settlements and the countryside *and* bring forward bespoke policy tailored to the tourism potential of Vulnerable, Sensitive and Opportunity areas within Mid and East Antrim Borough (see Table 6.4)

In addition to retaining current policy, with minor amendments, this approach will provide additional clarity on the potential for tourism development within our Borough. This option will highlight the Borough’s most valuable and vulnerable assets which should for the most part be protected from inappropriate tourism development, highlight sensitive areas as well as clearly setting out potential tourism growth areas. The potential for tourism development has been proposed in the following three categories:

Vulnerable Category – includes many of our already designated areas. In these areas the quality and character of the landscape is considered so special and/or the conservation interests are of such significance, that little or no development for tourism or recreation should be permitted within the majority of their extent. The reason is to safeguard the integrity of these assets which underpins their attractiveness to tourists.

Sensitive Category - includes the open countryside and a number of our already designated areas. In these areas the character of the landscape, the conservation interest or the existing level of development are such that whilst there may be scope for development, proposals must be sensitive to the particular characteristics of the surrounding environment. Sympathetic development, which by its nature and scale would not be damaging to nature conservation interests or historic environment, and which is sensitive to the landscape could be acceptable at some locations.

Opportunity Category – these areas include the remainder of urban and rural settlements and three proposed Opportunity Zones, namely Carnfunnock Country Park, Magheramorne Quarry and Gobbins Visitor Centre/Path. Such areas are considered to offer opportunities for the development of a range of appropriate quality tourism and recreation schemes in order to build on the existing

tourism base and enhance the tourism product. In some cases this may involve the expansion of existing tourism developments.

This option is considered to be in accordance with the RDS and the SPPS as a sustainable approach to tourism development which seeks to balance tourism growth with the protection of the natural and historic environment. This approach takes account of the quality and character of the townscape and landscape and the natural and built heritage. It will provide a greater degree of certainty than the Alternative Option as to where tourism development will be most appropriate and acceptable. As recommended by the SPPS this approach is tailored to the needs and assets of the local area and will be informed by engagement with relevant stakeholders.

Policy Implications

It is proposed that PPS 16 will continue to be applied in settlements and the countryside generally, in accordance with the recommendations in the Policy Review (Chapter 11 refers). However, within settlements and the countryside, bespoke policy will be brought forward and tailored to the tourism potential and capacity of discrete areas. These are identified in Table 6.4, as vulnerable, sensitive and opportunity areas.

Table 6.4 Proposed Categories for Tourism Potential in Mid and East Antrim

Vulnerable <i>Tourism Development should not be approved within majority of their extent</i>	Sensitive <i>Tourism Development should be strictly controlled to respect local environment and characteristics of the area</i>	Opportunity <i>Largely urban-based and three new proposed areas where majority of Tourism Development will be expected to be located</i>
The Coastal Zone (excluding Urban Waterfronts)	The Countryside	Urban Remainder
Sensitive Areas within Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	Rural Settlements
Gracehill Conservation Area	Conservation Areas (Glenarm, Carnlough, Whitehead, Carrickfergus)	Carnfunnock Country Park
• Historic Parks • Gardens and Demesnes • Sites of Archaeological Interest	Areas of Townscape Character	Magheramorne Quarry
Nature Conservation Designations (RAMSAR, ASSIs, SPAs/SACs, National Nature Reserves, Local Nature Reserves, SLNCl) Landscape Designations including landscape wedges	Areas of High Scenic Value (Carrickfergus Escarpment and Islandmagee)	Gobbins Visitor Centre/Path
Other Designations e.g. new Special Countryside Areas (SCAs)		

Alternative Option

Option 11 (b):

Retain current strategic policy approach set out in PPS 16: Tourism for accommodating tourism development in settlements and in the countryside, with minor amendments.

Q23. Do you agree with our suggested approach to identify the tourism potential of vulnerable, sensitive and opportunity areas within the Borough?

Q24. Are there any other areas that you feel should be protected?

Q25. Are there any other areas you feel should be identified as tourism opportunity zones?

Planning Policy Review of existing relevant PPSs

Planning Policy Statement 16: Tourism (PPS 16)

A full review and recommendations for amendments to PPS 16 is available in Chapter 11.

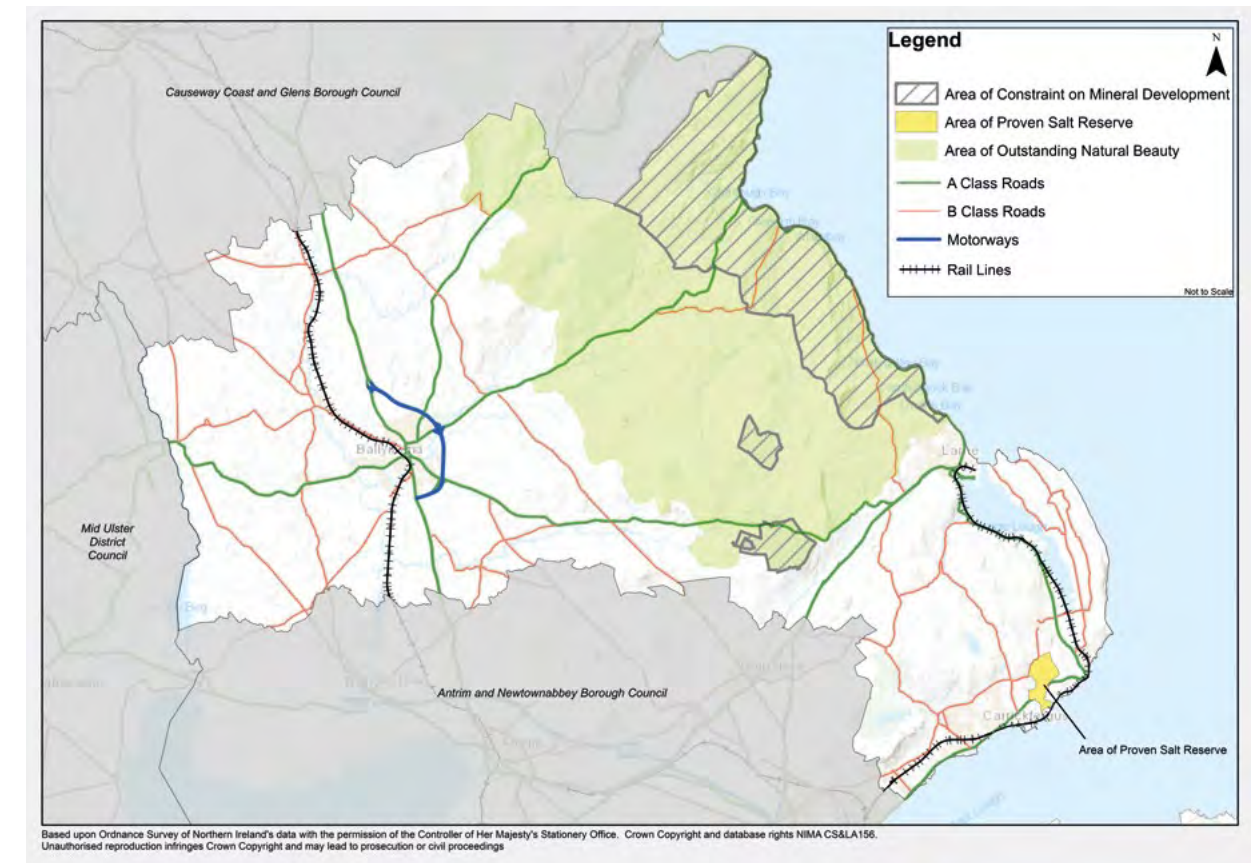
Q26. In relation to existing Policy TSM 8 (Safeguarding of Tourism Assets) in PPS 16, do you agree that the suggested amendment to the policy wording is sufficient to ensure the protection of the Borough's tourism assets from inappropriate development?



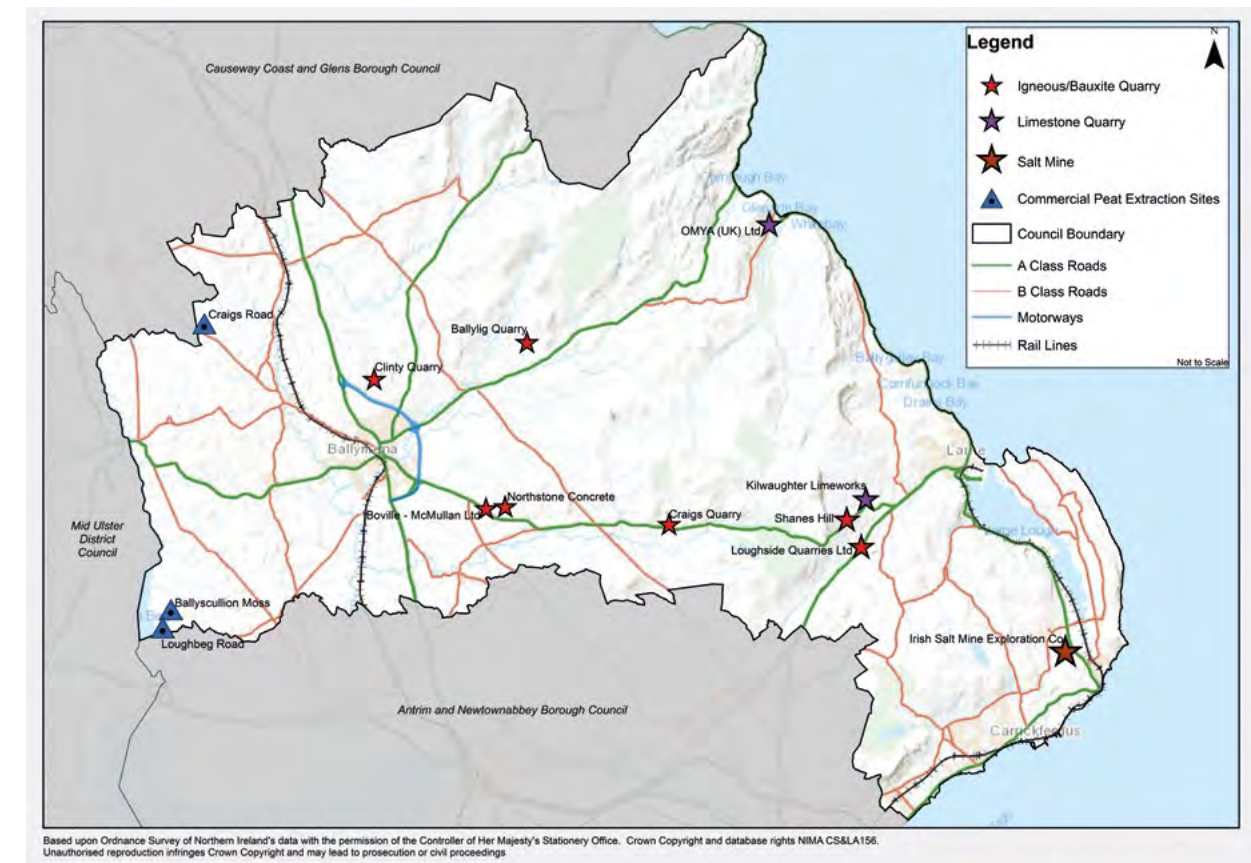
Minerals Development

- Minerals Development is an important part of the Mid and East Antrim economy. County Antrim (of which Mid and East Antrim Borough Council forms a part) produces approximately 25% of all minerals in Northern Ireland, which makes it the largest producer overall relative to the other five counties (DETI Mineral Statement 2010).
- Quarrying produces an annual value of £13.7 million and creates employment for around 400 people.
- Nine quarrying sites in the Borough producing approximately 3.2 million tonnes annually (see Map 6.3).
- Igneous/meta-igneous rocks, limestone and bauxite are extracted from quarries in our Borough.
- One active salt mine at Kilroot near Carrickfergus with a potential extraction rate of 500,000 tonnes per annum.
- One Area of Salt Reserve designated in BMAP 2015 (see Map 6.2).
- Three commercial peat extraction sites.
- Three Areas of Constraint on Mineral Development designated in the Larne Area Plan 2010 (see Map 6.2)

Map 6.2 Areas of Constraint on Mineral Development and Area of Salt Reserve in Mid and East Antrim



Map 6.3 Mineral Resources in Mid and East Antrim



Mineral Resources

Minerals are an important natural resource and economic asset. They provide the raw materials for many forms of development and also fuel for domestic and industrial purposes. The exploitation and processing of minerals is also of economic importance in providing jobs and employment, particularly in rural areas.

While minerals development offers significant economic benefits, it can also present a number of challenges relating to environmental impact and the amenity and wellbeing of people living in close proximity to mineral extraction and processing operations. Further, due to the nature and scale of some operations, there is also the potential for degradation of the landscape and impact on the integrity of sites designated for their nature conservation, biodiversity or historic/archaeological importance.

Our LDP therefore has a key role to play in facilitating a sustainable approach to minerals development. It is important that the approach we take through the LDP recognises the need to secure a continuous and ongoing supply of construction materials and other minerals to meet society's needs while protecting important environmental assets and safeguarding the amenity and wellbeing of those living close to mineral extraction sites.

Regional Policy Context

The RDS does not provide specific policy aims and objectives for minerals but recognises the importance of the rural area in offering opportunities for quarrying rural industries and enterprise at appropriate locations.

The SPPS has three regional strategic objectives for minerals development. These include:

- *Facilitate sustainable minerals development through balancing the need for specific minerals development proposals against the need to safeguard the environment;*
- *Minimise the impacts of minerals development on local communities, landscape quality, built and natural heritage and the water environment;*
- *Secure the sustainable and safe restoration, including the appropriate re-use of mineral sites, at the earliest opportunity.*

In seeking to meet these objectives, the SPPS specifies a number of actions that may be applied through LDPs (paragraph 6.155 SPPS refers).

The Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland (PSRNI) sets out a number of regional planning policies with regard to minerals in Northern Ireland.

These are:

- MIN 1:** Environmental Protection
- MIN 2:** Visual Implications
- MIN 3:** Areas of Constraint
- MIN 4:** Valuable Minerals
- MIN 5:** Mineral Reserves
- MIN 6:** Safety and Amenity
- MIN 7:** Traffic
- MIN 8:** Restoration

Local Policy Context

Our Corporate Plan's top strategic priority is to grow the economy. Through sustainable minerals development we can create the conditions which attract inward investment, support employment, expand businesses and promote entrepreneurship and innovation. Another strategic priority of our Council is to build stronger, safe and healthy communities. Again, through carefully planning and managing minerals development we can seek to ensure the safety of citizens and to safeguard their amenity.

Within our Community Plan under the key themes of 'Sustainable Jobs and Tourism' and 'Our Environment', our Borough is highlighted as a place where there should be employment opportunities as well as a clean, safe, protected and vibrant environment. The LDP will seek to deliver a sustainable balance that will allow for minerals development in appropriate locations, whilst also protecting the environment.

Identification of Key Issues

Taking account of the regional and local policy context and informed by our evidence base, the key minerals development issues to be addressed through the LDP are:

- *Key Issue 12: Balancing the need for Minerals Development with safeguarding of Landscape and Environmental Assets*
- *Key Issue 13: Safeguard against potential subsidence and the effects of land instability*



Key Issue 12

Balancing the need for Minerals Development with safeguarding of Landscape and Environmental Assets

Background

Mid and East Antrim has significant mineral resources which is a key economic strength for the Borough. Similarly, many areas are of significant landscape and environmental quality and should be protected for their intrinsic value and their value to the economy as tourism assets. It is therefore important to strike

a balance between exploiting minerals sustainably and protecting landscape and environmental assets.

The SPPS requires that mineral resources which are of economic or conservation value should be protected and it should be ensured that workable mineral resources are not sterilised by other surface development which

would prejudice future exploitation. Further, the SPPS states that LDPs should identify areas which should be protected from minerals development (Areas of Constraint on Mineral Development) because of their intrinsic landscape, amenity, scientific or heritage value (including natural, built and archaeological heritage).



Preferred Option

Option 12 (a):

Safeguard mineral resources of economic or conservation value e.g. by allowing for expansion of existing quarries, and retain the existing designated Area of Salt Reserve. There would be a presumption in favour of minerals development within designated Minerals Reserve Areas and other areas identified as suitable for minerals development. However, there would be a presumption against minerals development within areas designated for their landscape and/or environmental/heritage significance or at least within the majority of their extent e.g. within existing, expanded or new Areas of Constraint on Minerals Development (ACMD). Elsewhere proposals would be determined against existing or amended policy on a case-by-case basis.

Policy Implications

This option will enable us to define areas where there will be a presumption for minerals development, and other areas where there will be a presumption against. Elsewhere, proposals will be determined in accordance with existing or amended minerals policy adopted by our LDP (refer to Chapter 11 Policy Review).

Alternative Options

Option 12 (b):

Remove the existing ACMD and facilitate minerals development entirely through the application of existing or amended policy.

Option 12 (c):

Safeguard mineral resources of economic or conservation value e.g. by allowing for the expansion of existing quarries, and retain the existing designated Area of Salt Reserve. There would be a presumption in favour of minerals development within such areas. Apply existing/amended policy elsewhere with applications being decided on a case by case basis against policy criteria.

- Q27. Do you agree with our approach of identifying Mineral Reserve Areas where there would be a presumption in favour of minerals development?
- Q28. Do you agree with our approach of identifying Areas of Constraint on Minerals Development where there would be a presumption against minerals development?
- Q29. Are there any other areas you feel should be designated as a Mineral Reserve Area or as an Area of Constraint on Minerals Development?

Key Issue 13 Safeguarding Against Potential Subsidence and the Effects of Land Instability

Background

Problems resulting from subsidence or land instability can result in danger to life, damage to property and wasteful expenditure of public and private resources on remedial works. As a result, new development in areas at risk, particularly those involving habitable or occupied buildings, should normally be prevented.

Subsidence associated with minerals development has occurred in Mid and East Antrim and continues to present safety risks. The exploitation of natural resources through underground mining has left a legacy of surface instability above disused workings. There are a significant number of abandoned mine workings and also a number of collapsed mines where ground subsidence has taken place. These collapsed mines are centred mainly but not exclusively around Carrickfergus and north of Cargan. There are a number of Areas of Potential Subsidence designated in Carrickfergus through BMAP 2015. These are generally associated with the shafts and workings of old salt mines that have the potential to subside.

The SPPS does not set out any specific regional strategic objectives that address the issue of subsidence. It does however advise that development will not be permitted in areas known to be at risk of flooding, coastal erosion, or land instability.

Policy PSU 10 of PSRNI addresses the wider development risk, i.e. not just potential subsidence associated with abandoned mines but also risk associated with flooding, coastal erosion and land instability. Risks associated with landslides and coastal erosion are a feature of some areas in the Borough, although the evidence base is incomplete. The policy seeks to prevent development in all such areas. Policy PSU 10 Development at Risk has been superseded by Revised PPS 15: Planning and Flood Risk (insofar as it relates to flooding).

Within our Corporate Plan, one of the key strategic priorities is to 'Build stronger and safer communities'. By addressing the risks associated with subsidence, we can make the Borough a safer place for everyone.



Preferred Option

Option 13 (a):

Retain the existing BMAP Areas of Potential Subsidence within the former Carrickfergus Borough and retain Policy CE 06 (which sets out a presumption against development). Also, assess if there are any other known areas of potential subsidence within the Borough that should be identified. Also, rely on existing Policy PSU 10 of PSRNI to prevent development in all areas known to be at risk from land instability – including from mining, coastal erosion, landslides and other relevant causes.

Policy Implications

This option would continue to apply a policy similar to Policy CE 06 to areas of potential subsidence associated with minerals development within Carrickfergus and to other areas of the Borough where this risk has been clearly identified. In addition PSRNI PSU 10 would continue to be applied to address wider risks including land instability.

Alternative Options

Option 13 (b):

Retain the existing BMAP Areas of Potential Subsidence within the former Carrickfergus Borough and retain Policy CE 06, and assess if there are any other known areas of potential subsidence within the Borough that should be identified

Option 13 (c):

Rely on existing Policy PSU 10 of PSRNI to prevent development in all areas known to be at risk from land instability – including from mining, coastal erosion, landslides and other relevant causes.

Q30. Do you agree with our approach to retaining current BMAP Areas of Potential Subsidence and assessing if there are any other known areas of potential subsidence within the Borough that should be identified and designated as new Areas of Potential Subsidence?

Q31. Are there any areas that you are aware of that should be identified as Areas of Potential Subsidence?

Planning Policy Review of Existing Policies Related to Minerals Development

A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland (Policies MIN 1 to MIN 8) and Policy PSU 10.

A full review and recommendations for amendments to these mineral policies is available in Chapter 11.

Q32. Do you agree with the recommendations in the Policy Review to carry forward through the LDP existing (or amended) minerals policies MIN 1 – MIN 8 and Policy PSU 10 in relation to subsidence (land instability)?



7.0

Building Sustainable Communities

Housing

Open Space, Sport
and Leisure

Health, Education,
Community and
Cultural facilities

This theme is derived from the LDP social objectives set out in Chapter Four, particularly the following:

- *To provide a sufficient supply of land for new housing by 2030 in convenient locations to meet general housing needs.*
- *To meet the diverse range of specific housing needs and anticipated changes over the Plan period.*
- *To improve community safety and cohesion through the layout and design of new housing and other development.*
- *To facilitate confirmed needs for the development of new social, educational, recreational and community services at locations accessible to local communities through various modes of transportation and in accordance with the Community Plan.*
- *To facilitate the provision and integration of public open space within housing developments and linked open spaces (green infrastructure) within and beyond the wider urban fabric.*
- *To provide for quality public places and 'shared spaces' that are accessible to and valued by everyone.*

This theme is also informed by the Sustainability Appraisal objectives as set out in the scoping report, particularly the following:

- *improve health and wellbeing;*
- *strengthen society;*
- *provide good quality, sustainable housing;*
- *enable access to high quality education;*
- *encourage active and sustainable travel;*
- *improve air quality and reduce causes of and adapt to climate change;*
- *protect natural resources and enhance biodiversity; and*
- *maintain and enhance landscape character.*

These objectives and the regional and local policy context referenced on the next page relating to sustainable communities, have all informed the issues set out in this chapter.



Building Sustainable Communities

As indicated in Chapter Four, many of the LDP Strategic Objectives are to some degree inter-related and mutually beneficial. Meeting objectives under this theme will also assist us in delivering on other economic and environmental objectives, for example, to:

- *promote integration between transportation and new development so as to reduce the need for travel and encourage active and sustainable forms of transport;*
- *promote high quality design standards in all development so as to reflect local distinctiveness and further positive place-making; and*
- *facilitate networks of green and blue spaces (or green/blue infrastructure) so as to conserve and enhance biodiversity, including the protection of species and habitats.*

Regional Policy Context

Creating sustainable communities is at the heart of both the RDS and the SPPS and are defined by the RDS as “Places where people want to live, work and play now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to the environment and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.” Improved health and wellbeing is derived not only from ease of access to appropriate services and facilities

but also from the creation of a strong economy set within a safe and attractive environment. Meeting local needs for social and affordable housing also helps build strong balanced communities.

Strategic planning places emphasis on the importance of the relationship between the location of housing, jobs, facilities and services and infrastructure and generally seeks to ensure that housing is accessible to employment and core services. In regard to environmental matters, the regional direction for housing (as with development in general) is to avoid adverse impacts on natural and built heritage assets and to ensure that it does not take place in areas posing significant risk to people and property.

Local Policy Context

Building sustainable communities as sought in our LDP, is also an important thread running through our other strategic plans. For example, one of the strategic priorities set out in our Corporate Plan is, ‘Building stronger, safe and healthy communities’. Similarly, our Community Plan ‘Putting People First’ is aligned with our LDP aim through a number of its key themes and associated actions. Two of the most relevant of these themes in this context are Theme 2 ‘Good Health and Wellbeing’ and Theme 4 ‘Community Safety and Cohesion’.

The Evidence Base

- *In 2011, the district had 54,314 households, this had increased to 55,613 by 2016 and is projected to reach 58,557 households by the end of the plan period in 2030.*
- *The average household size is falling, from 2.47 in 2011 to anticipated 2.37 by 2030.*
- *80.2% of Mid and East Antrim residents consider themselves to be in good health.*
- *Mid and East Antrim was ranked fourth highest across the 11 Council areas (55%) and above the Northern Ireland average of 53% for participation in sport for 2011-2013.*
- *During 2014/2015, almost three quarters (73.5%) of residents in Mid and East Antrim accessed the natural environment at least once a week. This is third highest across the 11 Councils.*

For further details relating to the evidence base please refer to LDP Position Paper 2 (Housing and Settlement), Position Paper 6 (Open Space and Recreation), and Position Paper 9 (Education, Health and Community Facilities). www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/plan-preparation-process

Identification of Key Issues

In order to ensure that the LDP brings forward an appropriate strategic framework, the remainder of this section sets out key issues that have emerged from the evidence base, consultee engagement, Council aims and objectives and other sources. These issues relate to the various elements that help to create sustainable communities including housing, open space and recreation, health, education, community and cultural facilities. Some are considered with reference to alternative options that might be adopted through the LDP and/or amendments to existing operational planning policy that may be necessary. Other issues are simply identified and a general approach set out as how it is proposed to address them through the LDP.



Housing

- In 2011, 72.2% of households were owner occupied, 13.5% private rented, 11.8% social homes and 2.4% other.
- In 2011, 42% of houses in the Borough were detached.
- The average cost of a house in the Borough is £114,932, the fourth lowest of all councils in NI (NI House Price Index Jan - April 2017).

Regional Policy Context

The provision of a range of well-designed house types and sizes, and achieving a balance between affordable houses to rent, other types of tenure and market housing for sale are all considered by the RDS as important factors in building sustainable communities. Regional policy requires LDPs to plan for sustainable patterns of residential development, support urban and rural renaissance and strengthen community cohesion.

Local Policy Context

Building stronger, safe and healthy communities is one of the strategic priorities set out in our Corporate Plan and this has informed two key themes within our Community Plan, Theme 2 'Good Health and Wellbeing' and Theme 4 'Community Safety and Cohesion'. The following have been highlighted as strategic

infrastructure projects under these themes:

- Housing developments and supported living to support the needs of older people and those with disabilities; and
- Social and affordable housing developments.

Identification of Key Issues

The allocation of new housing across the Borough has been discussed in Chapter Five. The remaining key issues for housing are:

- Key Issue 14: Facilitating social and affordable housing
- Key Issue 15: Delivery of housing to meet the needs of people with mobility difficulties



Key Issue 14

Facilitating Social and Affordable Housing

- The total social housing need for Mid and East Antrim Borough for 2016 - 2021 has been assessed at 842 units by NIHE (Mid and East Antrim Housing Need Assessment, 2017). In the longer term NIHE have estimated that this will increase to 2,359 units between 2016 - 2030. This figure should be read as a simple indicator and will be subject to annual refinement by NIHE.
- Areas of greatest social housing need are within the main towns of Ballymena and Carrickfergus.
- Some 86% of the social housing waiting list comprise single, elderly and small family households and there is a high requirement for one and two bedroom dwellings; 57% of those on the list are in housing stress.
- Historically, much of the social housing in the Borough has been delivered on NIHE land in towns and villages; however, areas of housing need are increasingly emerging in locations where NIHE does not own land. Therefore, Housing Associations have to acquire sites on the open market.
- Levels of homelessness have been steadily falling since 2009/10, but are significantly higher in the former Ballymena district, than in the former Larne and Carrickfergus districts.
- In 2014, the Carrick and Larne market area had the highest levels of affordable homes for first time buyers in NI (75% of the housing stock were classified as affordable) (NI Housing Market Review & Perspectives 2015-2018). However, affordability remains an issue for first time buyers who cannot access mortgage finance.

Background

For the purposes of the SPPS, affordable housing relates to social rented housing (provided at affordable rent by registered Housing Associations) (HA) and intermediate housing (shared ownership housing provided through a registered HA e.g. Co-Ownership Housing Association, also sometimes referred to as affordable owner occupied). The social housing sector includes: General Needs Social Housing (social rented through NIHE or registered HA, also deemed affordable), Supported Housing or Special Housing Needs (accommodation with complementary housing support services to cater for people with a range of specific needs including those leaving the various programmes of care within health services, probation and certain vulnerable homeless persons) and Traveller Accommodation.

The SPPS requires LDPs to identify sites or areas within settlements where the site (or part thereof) is required to meet one or more category of need and clearly state the proportion required. Therefore we need to consider policy that will help deliver some 2,359 social/affordable housing units within the Borough over the plan period.



Preferred Option

Option 14 (a):
Zone sites solely for social/affordable housing in the Local Policies Plan and include key site requirements where a proportion of a general housing zoning should be provided as social housing, where a need has been identified. In addition set out strategic policy requiring that every tenth unit within new housing developments, in settlements where a need has been identified, shall be a social housing unit.

This option proposes a three pronged approach that would seek to achieve a balance between certainty in relation to social housing provision as well as contributing to the provision of balanced communities.

The addition of the one in 10 policy within the Plan Strategy would help to address the social housing

need in Mid and East Antrim until such times as the adopted Local Policies Plan brings forward social housing land zonings and key site requirements on selected general housing zonings. It is also considered that this particular approach reduces opportunities for developers splitting sites to avoid providing the required complement of social/affordable housing.

Delivery of social and affordable housing would be secured through planning conditions or on more complex and larger applications by Article 76 agreements.

Policy Implications

This Preferred Option will require new policy to be brought forward to replace PPS 12 Policy HS 2 Social Housing.

Alternative Options

Option 14 (b):
Set out strategic policy to allow the spatial zoning of social/affordable housing sites, where a need has been identified, through the Local Policies Plan.

Option 14 (c):
Set out strategic policy to enable the Local Policies Plan to indicate through key site requirements the proportion of social/affordable housing units to be provided in specific housing zonings, to meet local needs.

Option 14 (d):
Set out strategic policy requiring all housing sites, over certain thresholds, to provide a proportion of social/affordable housing.

Q33. Do you agree with our Preferred Option for addressing social/affordable housing need within the Borough?

Key Issue 15 Delivery of Housing to Meet the Needs of People with Mobility Difficulties (including people with disabilities and older people)

- Our population is getting older. The 2011 Census records that 16.5% of the Mid and East Antrim population was 65+ years (compared to NI proportion of 14.6%). This is projected to rise to 25% by 2030.
- The 2011 Census records that 11% of people in Mid & East Antrim suffered a mobility or dexterity difficulty.

Background

The SPSS highlights that the planning system has a positive role

to play in the delivery of homes to meet the full range of housing needs of society. Whilst acknowledging the needs of the Borough's ageing population, we are also conscious of the fact that mobility issues can affect any member of our community, young or old, for a variety of different reasons. Housing providers will therefore have to increasingly consider provision of homes which are accessible for those with mobility difficulties, including wheelchair users. NIHE have highlighted that whilst Housing

Associations respond to identified wheelchair need, the demand from people with a disability who wish to own their own homes cannot be readily met. Appropriate policy developed in the LDP would help to address this shortcoming.



Preferred Option

Option 15 (a):

Set out strategic policy that all ground floor apartments in blocks of two storey or above should be wheelchair accessible units.

This policy would apply to all new apartments and buildings converted into apartments unless deemed to be unrealistic, for example due to the building being listed. Current policy sets out that developments over 25 units must contain a mix of house types and sizes and this can help deliver apartments. In addition, the Local Policies Plan could set out key site requirements on selected zoned housing sites requiring apartments of an appropriate scale and design, thereby assisting delivery of a degree of wheelchair accessible units through the private market.

It is considered that this policy will also help to contribute to increased densities in town centres as these tend to be the favoured locations for apartment developments. As these locations are accessible to amenities, services and public transport, this policy could also bring the added benefit of assisting independent living.

This option would seek to address the housing needs of the general population who require a wheelchair accessible dwelling in addition to addressing the needs of an ageing population. The option could also help create

more balanced and inclusive communities.

Policy Implications

This Preferred Option will require new policy to be brought forward stipulating that all ground floor apartments in blocks of two storey or above should be wheelchair accessible units. It is recommended that the wording of PPS 12 Policy HS 4 regarding a mix of house types and sizes in new residential developments is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy and expanded to include this additional criterion.



Alternative Option

Option 15 (b):

No intervention by the Local Development Plan for delivery of wheelchair accessible dwelling units.

Q34. Do you agree with the proposed new policy approach to address the needs of people with mobility issues?



Planning Policy Review of existing relevant PPSs

Planning Policy Statement 7: Quality Residential Environments (PPS 7), Addendum to PPS 7: Residential Extensions and Alterations, Addendum to PPS 7: Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas, Planning Policy Statement 12: Housing in Settlements (PPS 12) and Planning Policy Statement 21: Sustainable Development in the Countryside (PPS 21)

A full review and recommendations for amendments to PPS 7, the Addendums to PPS 7, PPS 12 and housing policies within PPS 21 are available in Chapter 11.

Q35. In relation to existing Policy QD 2 (Design Concept Statements, Concept Master Plans and Comprehensive Planning) in PPS 7, do you agree with the amended threshold for the submission of a concept master plan?

Q36. In regard to the space standards set out in Annex A (Space Standards) of Addendum to PPS 7: Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas:

- Should they be retained or amended?
- Should these standards be applied to all new apartments and dwellings?

Q37. In relation to existing Policy LC 2 (The Conversion or Change of Use of Existing Buildings to Flats or Apartments) in Addendum to PPS 7: Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas:

- Do you agree that an additional criterion requiring the provision of waste storage areas that are well designed as an integral part of the proposed development should be included in policy for the assessment of conversions or change of use proposals to apartments?
- Should such a criterion also apply to all new apartments?

Q38. In relation to existing Policy HS 1 (Living over the Shop) in PPS 12, do you have any suggestions as to how Living over the Shop could be more proactively encouraged through the Local Development Plan?





Q39. In relation to existing Policy CTY 3 (Replacement Dwellings) in PPS 21:

- Do you agree that verifiable evidence, as to the extent of the dwelling, should be submitted for every replacement dwelling application?
- Do you agree with the recommendation to remove reference to fire damaged dwellings as per the SPPS?
- Do you agree with relocating and including the criteria for the replacement of non-listed vernacular dwellings within an amended PPS 6 BH 15 built heritage policy?

Q40. In relation to existing Policy CTY 4 (The Conversion and Reuse of Existing Buildings) in PPS 21, do you agree that our Plan Strategy should follow the SPPS as outlined?

Q41. In relation to existing Policy CTY 5 (Social and Affordable Housing) in PPS 21:

- Do you agree that we retain the stipulation that applications should be made by a registered Housing Association and that proposals should be for no more than 14 dwellings?
- Do you agree that only one such group should be permitted in close proximity to any particular rural settlement?

Q42. In relation to existing Policy CTY 8 (Ribbon Development) in PPS 21, do you agree that only substantial buildings should be counted as part of a built up frontage and that the policy should include a visual test?

Q43. In relation to existing Policy CTY 10 (Dwellings on Farms) in PPS 21, do you consider that a stricter integration test should be applied to those exceptional sites located elsewhere on a farm?



Open Space, Sport and Leisure

- In 2016, seven of our parks and green spaces were awarded Green Flag Status.
- In 2017, Carnlough, Ballygalley and Browns Bay were awarded Seaside Awards.
- Nine golf courses are located within our Borough.
- We have approximately 65 miles of coastline.
- Our population is served by three principal Leisure Centres.
- Carnfunnock Country Park has over 191 hectares of mixed woodland, colourful gardens, walking trails and coastline, not forgetting its spectacular panoramic views of the Antrim Coast and North Channel.

Regional Policy Context

The RDS acknowledges the value of accessible green space as a fundamental component to achieving sustainable development within both urban and rural areas. RG 7 'Support urban and rural renaissance' in particular stresses the importance of promoting

recreation space in cities, towns and neighbourhoods as well as ensuring that new developments and plans should make provision for green and blue infrastructure.

The SPPS requires the LDP to bring forward an Open Space Strategy that reflects the aim, objectives and policy approach of the SPPS, tailored to the circumstances of the plan area. It also requires that all existing open space should be safeguarded and that there should be a presumption against the loss of open space irrespective of its physical condition and appearance.

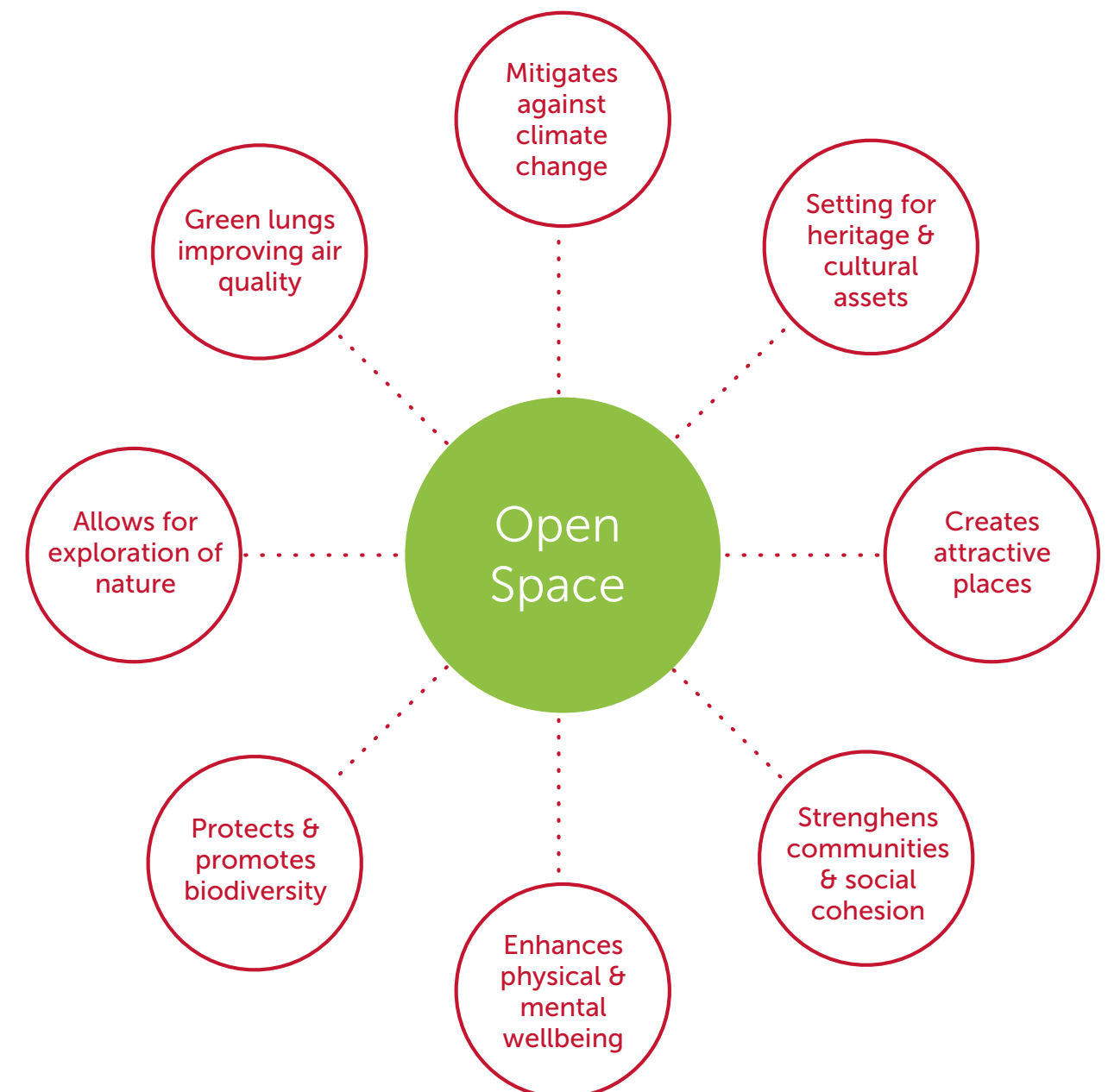
Local Policy Context

Adequate and appropriate provision for new and accessible open space and recreation facilities to meet the needs of all the residents of our Borough, is fundamental to building stronger, safe and healthy communities as aimed for in our Corporate Plan. Our Community Plan aims to promote healthy places and lifestyles in accordance with its theme of Good Health and Wellbeing.

Open Space Provision in Mid and East Antrim

Open space or green infrastructure, as it can also be referred to, includes all formal, informal and passive open spaces which are of public value. Whilst not an exhaustive list this encompasses parks, gardens, woodlands, forests, outdoor sports facilities such as pitches, tennis courts and bowling greens, communal green spaces within housing developments, play parks, kick about areas, green corridors and wedges, allotments, cemeteries, civic space including squares and other hard surfaced areas. It also includes blue infrastructure such as inland bodies of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs. Open space as well as providing important opportunities and venues for sport and outdoor recreation is also accredited with a range of other cultural, health, social, economic and environmental benefits, including the following, as shown in Figure 7.1:

Figure 7.1 Benefits of Open Space



Whilst stand alone open space can deliver many of the benefits in Figure 7.1, the greatest gains accrue from open space which is part of a wider green network. These are connected areas of green infrastructure that together form an integrated and multifunctional network. The linking together of natural, semi-natural and man-made open spaces to create an interconnected network further increases opportunities for physical activity and facilitates active travel i.e. by encouraging walking and cycling for everyday needs. A green network also increases accessibility within settlements as well as access to the surrounding rural area and supports sustainable development.

Full details of open space provision in our Borough are contained in Position Paper 6 (Open Space and Recreation).

Available at www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/plan-preparation-process

Our LDP will therefore support the retention and enhancement of existing open space and will actively seek opportunities to create new open spaces. Development which unacceptably compromises the extent and/or quality of our green and blue infrastructure will not be supported.

Outdoor Sport provision

In regard to open space provision for outdoor sport and recreation, our position paper acknowledges that we fall somewhat short of the Fields in Trust (FiT) recommended provision of 2.4 hectares per 1000 population insofar as it relates to playing pitches. However, we have not raised this as an issue in this paper because the notional deficiency is not considered significant when school pitches, approved synthetic pitches and recent approvals are factored in. Accordingly, we propose to zone land for new playing pitches in circumstances where Council or education authorities have committed to their development.

In addition to a good distribution of playing pitches across our Borough, we also have the following other outdoor recreational facilities:

- eight cricket greens;
- six multisport facilities;
- a range of other smaller neighbourhood MUGAs;
- tennis courts; and
- bowling greens.

Other Existing Open Space Provision

‘Outdoor play space’ as defined by the FiT standards, is a significant component but it is not the only form of open space. The standard does not take account of the

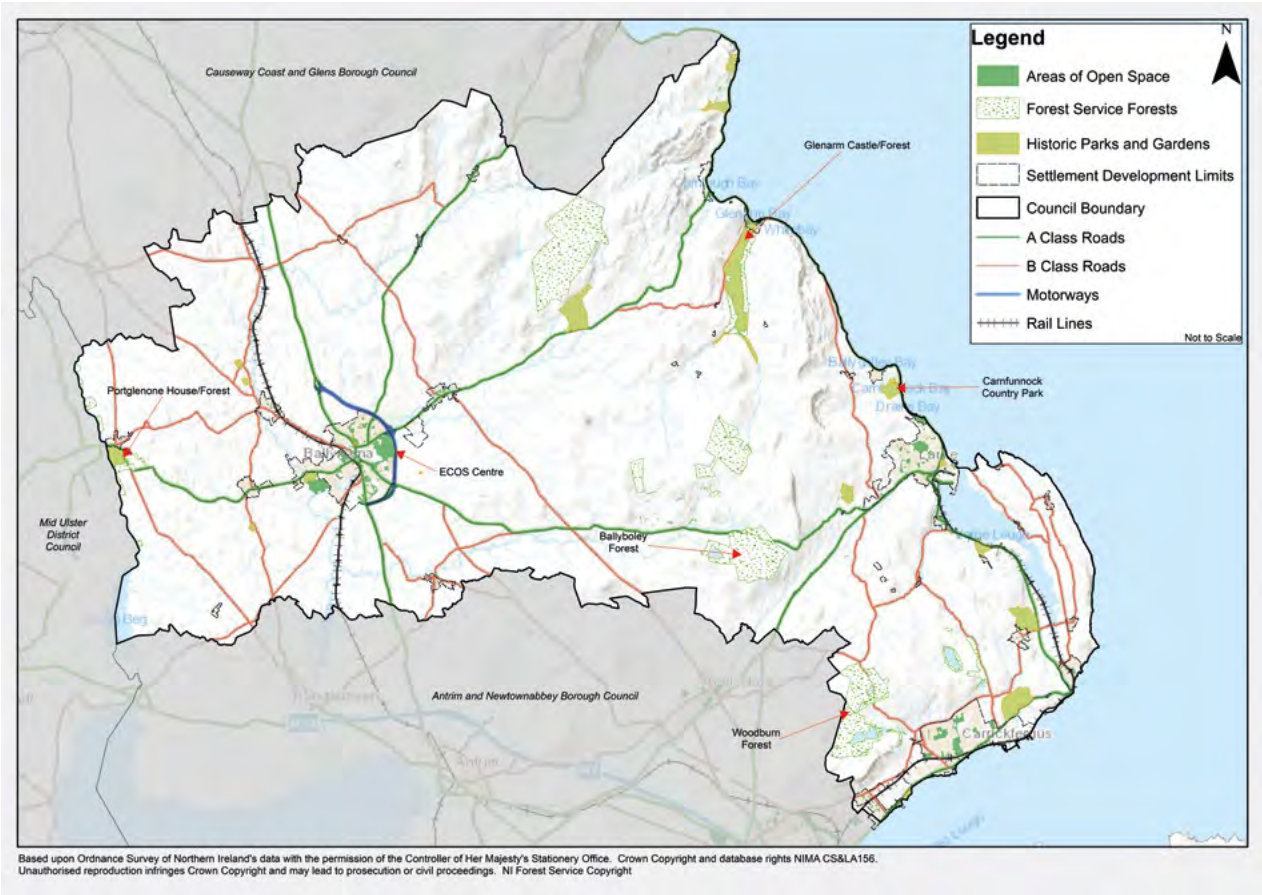
extensive variety of open space, both formal and informal that is available across our Borough much of which also offers opportunities for outdoor play (see Map 7.1). This includes parks such as Carnfunnock and People’s Park, woodlands and forests such as Glenarm Forest, Ecos Woodland and Bashfordlands Wood. Across the Borough there are also 14 outdoor gyms, a number of informal kick about areas, green landscape wedges as well as communal green space within existing residential areas.

We also benefit from countryside that provides numerous opportunities for walking, hiking and cycling routes including a 30 mile section of the Ulster Way as well as part of the National Cycling network. Our coastal location, loughs and inland waterways provide added benefit such as access to good quality beaches and marinas. These areas also provide opportunities for rowing, sailing, diving and other watersports. Leisure centres in each of our main towns complement our outdoor recreational areas.

As demonstrated above our Borough has an extensive portfolio of open space and recreational facilities which we will seek to protect and enhance recognising the importance they play in enhancing quality of life.

Q44. Do you agree with our approach to identifying and protecting open space for new playing pitches?

Map 7.1 Open space areas within Mid and East Antrim



Identification of Key Issues

Taking account of the regional and local policy context and informed by our evidence base, the key strategic open space issues to be addressed through the LDP are:

- Key Issue 16: Community Growing Spaces and Allotments
- Key Issue 17: Community Greenways/Pathways
- Key Issue 18: Play Park Provision
- Key Issue 19: Open Space Provision in New Residential Developments.

Key Issue 16 Community Growing Spaces and Allotments

- *Currently we operate three allotment sites located in Carrickfergus (Beltoy Road), Greenisland (Knockleigh Drive) and Larne (Town Park). The identification of a suitable site in Ballymena is currently in progress.*
- *NIHE have developed growing spaces within some of their estates in Ballymena and these are popular with residents.*

Background

As well as encouraging physical exercise, the provision of spaces in urban areas for growing of food (e.g. community orchards, allotments and school grounds) can reduce food miles, provide people directly with fresh healthy food, increase education and awareness about good food and healthy eating. These spaces

can also foster community pride, improve social cohesion and provide a focus for the community. These benefits are recognised in our Community Plan which identifies the development of allotments as a key action contributing to Theme 2 ‘Good Health and Wellbeing’.

Through providing for community growing spaces and allotments, the LDP will positively enhance and contribute to health and wellbeing and the creation of shared space, therefore aligning to those core principles in the SPPS.

It is therefore appropriate to consider how our LDP could help support this approach.



Preferred Option

Option 16 (a):
Support delivery of Community Growing Spaces/Allotments in suitable locations

Through the provision of policy criteria, this option would support the delivery of community growing spaces, particularly in locations that encourage active travel and sustainable development. This option would also allow firm proposals for future growing spaces to be identified spatially

in the Local Policies Plan. This approach supports the Community Plan in seeking to improve health and wellbeing for the benefit of all citizens as well as meeting wider environmental, social and economic aims with regards to achieving sustainable development.

Policy Implications
This option will require new bespoke policy for the assessment of such proposals that come forward and also allow for spatial designation through the Local Policies Plan.

Alternative Options

Option 16 (b):
Support delivery of Community Growing Spaces/Allotments within appropriate new housing developments.

Option 16 (c):
No specific policy for Community Growing Spaces/Allotments. Such proposals would be assessed within a wider policy for new open space.

Q45. Do you agree with our Preferred Option to help accommodate Community Growing Spaces/ Allotments within the Borough?

Q46. Are there any other ways the LDP can help contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of our residents?

Key Issue 17

Community Greenways/Pathways

- *Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan designated four greenways within Carrickfergus (see Map 7.2).*
- *The Department for Infrastructure’s ‘Strategic Plan for Greenways’ (2016) identified a regional network of 1,000km of greenways across NI. A number pass through our Borough, including routes from Mossley to Carrickfergus via Greenisland, Ballyclare to Larne and Ballymena to Cushendall (see Map 7.3).*

Background

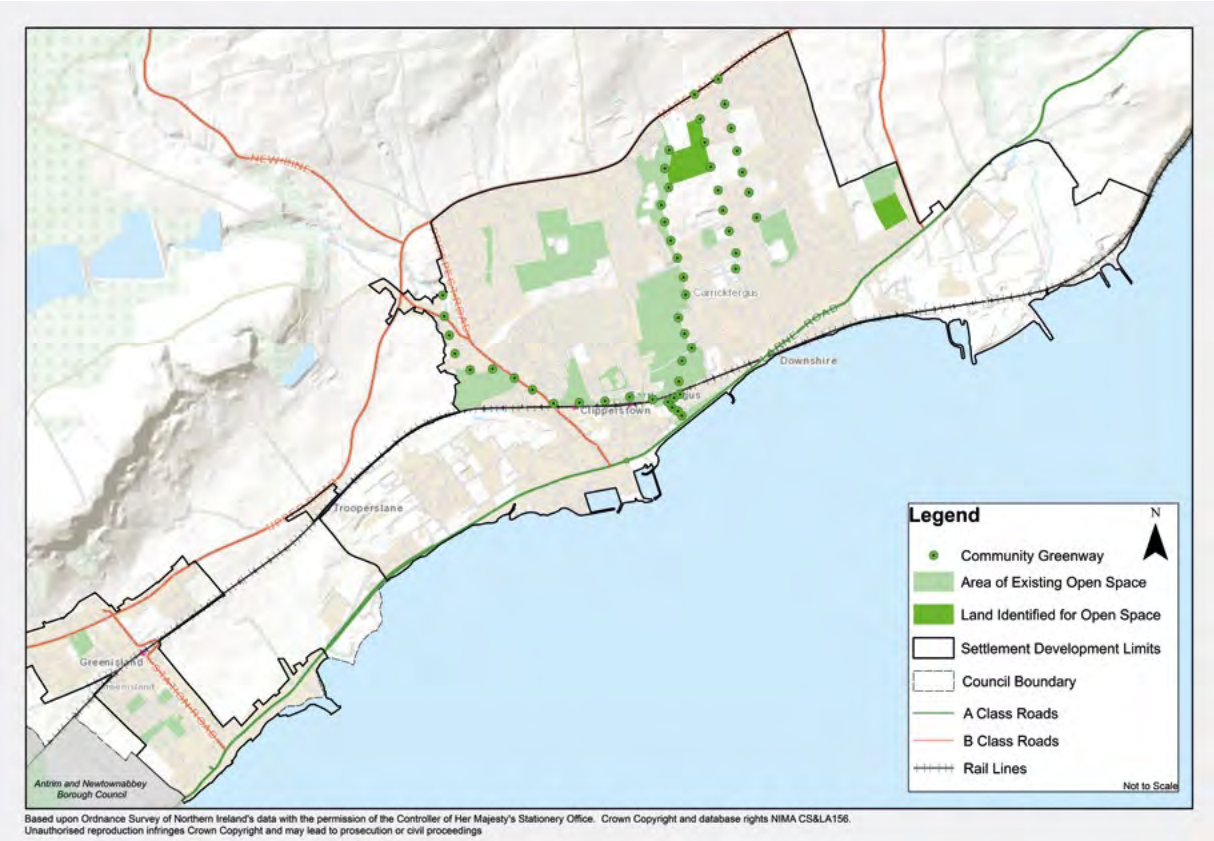
The SPPS highlights that LDPs must take account of the importance of protecting linear open spaces such as pedestrian and cycle routes, community greenways, former railway lines and river and canal corridors. These are valuable in linking larger areas of open space and providing important wildlife corridors/ecological networks as well as promoting and protecting

public access to and along the coast.

Mid and East Antrim has a good geographical distribution of informal and passive recreational facilities. However, evidence suggests that a significant number of parks and open spaces are not currently used to their full potential to support increased health and wellbeing. Greenways can provide safe and traffic free links, for pedestrians and cyclists, between open space, recreational facilities, residential areas, places of employment and town centres. Our Community Plan identifies the provision of greenways/pathways between areas as a key action contributing to Theme 2 ‘Good Health and Wellbeing’.

It is therefore appropriate to consider how our LDP could help support this approach.

Map 7.2 Greenways in Carrickfergus



Map 7.3 Strategic Plan for Greenways



Source A Strategic Plan for Greenways, DfI, 2016





Preferred Option

Option 17 (a):

Facilitate the development of a network of Community Greenways/Pathways.

This option will set out strategic policy to protect designated community greenways and pathways including those designated by other bodies. It will also ensure that new development has open space linkages to these greenways. This option would also allow for bespoke key site requirements to be attached to new zonings in the Local Policies Plan to help deliver this. In addition, the Local Policies Plan could spatially identify community greenways/pathways which seek to re-establish corridor links between the countryside, coast and urban

areas of open space such as parks, playing fields and natural areas to create a multifunctional green network.

This approach supports our Community Plan in seeking to improve health and wellbeing for the benefit of all citizens as well as meeting wider environmental aims, such as the safeguarding of wildlife habitats, biodiversity and flood risk management.

Policy Implications

This preferred option will require new bespoke policy to allow for

the designation, provision and protection of new and existing community greenways/pathways and for open space linkages from new developments to these greenways. It is proposed that PPS 3 Policy AMP 5 is also amended to take account of the protection of designated greenways/pathways and Policy AMP 8 is amended to include reference to greenways/pathways (see Chapter Eight Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity).

Alternative Option

Option 17 (b): No specific policy to protect Greenways.

Q47. Do you agree with our Preferred Option in relation to designating and protecting a network of community greenways/pathways within our Borough?

Q48. Do you know of any open spaces, local routes or rights of way that could be used to form part of a green network?



Key Issue 18 Play Park Provision

- Almost 20% of our Borough’s population is under 16 and 12% are nine years old or under.
- Higher proportions of children are associated with particular areas, including Kilwaughter (Larne), Dunclug (Ballymena) and Northland (Carrickfergus).
- We have 68 outdoor equipped children’s play areas located across the Borough.

Background

Our Borough is generally well served with equipped play parks, with all existing towns and villages having at least one. However, within our main towns there are some neighbourhoods where there are local deficiencies in provision. In the past, some play parks have not been delivered by developers of new housing

developments and this has contributed to local deficiencies.

The new LDP offers an opportunity to take a strategic approach to play park provision in the Borough, tailored to meet the specific needs of an area and informed by our Play Strategy (when published).



Alternative Options

Option 18 (b):
Set out strategic policy to accommodate equipped children’s play areas in locations identified and owned by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.

Option 18 (c):
Retain Policy OS 2 of PPS 8 including the criteria to require an equipped children’s play area for residential developments of 100 units or more, or for development sites of five hectares or more.

Option 18 (d):
Set out strategic policy requiring developer contributions from residential developments of 100 units or more, or for development sites of five hectares or more, to create/enhance/maintain centrally located council owned play parks.

Option 18 (e):
Assess local needs for equipped children’s play space taking into account our Play Strategy. Key site requirements would then require play facilities for housing sites in areas of need or alternatively require developer contributions to create/enhance/maintain Council owned play parks.



Preferred Option

Option 18 (a):
Set out strategic policy requiring residential developments of 100 units or more, or on sites of five hectares or more to provide an equipped children’s play area, unless otherwise specified through key site requirements.

New housing developments of an appropriate scale provide an important opportunity to deliver new equipped children’s play areas. The zoning of housing land and the use of key site requirements for specific sites will not be carried out until the second stage of the LDP, the Local Policies Plan. Once we reach that stage, key site requirements can be applied to zoned housing sites setting out if an equipped play area should be provided on site, if developer

contributions are required or alternatively if a play area is not required due to existing adequate provision. This option will allow children’s equipped play provision to be assessed on a site by site basis taking into account our Play Strategy. This option however, will also retain the existing policy approach as set out in Policy OS 2 of PPS 8 to ensure that there will be no policy gap between the adoption of the Plan Strategy and the Local Policies Plan. This

will safeguard against the loss of opportunities for the provision of children’s play areas.

Policy Implications

This preferred option will require an amendment to Policy OS 2 of PPS 8 to allow for variations in the provision of equipped children’s play areas within identified housing zonings. Play parks outside housing zonings in appropriate locations will also be supported.

Q49. Do you agree with our Preferred Option to help provide equipped children’s play areas?

Key Issue 19 Open Space Provision in New Residential Developments

Background

The SPPS requires the LDP to bring forward policy to require new residential development of an appropriate scale (generally 25 or more units, or on sites of one hectare and above) to provide adequate and well-designed open space as an integral part of the development. The SPPS also requires that a suitable mechanism to secure the effective and future management and maintenance of open space is provided. Our policy approach to the maintenance and management of open space can be found in the policy review in Chapter 11.

The need for adequate private, semi-private and public amenity space is an important consideration in all residential developments. However, the provision of open

space is too often an afterthought rather than being considered an integral part of the overall design of the development. Evidence suggests that historically the quality and quantity of open space has fallen below expectation, particularly within certain areas such as Larne West and within the northeast sector of Carrickfergus. The LDP now offers an opportunity to adopt a Borough wide strategic approach to the provision of open space in order to ensure that all future proposals result in the creation of quality residential environments.



Preferred Option

Option 19 (a):
Retention of the current strategic criteria based policy regarding public open space contained in Policy OS 2 of PPS 8 i.e. setting out a 10% requirement of open space in residential developments of 25 units or more and a 15% requirement for development over 300 units and an amended list of exceptions where a rate less than 10% may be acceptable unless otherwise specified through key site requirements.

At Local Policies Plan stage this option will allow for a site by site analysis in order to identify an appropriate level of open space provision for each housing zoning delivered by key site requirements. Until that time however, this option will fill the policy gap between the adoption of the Plan Strategy and the Local Policies Plan. This approach will also ensure that an appropriate degree of open space is provided within residential development proposals that come forward outside of zoned housing sites.

Under this option provision of open space at a rate of less than 10% of the total site area could be deemed acceptable, where the residential development:

- *is located within a town or city centre; or*
- *is close to and would benefit from direct and unobstructed access to appropriate areas of existing public open space; or*
- *provides accommodation for special groups such as the elderly or people with disabilities.*

Policy Implications

This Preferred Option will require amendments to PPS 8 Policy OS 2 to allow for an amended list of exceptions where the provision of less than 10% of open space may be acceptable. The policy would also allow for bespoke open space requirements to be identified for specific zoned housing sites at Local Policies Plan stage.

Alternative Options

Option 19 (b):
Retain the current strategic criteria based policy regarding public open space contained in Policy OS2 of PPS 8 i.e. setting out a 10% requirement of open space in residential developments of 25 units or more and a 15% requirement for developments over 300 units and the list of criteria based exceptions where a rate less than 10% may be acceptable.

Option 19 (c):
Provide strategic policy to secure appropriate open space provision on a site-by-site basis through key site requirements.

Q50. Do you agree with our Preferred Option for the provision of open space within residential developments and the revised list of exceptions where provision at a rate of less than 10% may be acceptable?

Planning Policy Review of existing relevant PPSs

Planning Policy Statement 8: Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation (PPS 8) and Planning Policy Statement 3: Access, Movement and Parking (PPS 3)

A full review and recommendations for amendments to PPS 8 are available in Chapter 11. Please see Chapter 8 in regard to PPS 3 Policies AMP 5 and AMP 8 in relation to greenways and disused transport routes.

Q51. Do you agree that the current NIHE protocol as set out in Policy OS 1 (Protection of Open Space) and Annex C of PPS 8 should be retained?

Q52. Do you consider that the thresholds for open space provision in Policy OS 2 (Public Open Space in New Residential Development) are appropriate?

Q53. Do you agree that, in relation to the management and maintenance of open space, the wording of Policy OS 2 (Public Open Space in New Residential Development) should be amended to include additional criteria that proposed open space must meet in order to be considered for adoption by Council (i.e. a minimum size of useable play/recreation space of 1,000 sq.m or more (e.g. 50m x 20m) and structured play spaces with an area of no less than 600 sq.m)?

Q54. In relation to Policy OS 3 (Outdoor Recreation in the Countryside):

- Do you agree that additional criteria should be added to allow for consideration of hours of operation?
- Do you agree that this policy should only be applicable to commercial equestrian uses in the countryside?

Q55. Do you agree with the inclusion of additional criteria within Policy OS 6 (Development of Facilities ancillary to Water Sports) as per the SPPS?

Health, Education, Community and Cultural Facilities

- *There are two Hospitals, 27 GP Practices and 30 Dental Surgeries in our Borough.*
- *There are 54 nursery units, 58 primary schools, two special education facilities, 14 post primary schools and a Further Education campus (Northern Regional College) in both Ballymena and Larne.*
- *We have four main Civic Buildings, at The Braid and Ardeevin in Ballymena, Smiley Buildings in Larne and the Civic Centre Carrickfergus.*
- *We have 27 Community Centres, nine libraries, and a number of museums and arts centres in our Borough.*

Whilst we have a broad range of health, education, community and cultural facilities throughout the Borough, the demand for such facilities will change as local needs evolve. The availability of and access to such facilities is at the heart of improving community wellbeing and social cohesion alongside a strong economy.

The provision of health and education facilities are the responsibility of the Northern Health and Social Care Trust and the Education Authority respectively. Whilst community and cultural facilities are often delivered by a range of public sector bodies, including the Council, and voluntary bodies.

Regional Policy Context

Both the RDS and SPPS aim is to promote development which improves the health and wellbeing of communities. The SPPS states that the LDP should allocate sufficient land to meet the anticipated needs of the community, in terms of health, education and other public services. As a Council we also have a direct role in ensuring that all our residents have easy access to our services and facilities.

Local Policy Context

Addressing the needs of an ageing population and helping to tackle low educational attainment and health inequalities linked to deprivation are local challenges highlighted in our Community Plan. It also includes a number of outcomes that rely on good provision of education, health, community and cultural facilities:

- *Our people are able to enjoy longer and healthier lives;*
- *Our people are physically active more often;*
- *Our older people are active, respected and supported in their community;*
- *Our Borough has health equality for all;*
- *In our Borough there are no barriers to stop anyone achieving their educational potential; and*
- *Our people and wider communities place value on life-long learning.*

Education Facilities

A number of existing schools in the Borough will benefit from refurbishment and extension works over the plan period. In addition a number of new educational facilities have received funding for major capital builds, including:

- *Braidside Integrated Primary School, Ballymena;*
- *Dunclug College, Ballymena;*
- *St. Killian’s College, Carnlough;*
- *Ulidia College, Carrickfergus;*
- *Islandmagee Primary School;*
- *Mary Queen of Peace Primary School, Glenravel; and*
- *Cullybackey College.*

It is our understanding that the new primary schools in Glenravel and Islandmagee, along with Cullybackey College may require new sites, but this has yet to be finalised.

Northern Regional College has indicated that it has a five-year plan to consolidate their three existing sites in Ballymena (Trostan Avenue, Café Lamont and Farmlodge) on the current Farmlodge site.

Health Facilities

Northern Health and Social Care Trust advise that they intend to replace or refurbish a number of their existing facilities within the Borough. However, no major new build health projects have currently been identified.

Community and Cultural Facilities

It is our vision that Seven Towers Leisure Centre Ballymena will be replaced with a wellbeing centre that provides a full range of leisure services and wellbeing facilities on a new site. A full economic appraisal and exploration of the most advantageous site location for a new build will take place before this project commences.

Accommodating Health, Education, Community and Cultural Facilities Proposed Approach

It is our intention that the LDP Plan Strategy will acknowledge the range of facilities across the Plan area. The LDP will protect

specific sites for education, health, community and cultural facilities where a firm proposal is in place on the part of the service provider. In addition, if surplus land is identified by a service provider, the LPP could potentially re-zone this land for alternative land uses.

The new LDP offers the opportunity to ensure that access to services and facilities is taken into account in plan decisions regarding the location of new residential development. It will also identify new developments where it will be appropriate for developers to contribute towards new community infrastructure either within their site or in the locality. This will be delivered through planning conditions or agreements.

Policy Implications

The Plan Strategy will set out criteria based policy to apply generally across the Borough which supports the delivery of new health, education, community and cultural facilities, in locations that encourage

active travel and sustainable development and also the extension of such facilities. The Plan Strategy will also include a new strategic policy on developer contributions (see Chapter Four).

Planning Policy Review of existing relevant PPSs

A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland, Policy PSU 1: Community Needs

A full review and recommendations in relation to Policy PSU 1: Community Needs from A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland is available in Chapter 11.

Q56. Do you agree with our approach to facilitating health, education, community and cultural facilities within our Borough?

8.0

Transportation, Infrastructure and Connectivity

Transportation

Renewable Energy

Flood Risk and Drainage

Cemeteries

Telecommunications, Power
Lines and Overhead Cables
(including High Structures)

Waste and Sewerage
Infrastructure

Waste Management

This theme is derived from the LDP objectives set out in Chapter Four:

- To promote integration between transportation and new development so as to reduce the need for travel and to reduce dependency upon travel by private car generally.
- To protect strategically important transportation and public utilities infrastructure and where possible enhance connectivity within Mid and East Antrim and between the Borough and other centres.
- To manage the use of energy, water, waste and mineral resources in an efficient and sustainable manner.
- To prevent new development in areas known to be at significant risk from flooding, coastal erosion or land instability, taking account of increased vulnerability associated with climate change.
- To support development that furthers local adaptation to climate change, for example through reduced carbon emissions and the efficient and sustainable use of water, energy, waste and mineral resources.
- To support the generation of energy from renewable sources in a balanced way that takes due account of environmental impacts and on sensitive or vulnerable landscapes.
- To facilitate networks of green and blue spaces (or green / blue infrastructure) so as to secure environmental and social benefits.



Transportation

This theme is also informed by the Sustainability Appraisal objectives as set out in the scoping report, particularly the following:

- *Manage material assets sustainably*
- *Encourage active and sustainable travel*
- *Improve air quality*
- *Reduce causes of and adapt to climate change*
- *Protect, manage and use water resources sustainably*

These objectives plus the regional and local policy context relating to infrastructure and connectivity, as well as our evidence base, have all informed the issues set out in this chapter.

The Evidence Base

High level statistics relating to Transportation, Infrastructure and Connectivity within Mid and East Antrim are referred to in Chapter Three (District Profile). More detailed information emerging from our evidence base is set out later in this chapter, where it is particularly relevant to the various issues under consideration.

For further details relating to the evidence base please refer to the LDP Position Paper 14 (Transportation) (Transportation Appendix) and Position Paper 8 (Public Utilities), available at:

www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/plan-preparation-process

Identification of Key Issues

The key issues in this chapter are set out in relation to certain sectors where we consider that feedback from the public and stakeholders would be particularly beneficial in progressing the Plan Strategy. Where issues are not brought forward for specific sectors that is referred to in the text.

The sectors discussed in this chapter are:

- *Transportation*
- *Renewable Energy*
- *Flood Risk and Drainage*
- *Cemeteries*
- *Telecommunications, Powerlines and Overhead Cables*
- *Water and Sewerage Infrastructure*
- *Waste Management*

Transportation, infrastructure and connectivity is important to the local economy and vital in attracting inward investment. The movement of people and the efficient distribution of goods and services is essential to the proper functioning of our Borough.

Transportation connects people socially and provides access to essential services such as employment, leisure, recreational and educational opportunities which are all key to people’s wellbeing. The new LDP seeks to improve our connectivity through promoting the integration of transportation and land-use. It will also promote more sustainable forms of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport.

Regional Policy Context

The RDS seeks to “deliver a balanced approach to transport infrastructure” (RG2) by managing the use of road and rail space in a better way through the following means:

- *Improve connectivity;*
- *Maximise the potential of the Regional Strategic Transport Network;*
- *Use road space and railways more efficiently;*
- *Improve social inclusion;*
- *Manage the movement of freight;*
- *Improve access to our cities and towns; and*
- *Improve safety by adopting a ‘safe systems’ approach to road safety.*

The RDS also highlights the need to reduce our carbon footprint

and facilitate mitigation and adaptation to climate change whilst improving air quality. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transport is listed as one of the mitigating measures and reduced private car use is considered necessary in moving towards this goal.

The SPSS objectives for transportation and land-use planning include:

- *Promote sustainable patterns of development which reduce the need for motorised transport, encourages active travel, and facilitate travel by public transport in preference to the private car;*
- *Ensure accessibility for all, with the needs of people with disabilities and others who mobility is impaired given particular consideration;*
- *Promote the provision of adequate facilities for cyclists in new development;*
- *Promote parking policies that will assist in reducing reliance on the private car and help tackle growing congestion;*
- *Protect routes required for new transport schemes including disused transport routes with potential for future reuse;*
- *Restrict the number of new accesses and control the level of use of existing accesses onto Protected Routes; and*
- *Promote road safety, in particular for pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users.*

The SPSS also states that the greater use of sustainable transport (that is any means of

transport with a low impact on the environment and includes public transport, walking and cycling) is also necessary to meet the Executive’s target of a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of at least 35% by 2025, based on 1990 levels.

Local Policy Context

Our Corporate Plan highlights our Council’s top strategic priority is to grow the economy. Good transportation systems and connectivity is key to achieving that and will assist economic growth. We are also seeking to build stronger, safer and healthier communities. Again, transportation can help to deliver on this through enhancing accessibility to services promoting active travel and a safe and sustainable environment.

Our Community Plan, under the key theme of Sustainable Jobs, highlights our Borough as a place to do business through developing transport. Under the theme ‘Good Health and Wellbeing’ we are aiming for citizens to be more physically active so as to enjoy longer and healthier lives. Facilitating active transport is one means of delivering on this. Under the Environment theme, we also commit to starting car clubs as an alternative to car ownership, expand community transport operations, and explore potential for development of additional cycle infrastructure. We also seek to create safe walking routes to schools and colleges, and connect existing walking and cycling routes to encourage less dependency on cars.

Background

Mid and East Antrim occupies a key strategic location in relation to Northern Ireland’s regional transport network. Our three main towns are all served by major roads and rail links providing easy access to Belfast and Derry/Londonderry. Connectivity beyond Northern Ireland is provided by the location of the Port of Larne within our Borough and through close proximity to the International Airport.

The RDS identifies Larne as a Gateway on the Eastern Seaboard Corridor (one of the five Key Transport Corridors (KTCs) identified in the RDS), linking it to Belfast and the Motorway network. The A8, a major transport link between the Port of Larne and the M2, has recently been upgraded providing further opportunities to take advantage of this Key Gateway location. Ballymena’s location on another of these five KTCs - the Northern Corridor, links it with Belfast and Antrim as well as Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady and Derry/Londonderry. The dualling of the A26, north of Ballymena, has just been completed further improving the connectivity and attractiveness of Ballymena’s central location. Carrickfergus is located on one of the Key Link Corridors within the Belfast Metropolitan Area. The A2 was recently dualled, further improving accessibility between Belfast and Carrickfergus, and ensuring that our Borough is a key link on the Causeway Coastal Route. Map 8.1 shows the context

of our Borough in relation to these Key Transport Corridors identified in the RDS.

There are also currently eight Protected Routes designated within Mid & East Antrim, some of which extend into other Council areas.

Our Borough is served by the NI Railways network, with both Ballymena and Cullybackey having train stations along the Belfast–Derry/Londonderry line which also facilitates links to Coleraine and Portrush. There are also several train stations throughout Carrickfergus and Larne districts which provide a key link to Belfast City Centre and beyond. There are also bus stations in both Larne and Ballymena. Many of these public transport stations also benefit from the provision of free park and ride car parking. Map 8.2 shows the key transportation infrastructure and connectivity within our Borough.

While transportation infrastructure and services are not the responsibility of the Council, we recognise the importance of facilitating improvements in these systems in order to enhance accessibility, connectivity, and a sustainable environment.

Accessibility Analysis

The Department for Infrastructure provided each of the new Councils with an Accessibility Study which used software based on existing transport conditions to establish travel times for walking, cycling, public transport and driving to and

from a central location within each of the three main towns in our Borough. The following locations were used:

- Ballymena (Bandstand, Broadway)
- Carrickfergus (Town Hall, Antrim Street)
- Larne (Broadway Shopping Centre)

These Accessibility Analysis Maps will assist in identifying locations with good accessibility to the town centre and help differentiate between potential development locations in each town to ensure that the most accessible and sustainable locations are considered in the LDP.

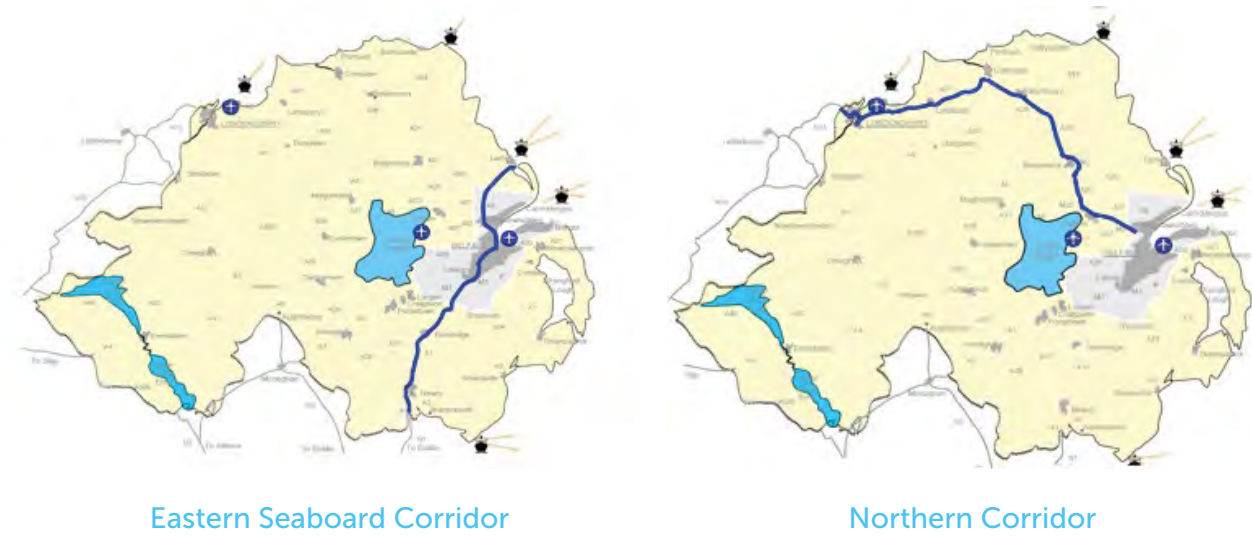
The Accessibility maps displaying the travel times for walking, cycling, public transport and driving to and from each location are included in Appendix B.

Identification of Key Issues

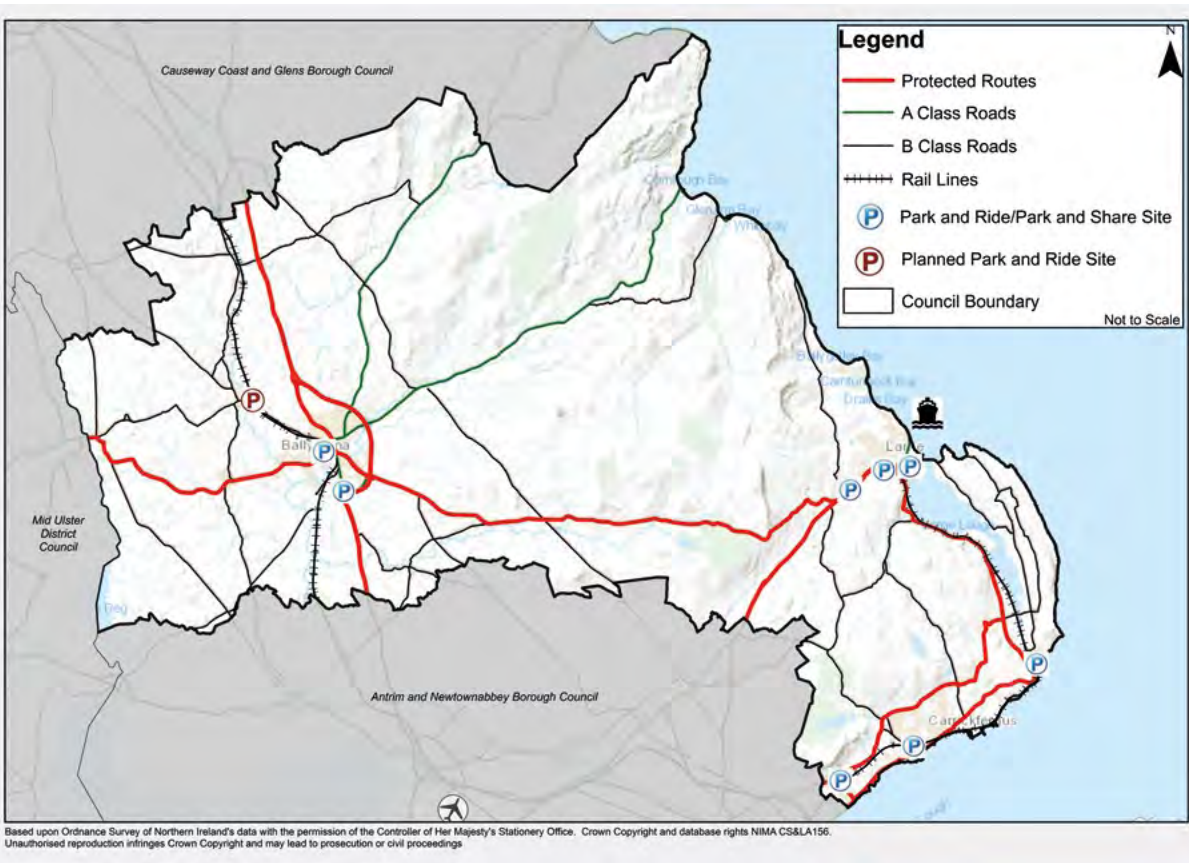
Key transportation issues are considered in this chapter under the following headings:

- Key Issue 20: Reduce reliance on the private car/promote sustainable transport and active travel
- Key Issue 21: Areas of Parking Restraint
- Key Issue 22: Protection of proposed road schemes

Map 8.1 Key Transport Corridors in the RDS in relation to Mid and East Antrim



Map 8.2 Key transportation infrastructure and connectivity within Mid and East Antrim



Key Issue 20 Reduce reliance on the private car / Promote sustainable transport and active travel

- Strong reliance on the private car within Mid and East Antrim - car journeys account for 72% of all journeys made and 81% of total distance travelled.
- For employment purposes within our Borough - 76% travel to work by car/van/motorcycle, 5% by public transport, 6.5% walk and 0.5% cycle to work.
- 17% of employed residents travel less than 2km to work, and 33% travel less than 5km.
- Approximately 45% of Mid and East Antrim residents also work within the Borough.
- 81% of households within the Borough own one or more private vehicles.

(Source: Census 2011)

Background

Within Mid and East Antrim there is a high reliance on the private car, especially for commuting to work. There is also a relatively low level of active travel (walking and cycling). This can be in part explained by the rural nature of the Borough. However it is considered

that more needs to be done to make progress towards meeting regional and local objectives previously outlined, such as to mitigate and adapt to climate change and to promote public health and wellbeing. Active travel benefits people of all ages. It can contribute to helping children maintain a healthy weight and by encouraging older people to remain active, it can help lower the incidents of conditions such as hip fractures and heart disease. Active travel also has a positive influence on mental health and wellbeing, whereas travelling by private car can increase stress through issues such as traffic, noise and isolation.

As previously noted, the SPPS places more emphasis on reducing reliance on private motorised transport, and on promoting sustainable transport and active travel.

We therefore need to look at how our LDP can assist in reducing the use of the private car and instead promote more sustainable modes of transport and active travel. Several options are considered on the next page.



Preferred Option

Option 20 (a):

Introduce a new proactive policy for sustainable transport in new development and encourage the provision of more park and ride facilities to reduce the reliance on the private car and promote public transport.

This option is a combination of options (c) and (d) below and is in line with the SPPS objectives to identify active travel networks and provide a range of infrastructure improvements to increase the use of more sustainable transport modes, to promote sustainable patterns of development and facilitate travel by public transport in preference to the private car. It would encourage a modal shift away from the private car and ensure a range of alternative

transport options are available such as pedestrian-cycle links/routes between developments in urban areas. It would also ensure sustainable travel patterns are embedded at an early stage of planning and design to influence the behaviour of occupiers or users. It would create safe and secure layouts minimising conflict between traffic, cyclist and/or pedestrians, as well as incorporating physical activity into everyday life through active travel.

This option would also provide an element of flexibility recognising that the ability to deliver sustainable transport solutions will differ between developments and settlements.

Policy Implications

A new policy would replace existing policy to ensure that sustainable transport and active travel is promoted in a more proactive manner, particularly for new developments within urban areas.

Alternative Options

Option 20 (b):

Retain the existing policy approach supporting sustainable transport and active travel.

Option 20 (c):

Only introduce a new proactive general policy requiring all new development within urban areas to incorporate sustainable transport and active travel modes, where it must be demonstrated that sustainable transport and active travel has been promoted in the development unless specific circumstances indicate otherwise. This would mean that all new zonings in urban areas, irrespective of development type, would need to demonstrate sustainability in regard to transport arrangements and active travel.

Option 20 (d):

Only encourage the provision of more park and ride facilities to reduce the reliance on the private car and promote public transport.

Q57. Do you agree with our suggested approach to assist in reducing reliance on the private car and increasing the use of sustainable transport and active travel?

Key Issue 21 Areas of Car Parking Restraint

- One existing Area of Parking Restraint within the Borough – Carrickfergus Town Centre.

Background

An area of parking restraint is a form of parking demand management which means that any new development within a designated area could avail of a reduction in the normal amount of parking spaces to be provided.

To tackle growing congestion problems and help reduce reliance on the private car it is considered that in certain instances it may no longer be appropriate or desirable for developers to fully meet demand for parking generated by their developments. This is especially the case in town centres and other defined locations close to transport hubs which are highly accessible and well served by public transport.

Adequate car parking is vital for town centres to function properly. However a balance has to be struck between car parking that meets the needs of residents, businesses, commuters and visitors on the one hand and reducing traffic congestion on the other.

A careful balance is also needed between the level of parking provided and the comparative viability of using other forms of transport to make the same trip. If a restriction in parking spaces is balanced by greater availability of alternative transport modes, then private car use may be reduced.

It is also acknowledged that in many locations it will remain important that new developments make normal provision for car parking. This is particularly important in rural areas and those towns and villages where the potential for using public transport is limited. Therefore, the full parking standards will still be required to be met outside an Area of Parking Restraint.

The SPPS, following the general thrust of PPS 3 and PPS 13, states that LDPs should recognise the role of car parking in influencing modal choice between private car and public transport, and that they should consider a range of initiatives including designating areas of parking restraint.

The Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (BMAP) designated an area of parking restraint within

Carrickfergus Town. This aimed to reduce the amount of parking provided with new developments to control the availability of long-stay commuter parking, and assist in maintaining and enhancing the vitality of the town centre by making better use of parking spaces. Within BMAP the policy applies a standard of one space per dwelling for residential parking and, for non-residential parking one space per 50 sq.m of non-operational space, and one space per 930 sq.m of operational space.

It is therefore considered the issue of car parking associated with new developments should be addressed, and the question asked as to whether the designation of ‘areas of parking restraint’ should be considered within any of our three main towns. Whilst there is no preferred option, the two options for consideration are set out.

Alternative Options

Option 21 (a): Introduce areas of car parking restraint in the main towns

This option would limit the provision of car parking within new developments in town centres and around transport hubs such as rail and bus stations. A lesser provision of parking would reduce reliance on the private car and congestion within these areas, make greater

use of or even enhance the existing transport provision, and encourage active travel. It would also allow for higher densities of development in these areas, bringing vitality to the central and most accessible areas of our towns.

Policy Implications

Policy would require developers to meet specified criteria if they sought to provide parking above the stipulated standards within an area of parking restraint.

Option 21 (b): No intervention by the Local Development Plan through the introduction of car parking restraint areas in the main towns

The standard levels of car parking provision in new developments within town centres and around transport hubs would be retained, therefore making behavioural change in private car use unlikely. Negative impacts in congestion and air quality would persist. It

would not encourage a modal shift away from the private car and does not proactively encourage a behavioural change to public transport and active travel. The environmental quality and attractiveness of areas around the town centre would not be

enhanced.

Policy Implications

Carrickfergus would lose its existing Area of Parking Restraint designation and associated policy.

Q58. Do you think our LDP should designate areas of parking restraint within the three main towns?

Key Issue 22 Protection of Proposed Road Schemes

Background

The three existing Area Plans included a number of proposed road schemes (see Table 8.1). Some of these road schemes have since been built or partly built, whilst others remain undeveloped.

Some of these road schemes have been unimplemented for more than 27 years, yet the lands required to facilitate them continue to be protected from other development which would prejudice their implementation. The SPPS and PPS 3 also requires LDPs to protect routes identified in LDPs for new transport schemes.

The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) has confirmed that all the road schemes yet to be implemented within our Borough are classed as ‘Non-Strategic Road Schemes’. Given that none of these road schemes are Key Transport Corridors and are not included in the Strategic Road Improvement Programme, private developer input is the expected delivery mechanism.

In a wider context it has been noted that the SPPS aims to promote sustainable patterns of development to reduce the need for motorised transport, encourage active travel (such as walking and

cycling) and facilitate travel by public transport in preference to a private car. Accordingly there is a need to balance such aims against building more non-strategic roads, which in this wider context could be counterproductive.

We therefore need to consider whether it remains appropriate to continue to protect all road schemes through the LDP. Several options have been considered.

Table 8.1 Proposed road schemes

Ballymena Area Plan 1986 - 2001	A26 Antrim to Ballymena dual carriageway Northern Distributor (North Rd to Broughshane Rd) West Link (Ballymoney Rd to Galgorm Rd & Old Park Rd) South West Ring Rd (Ballee to Galgorm Rd) Woodtown Rd Cullybackey Throughpass
Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (Carrickfergus)	Spine Rd Sloefield Rd Victoria Rd A2 Shore Rd Greenisland
Larne Area Plan 2010 (proposals taken from the Larne West Study DOE 1991)	Larne West Distributor Rd



Preferred Option

Option 22 (a):
Only include Non-Strategic Road Schemes in the LDP which have been justified by Department for Infrastructure (DfI) through a Local Transport Strategy.

At the Plan Strategy/Local Transport Strategy stage, DfI would be required to provide justification for including a proposed transport scheme in the LDP. Justified schemes would then be included in the LDP and the land required to facilitate those schemes protected. Any particular scheme not justified

would not be shown in the LDP and the land required to facilitate such schemes no longer protected from being developed for other uses.

Policy Implications

There would not be any policy implications for this option as the policy protecting any transport

schemes shown in the LDP would be retained irrespective of the number of transport schemes shown in the LDP.

Alternative Options

Option 22 (b):
Protect land for Non-Strategic Road Schemes in the LDP.

Option 22 (c):
Remove Non-Strategic Road Schemes from the LDP.

Q59. Do you agree with our suggested approach in relation to facilitating Non-Strategic Road Schemes within the Borough?

Planning Policy Review of existing relevant PPSs

Planning Policy Statement 3: 'Access, Movement and Parking' (PPS 3) and Planning Policy Statement 13: 'Transportation and Land Use' (PPS 13)

A full review and recommendations for amendments to PPS 3 and PPS 13 is available in Chapter 11.

Q60. Do you agree that the suggested amendments to the policy wording of Policy AMP 3 (Access to Protected Routes) in PPS 3 would enable more flexibility for exceptional circumstances and afford more weight to design and regeneration considerations?

Q61. Do you agree that the suggested amendments to the policy wording of Policies AMP 5 (Disused Transport Routes) and AMP 8 (Cycle Provision) in PPS 3 would enable the promotion of Greenways and active travel?

Q62. Do you agree that the suggested amendments to the policy wording of Policies AMP 10 (Provision of Public and Private Car Parks) and AMP 11 (Temporary Car Parks) in PPS 3 are appropriate to ensure the protection and provision of car parks?



Renewable Energy

- Throughout 2016, 25.4% of total electricity consumption in Northern Ireland was generated from renewable sources located in NI.
- Of this, 90% was generated from wind sources, with large scale generation such as wind farms contributing ¾ of that.
- As of April 2017, NI Electricity advise that over 1,000MW has been connected to the network, with a further 1,400MW in the generation connection queue.
- In Mid and East Antrim, 277 single turbine applications have been received since 2002, with 239 of those gaining planning approval.
- Within that same period, 10 applications for wind farm development (more than two turbines) were received, with six of those approved.

Renewable energy is energy from a source that is not depleted when used. The main sources are wind, sun (solar), moving water (hydropower), heat extracted from the air, ground and water (including geothermal energy) and biomass (wood, biodegradable waste and energy crops).

The Northern Ireland Executive’s 2011-15 Programme for Government set a target of 20% of electricity consumption from renewable sources by 2015, whilst the Executive’s 2010-2020 Strategic Energy Framework

included a target to achieve 40% of electricity consumption from renewable sources by 2020.

Regional Policy Context

The Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS) emphasises the need to increase the contribution that renewable energy can make to the overall energy mix. Regional Guidance RG5 seeks to deliver a sustainable and secure energy supply, whilst RG9 aims to reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate mitigation and adaption to climate change whilst improving air quality by increasing the use of renewable energies and utilising local production of heat and/or electricity from low or zero carbon energy sources.

The aim of the SPPS in relation to renewable energy is to facilitate the siting of renewable energy generating facilities in appropriate locations within the built and natural environment in order to achieve Northern Ireland’s renewable energy targets and to realise the benefits of renewable energy without compromising other environmental assets of acknowledged importance.

The SPPS objectives for renewable energy include:

- ensuring that the environmental, landscape, visual and amenity impacts associated with or arising from renewable energy

development are adequately addressed;

- ensuring adequate protection of the region’s built, natural, and cultural heritage features; and
- facilitating the integration of renewable energy technology into the design, siting and layout of new development and promote greater application of the principles of Passive Solar Design.

The SPPS states that particular care should be taken when considering the potential impact of all renewable proposals on the landscape. For example, some landscapes may be able to accommodate wind farms or solar farms more easily than others, on account of their topography, landform and ability to limit visibility. It also highlights a cautious approach for renewable energy developments within designated landscapes which are of significant value, such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It states that in such sensitive landscapes, it may be difficult to accommodate renewable energy proposals, including wind turbines, without detriment to cultural and natural heritage assets.

Local Policy Context

In the context of our Council’s top strategic priority to grow the economy, it is acknowledged that renewables bring investment and jobs to our Borough. Developing our tourism potential is also a key theme of our Corporate Plan, so the need for renewables should be carefully balanced with protecting our most sensitive landscapes which are of such intrinsic value to our tourism economy.

Our Community Plan, under the theme of Sustainable Jobs, highlights our Borough as a place to do business, including developing energy. Under the theme ‘Good Health and Wellbeing’, we also aim to help our citizens to enjoy longer and healthier lives. Renewables can contribute to this in the long term by mitigating against the effects of climate change and improving air quality.

Background

Mid and East Antrim occupies a key strategic location in relation to Northern Ireland’s Energy Network. We are home to Kilroot and Ballylumford Power Stations. There are also numerous renewable energy projects including wind farms and solar farms within our Borough, as well as the potential for future off-shore renewable energy projects to connect into our Borough.

The provision of renewables is therefore vital within our Council area. Not only do renewables provide a welcome boost in the rates our Council receives, they also contribute by ensuring a secure and affordable renewable energy supply, furthering investment in the local economy and provide employment. In the wider context renewables contribute to sustainable development, mitigate against climate change, and improve air quality by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and our dependence on fossil fuels. All this contributes to improving the overall health and wellbeing of our society.

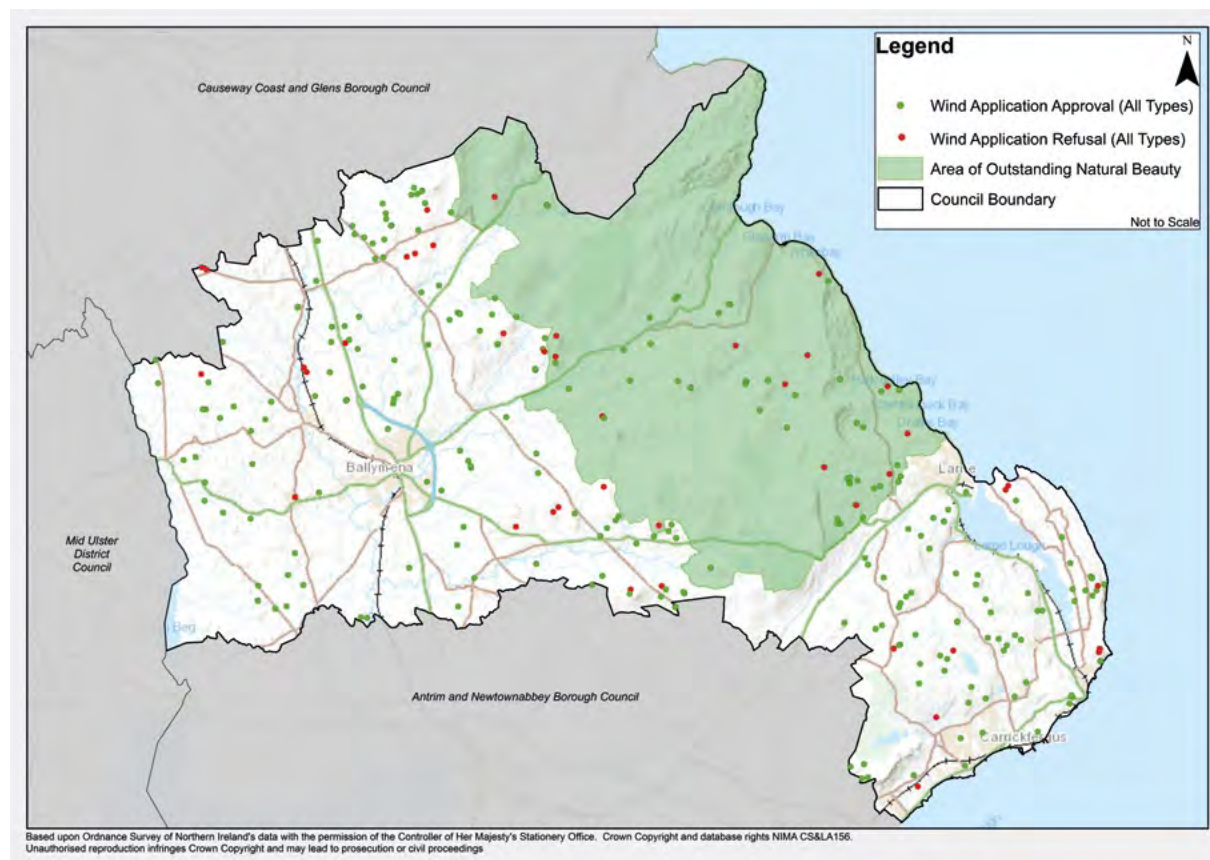


Key Issue 23 Facilitating Renewable Energy

Background

The cumulative impact of wind energy developments, particularly within designated and sensitive landscapes such as the AONB, may be seen as having a negative visual impact on the landscape, environmental quality and tourism amenity of those areas. Map 8.3 below shows the cumulative impact of wind turbine applications throughout our Borough.

Map 8.3 Cumulative impact of wind turbine applications throughout Mid and East Antrim



In order to encourage further energy efficiencies and promote renewable energy within our Borough, we propose to continue with the general presumption in favour of renewable energy, in line with the SPPS, subject to meeting the relevant policy requirements. However, within designated and sensitive landscapes, the LDP has a

role in ensuring that development is carefully managed in the interests of rural amenity, wider sustainability and environmental objectives, and the resilience of our Borough's tourism industry which relies so much on our unique landscapes. Policies should therefore be brought forward in the LDP to protect against inappropriate

development, particularly in areas that are considered vulnerable or have limited capacity to absorb such further developments.

The options considered on this issue are outlined as follows:



Preferred Option

Option 23 (a):

Retention of SPPS approach updating Policy RE 1 of PPS 18 by adopting a cautious approach within designated landscapes.

This option reflects the aims of the SPPS in that it would continue to be promotive of renewable energy development in general, whilst seeking to protect key areas within our designated landscapes such as the AONB. However, a "cautious approach" is open to interpretation and subjectivity which may not provide sufficient certainty and direction for developers, nor afford total protection to these most

sensitive landscapes.

It should be noted that this option should be considered in conjunction with Key Issue 33 in Chapter 10 on providing increased policy protection to protect exceptional landscapes and areas considered highly sensitive to particular types of development within the Antrim Coast and Glens Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Policy Implications

Amend Policy RE 1 of PPS 18, updated to reflect the 'cautious approach' wording in the SPPS. It should be noted that regional policy in relation to Renewable Energy is currently being reviewed by the Department of Infrastructure.

Alternative Option

Option 23 (b):

Restrict/prevent renewable energy development for certain types of renewables (e.g. tall structures) within designated landscapes (or in highly sensitive areas within these landscapes) and amend policy accordingly.

Q63. Do you agree with our suggested approach to balancing the need for renewable energy developments whilst safeguarding our designated landscapes and/or key areas within the wider designation?

Planning Policy Review of Existing Relevant PPSs

Planning Policy Statement 18: Renewable Energy (PPS 18)

A full review and recommendations for amendments to PPS 18 is available in Chapter 11.

Q64. In relation to existing Policy RE 1 (Renewable Energy Development) in PPS 18, do you agree that our suggested amendment to the policy approach is sufficient to ensure the protection of our Borough's designated landscapes from inappropriate renewable energy development?

Q65. In relation to existing Policy RE 1 in PPS 18, do you agree that additional policy criteria should be considered ensuring renewable energy developments in close proximity to existing electricity infrastructure does not compromise or curtail future network operations/expansions?



Flood Risk and Drainage

- Seven main rivers flow through our Borough: *The Braid River; Maine River; Kellswater River; Clough/Cloughwater River; Lower Bann; Glenarm River and the Glynn River.*
- 18 controlled reservoirs.
- Our Borough has approximately 65 miles of coastline.

Flooding is a natural process that cannot be entirely prevented. Some areas are already susceptible to intermittent flooding from various sources, principally from rivers, the sea or surface water runoff. Climate change is generally expected to increase flood risk, albeit that there remains much uncertainty as to the degree of climate change that will occur and the implications for particular areas of Northern Ireland.

The effects of flooding on human activity are wide ranging. Floods have the potential to cause fatalities and injury, displacement of people, pollution and health risk, damage to buildings, adverse environmental impacts and to severely compromise economic and social activities.

There are four main types of flooding: fluvial flooding (rivers); coastal flooding; pluvial flooding (surface water); and flooding from impounded water bodies i.e. reservoirs.

Regional Policy Context

In the RDS, Regional Guidance RG12 seeks to promote a more

sustainable approach to flood risk management. RG9 seeks to reduce our carbon footprint and facilitate mitigation and adaption to climate change. One of the adaptive measures outlined is to minimise development in areas at risk from flooding from rivers, the sea and surface water run-off. It also recognises the need to avoid, where possible, the selection of flood prone land for employment and housing growth. It advises a precautionary approach to development in areas of flood risk and the use of the latest flood risk information that is available in order to properly manage development.

RG8 states that residential development should not take place in areas which are known to be at risk of flooding, whilst RG1 similarly states that when allocating land for economic growth and employment, areas which are at risk of flooding should be avoided, where possible.

Government policy in regard to securing a sustainable water sector in Northern Ireland is currently being implemented through 'Sustainable Water – a Long Term Water Strategy for Northern Ireland (2015-2040)', published by the Department for Infrastructure in March 2016. It sets out a range of initiatives to deliver the Executive's long term goal of a sustainable water sector and identifies how planning can impact on flood risk and water quality and aims to ensure

that such matters inform the preparation of the LDP.

The aim of the SPPS in relation to flood risk is to prevent future development that may be at risk from flooding or that may increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

The SPPS regional objectives for flood risk generally reflect the thrust of the RDS and the Long Term Water Strategy.

Local Policy Context

Our Corporate Plan seeks to build stronger, safer and healthier communities through improving the health and wellbeing of our people and communities; and protect and enhance an attractive, safe and sustainable environment. Reducing the exposure of people and property to flooding will therefore assist in this.

Our Community Plan, under the key theme of Our Environment, highlights the need to manage development so as to avoid building in areas prone to flooding, coastal erosion and land instability.

Managing new development through our LDP so as to take proper account of flood risk will therefore help in delivering on these aspects of our Corporate and Community Plans.

Background

Settlements within our Borough that have areas considered to be at significant risk of flooding include Ahoghill, Gracehill, Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Larne and Ballygalley.

Within our Borough there are 18 controlled reservoirs, i.e. water impounding structures with a minimum capacity of 10,000 cubic metres. These are recognised as a flood risk because of the potential for downstream flooding as a result of over-topping or structure failure. Most of these reservoirs are in, or close to, rural settlements.

The most effective means of managing flood risk is to avoid the risk, by locating development outside the flood risk area, particularly where this is associated with river or coastal flooding. Our LDP will use the most up to date information on flood risk to take account of the potential risks from flooding over the Plan period and beyond as this is likely to influence decisions on such matters as the zoning of land for development, or the designation of settlement limits. We will adopt a precautionary approach to the identification of land through the Plan process. Our LDP will ensure that land identified as being at risk of flooding either now or in the future as a result of anticipated climate change, is not zoned for development, unless in exceptional circumstances.



Key Issue 24 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Background

Regional planning policy does not seek to prevent development in areas of surface water (or pluvial) flood risk. Rather, it aims to manage and mitigate such risks. In these circumstances we need a more sustainable approach to managing surface water. One of the ways of managing development, particularly in areas susceptible to surface water flooding, is the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) as the preferred drainage solution.

SuDS is an approach to managing rainwater falling on roofs, roads, paving and other hard surfaces through a sequence of actions that mimic natural drainage processes. The key objectives are to manage the flow rate and volume of surface runoff to reduce the risk of flooding and water pollution. Figure 8.1 below shows an example of how SuDS can be incorporated in new development.

SuDS can improve biodiversity and local amenity, as well as offering economic benefit. For example through diverting surface water from the sewage network, lesser flows accrue to WWTW resulting in lower energy costs (WWTW are one of the highest users of electricity). When planning for SuDS, early consideration of the potential multiple benefits and opportunities will help deliver cost effective SuDS schemes with the best results.

The RDS promotes a more sustainable approach to flood risk management, including encouraging the greater use of SuDS.

The SPPS states that in managing development, particularly in areas susceptible to surface water flooding, we should encourage developers to use SuDS as the preferred drainage solution to help meet the regional strategic objectives in relation to flood risk and climate change. It also states

that LDPs should also promote sustainable drainage, for example by requiring such solutions, where appropriate to individual zonings.

Under current policy (Revised PPS 15), SuDS are encouraged in so far that 'developers should give consideration' to the use of SuDS as the preferred drainage solution. However, there is currently no legislative requirement for developers to provide SuDS. In addition, the water quality improvements required by the EU Water Framework Directive means that continuing to drain built up areas without taking wider environmental issues such as sustainable drainage into consideration is no longer an option.

It is therefore considered our LDP should do more to incorporate SuDS within new developments. The following options are considered:



Preferred Option

Option 24 (a): Promote SuDS within the LDP.

This aims to make SuDS the preferred option for managing surface water in all new developments, where this is feasible. Whilst this is in accordance with regional policy, it would see a change in emphasis from 'encouraging' to 'promoting'

SuDS in a more proactive manner within our Borough. There are a number of ways in which we could promote SuDS including through general criteria based policy, or through key site requirements attached to specific zonings, or for all development within areas of

identified surface water flood risk.

Policy Implications

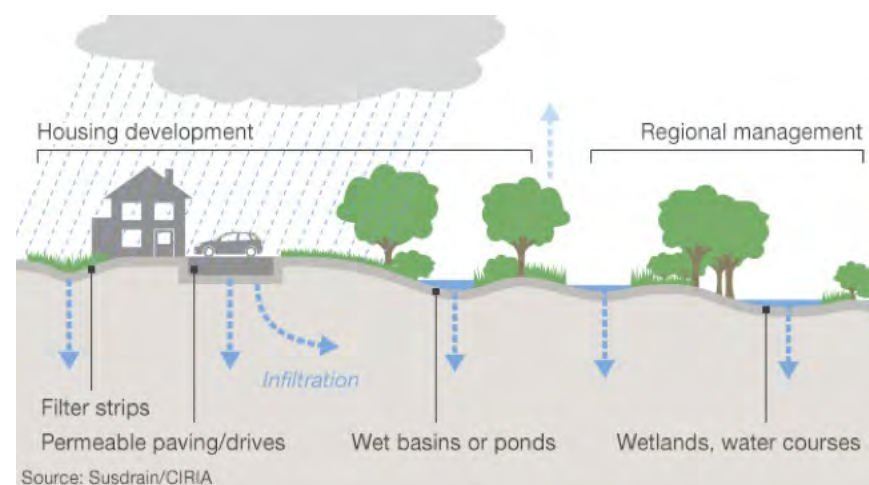
Our flooding policies would be updated to be a more promotive policy in relation to SuDS.

Alternative Option

Option 24 (b): Retain existing approach regarding SuDS.

Figure 8.1

Example of how SuDS can be incorporated in new development



Q66. Do you agree with our suggested approach to actively promoting SuDS within new developments in our Borough?

Q67. Can you suggest any other areas where SuDS should be implemented?

Planning Policy Review of Existing Relevant PPSs

Revised Planning Policy Statement 15: Planning and Flood Risk (PPS 15)

A full review and recommendations for amendments to Revised PPS 15 is available in Chapter 11.

Q68. Do you agree with our approach that Policy FLD 3 (Development and Surface Water (Pluvial) Flood Risk outside Flood Plains) in Revised PPS 15 should be amended to reflect a greater commitment to implementing SuDS?

Q69. Do you agree with our approach that Policy FLD 5 (Development in Proximity to Reservoirs) in Revised PPS 15 should not be brought forward in the LDP?



Cemeteries

- 28 cemeteries are provided and maintained by our Council
- The death rate in our Borough is slighter higher than NI average

There is no existing policy context for cemetery provision within the RDS or the SPPS.

Local Policy Context

Our Corporate Plan seeks to deliver excellent services, and develop a high performing Council which is recognised as a leading Council in all areas of service provision.

Our Community Plan, under the theme of Good Health and Wellbeing, aims to have high quality public services.

Background

Whilst the majority of cemeteries in our Borough are provided by local churches of various denominations, Council also has a duty to provide sufficient cemetery space.

Alternative Option

Option 25 (b):
No intervention by the LDP - reliance on the development management system to determine cemetery proposals on a case by case basis using normal planning material considerations.

Key Issue 25 Cemetery Provision

Whilst there is current sufficient cemetery provision in the Ballymena area for the Plan period, capacity is restricted within Carrickfergus and Larne areas, with additional land required for cemetery space during the Plan period.

It is therefore necessary to consider the issue of how future cemetery provision can be addressed in the LDP.

Q70. Do you agree with our suggested approach for facilitating future cemetery provision within our Borough?



Preferred Option

Option 25 (a):
Criteria based policy to support the delivery of a new cemetery or an extension to a cemetery. In addition, facilitate the identification and safeguarding of specific locations where there is a firm proposal for a new/extension to a cemetery.

This option will enable the LDP to zone sites where there is a firm proposal for cemetery development to ensure their protection for that use. Additionally this option would also allow for

future cemetery proposals to come forward over the Plan period, which would be determined in accordance with the specified criteria.

Policy Implications

The LDP would include a new policy on cemetery provision.



Telecommunications, Power Lines and Overhead Cables (including High Structures)

Modern telecommunications are an essential and beneficial element of everyday living for everyone who lives, works or visits our Borough. It is important to continue to support investment in high quality communications infrastructure which plays a vital role in the social and economic wellbeing of our Borough. Power lines and overhead cables, along with their associated high structures, are important in ensuring our homes, businesses and services throughout our Borough are well connected.

Access to reliable high speed digital infrastructure is also key to ensuring our businesses remain competitive and helps to grow a sustainable local economy. Our Borough is serviced by the four main mobile network providers who all offer 4G coverage. In relation to superfast broadband services (>30Mbps). Availability ranges from 82% to 97% across our main towns.

Regional Policy Context

The RDS affirms that Northern Ireland’s core telecommunications network is world class, but highlights that continued investment in infrastructure is vital to maintain a competitive advantage to enable strong economic growth. Regional Guidance RG3 seeks to implement

a balanced approach to telecommunications infrastructure that will give this competitive advantage through:

- *investment in infrastructure for higher broadband speeds;*
- *improvement of telecom services in smaller rural areas to minimise the urban/rural divide;*
- *increasing the usage of broadband;*
- *capitalising on direct international connectivity.*

The aim of the SPPS in relation to telecommunications and other utilities is to facilitate the development of such infrastructure in an efficient and effective manner whilst keeping the environmental impact to a minimum.

In relation to the development of new power lines and overhead cables, the SPPS states that proposals should have regard to potential impacts on amenity and should avoid areas of landscape sensitivity, including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Local Policy Context

In the context of our Council’s top strategic priority to grow the economy, promoting connectivity through good communications infrastructure is essential to

achieving that by making our Borough an attractive and accessible place to invest. Also, in seeking to build stronger, safer and healthier communities through improving health and wellbeing, good communications has a role to play in reducing social isolation.

Background

Mid and East Antrim occupies a key strategic location in relation to the Northern Ireland Energy Network. Being home to Kilroot and Ballylumford Power Stations, there is the potential for a proliferation of high structures and overhead cables in certain parts of our Borough. It is therefore important to balance facilitating telecommunications developments, high structures and overhead cables with protecting the environment, and in particular our designated areas and sensitive landscapes.

As the planning issues relating to telecommunications, power lines and overhead cables are broadly similar to those previously discussed for renewable energy (particularly wind energy), there are no issues brought forward in this section.



Planning Policy Review of Existing Relevant PPSs

Planning Policy Statement 10: Telecommunications (PPS 10) and Policy PSU 11 of ‘A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland’ (PSRNI)

A full review and recommendations for amendments to PPS 10 and PSRNI is available in Chapter 11.

Q71. Do you agree with our approach updating the wording of Policy PSU 11 (Overhead Cables) to reflect the SPPS wording?

Water and Sewerage Infrastructure

- *Mid and East Antrim is supplied with water from 10 Impounding Reservoirs/Loughs.*
- *In 2015 there was 99.8% compliance with water quality standards at customer taps compared to 99.7% across Northern Ireland.*
- *Four Water Treatment Works within our Borough.*
- *31 Waste Water Treatment Works.*

Regional Policy Context

RDS (RG12) promotes a more sustainable approach to the provision of water and sewerage services. It highlights there will be increased demands on water resources and waste water disposal due to changes in population distribution, household formation, urban development, and our lifestyles. Climate change will also impact on our water environment. We need to ensure when planning for future development, that there is sufficient capacity in the existing water supply and waste-water treatment infrastructure or that this can be provided ahead of development without harming the environment.

The RDS states that our LDPs should be informed by current water and sewerage infrastructure and future investment programmes.

‘Sustainable Water – a Long Term Water Strategy for Northern Ireland (2015 -2040)’, states that LDPs should make provision for wastewater treatment facilities.

The SPPS highlights that furthering sustainable development means ensuring the planning system plays its part in supporting the NI Executive and wider government policy and strategies in efforts to address any existing or potential barriers to sustainable development, including water and sewerage infrastructure.

Local Policy Context

In the context of our Council’s top strategic priority to grow the economy, it is vital that necessary infrastructure such as water and sewerage is in place to accommodate such growth. This will also help build stronger, safer and healthier communities through improving the health and wellbeing of our people; and protecting and enhancing an attractive, safe and sustainable environment.

Our Community Plan, under the key theme of Sustainable Jobs and Tourism, seeks to create a place where people want to live, work, visit and invest, and under the Good Health and Wellbeing theme, aim to have high quality public services. Sufficient water and sewerage infrastructure needs to be in place to ensure this can be achieved.

Background

As stated in Chapter 5 of this document, our Growth Strategy highlights that 6,230 dwellings will be required over the Plan period 2015 -2030. The development and enhancement of the water

and sewage infrastructure within our Borough is essential for accommodating this growth.

The provision of water supply (including abstraction and treatment), as well as sewerage treatment facilities in Northern Ireland is the responsibility of NI Water. NI Water have been working closely with us to determine locations where new/ upgraded WWTWs may be needed to ensure that housing and economic growth is not unduly restricted.

Whilst there is a sufficient water supply within our Borough, it is recognised there are some WWTW capacity constraints serving our smaller settlements, although many of these are due to be upgraded by NI Water by 2021.

Whilst no issues have been brought forward in relation to water and sewerage infrastructure, we will continue to work closely with NI Water to ensure our LDP housing and economic development allocations are appropriate. The LDP will also facilitate the development of water and sewerage infrastructure where NI Water indicate a firm commitment to providing these services.

Waste Management

- *Recycled Waste (2015/16) - 45% of our Council’s collected waste was prepared for reuse, dry recycling or composting (43% NI)*
- *Five Household Recycling Centres within our Borough*
- *Since 2011, five Anaerobic Digestion (AD) Plants have been approved within our Borough*

Waste has the potential to have an adverse impact on our environment, so the sustainable management of it is essential for the health and wellbeing

of society, and our quality of life. Government policy now recognises the importance of managing our waste sustainably, with the need to divert waste away from landfill in favour of more sustainable methods where waste is treated as a resource.

Regional Policy Context

RDS (RG10) acknowledges that managing waste is a significant part of how we treat our environment. If waste is not managed safely then it can

become a serious threat to public health, and cause damage to the environment as well as being a local nuisance. RG10 identifies the waste hierarchy principle (see Figure 8.2) which aims to encourage the management of waste materials in order to reduce the amount of waste materials produced, to recover maximum value from the wastes that are produced, and to only use waste disposal as a last resort. The less waste we introduce into the waste stream, the less harm we inflict on our environment.

Figure 8.2 Waste Hierarchy



The RDS also promotes the proximity principle which states that waste should be dealt with as close as possible to the point of generation in an effort to minimise the negative effects of waste transportation.

The SPPS objectives for Waste Management include:

- *Promote development of waste management and recycling facilities in appropriate locations;*

- *Ensure that detrimental effects on people, the environment, and local amenity associated with waste management facilities (e.g. pollution) are avoided or minimised; and*
- *Secure appropriate restoration of proposed waste management sites for agreed after-uses.*

In assessing need for waste management facilities, the SPPS states that LDPs must take into account the Northern Ireland

Waste Management Strategy ‘Delivering resources efficiency’ and the relevant local Waste Management Plan. Councils are also encouraged to foster a joined up approach with relevant bodies including neighbouring councils. Where a need for waste management facilities is identified in the Plan area, the LDP should identify specific sites. LDPs should also identify the need for appropriate waste management facilities within new development.

Local Policy Context

In the context of our Council’s strategic priority to build stronger, safer and healthier communities and protecting and enhancing an attractive, safe and sustainable environment, we need to ensure that there are appropriate and sustainable waste management facilities and services within our Borough.

Our Council also seeks to deliver excellent services which make a positive impact on the quality of life for our citizens. Waste management and recycling services and facilities are a key means to achieving this aim.

Our Community Plan, under the key theme of ‘Our Environment’, highlights the need to encourage environmentally responsible behaviour and value our environment. Sustainable waste management facilities and services

within new developments and throughout our Borough will help achieve this.

Background

Our Council is part of the arc21 waste management group. Representing six of the 11 new council areas, arc21 works on behalf of member councils to guide, support and help meet legal requirements and drive forward innovative waste management programmes. The arc21 Waste Management Plan (October 2014) provides a framework for waste management provision and a regional network of facilities for all controlled wastes within the arc21 region. It establishes the overall need for waste management capacity and details the proposed arrangements to deal with the wastes produced in a sustainable manner. It is anticipated there will not be a need for further landfill

sites for household waste in our Borough within the Plan period. In terms of existing recycling infrastructure, our Council operates five Household Recycling Centres - Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Larne, Ballycarry and Glenarm. These sites provide a collection point for a wide range of items including car batteries, fridges and freezers, gas cylinders, large electrical appliance, and hard core, rubble and ceramics.

There is also a Waste Transfer Station and Depot at Tully which is in private sector ownership and operated under a long term lease.

Whilst no issues have been brought forward in relation to waste management, we will continue to work closely with relevant bodies and neighbouring councils to ensure that any emerging issues are properly addressed in our LDP.

Planning Policy Review of Existing Relevant PPSs

Planning Policy Statement 11: Planning and Waste Management (PPS 11)

A full review and recommendations for amendments to PPS 11 is available in Chapter 11.

Q72. Do you agree with our suggested amendments to the policy approach of Policies WM 1 (Environmental Impact of a Waste management facility), WM 2 (Waste Collection and Treatment facilities), WM 3 (Waste Disposal) and WM 4 (Land Improvement) would better reflect the value of waste as a resource, and better integrate waste facilities into new developments?

Recycling Centre

Ballymena Household Recycling Centre
Redlands Household Recycling Centre
Glenarm Household Recycling Centre
Larne South Household Recycling Centre
Carrickfergus/Sullatober Household Recycling Centre

Location

Waveney Road, Ballymena
Harbour Highway, Larne
Dickeystown Road, Glenarm
Island Road Lower, Ballycarry
Sullatober Lane, Carrickfergus



9.0

Stewardship of our Built Environment and Creating Places

Archaeology and Built Heritage
Place-Making and Good Design

This theme is derived from the LDP environmental objectives set out in Chapter Four, particularly the following:

- *To conserve and where possible, enhance our Conservation Areas and Areas of Townscape/Village Character, and other assets of our built and archaeological heritage, recognising their links with the historical evolution of Mid and East Antrim.*
- *To promote improved access to all heritage assets.*
- *Promote high quality design standards in all development so as to reflect local distinctiveness and further positive place-making.*

This theme is also informed by the Sustainability Appraisal objectives as set out in the scoping report, particularly the following:

- *Conserve and enhance our built and cultural heritage, and*
- *Strengthen society.*

These objectives and the regional and local policy context referenced below, relating to the built and historic environment have all informed the issues set out in this chapter. As indicated in Chapter Four, many of the LDP Strategic Objectives are to some degree inter-related and mutually beneficial. Meeting objectives under this theme will also assist us in delivering on other social and economic objectives, for example those aimed at promoting economic growth through tourism and those seeking to deliver quality public places and shared spaces.



Archaeology and Built Heritage

Conserving, protecting and enhancing our archaeology and built heritage

The planning system has a key role in the stewardship of our archaeological and built heritage assets. Such assets embrace all manner of features associated with the historic environment including historic buildings, parks and gardens, standing, buried and submerged remains, and areas and sites of special architectural or historic interest. Once lost, heritage assets cannot be replaced and their loss is likely to have adverse cultural, environmental, economic and social impacts.

The Evidence Base

Archaeology and Built Heritage forms an important part of the character and appearance of the Borough. The main assets are detailed below:

- Eight State Care Monuments
- 157 Scheduled Monuments
- 1292 Unscheduled Monuments
- 20 Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes
- 637 Listed Buildings, 10 Grade ‘A’ and 89 Grade ‘B’
- Five Conservation Areas
- Five Areas of Townscape Character
- One Area of Significant Archaeological Interest
- Three Areas of Archaeological Potential

In addition there are many assets that are not formally designated, for example unlisted vernacular buildings, historic buildings of local importance and assets associated with our industrial heritage. For further details relating to the evidence base please refer to LDP Position Paper 5 (Environmental Assets).

www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/plan-preparation-process

Regional Policy Context

The RDS seeks to ‘conserve, protect and, where possible, enhance our built heritage and archaeology’ (RG11) by;

- Identifying, protecting and conserving our archaeological sites and monuments and built heritage assets, and
- Placing an emphasis on our built heritage as a key marketing, tourism and recreational asset that can make a valuable contribution to the environment, economy and society.

The aim of the SPPS in relation to Archaeology and Built Heritage is to manage change in positive ways to safeguard those heritage assets which society regards as significant whilst facilitating appropriate development that will contribute to the ongoing preservation, conservation and enhancement of these assets.

The SPPS requires us to set out a positive strategy in our LDP for the protection,

conservation and enjoyment of our historic environment and recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource to be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. The SPPS objectives relating to built heritage include;

- Secure the protection, conservation and, where possible, the enhancement of our built and archaeological heritage;
- Promote sustainable development and environmental stewardship with regard to our built and archaeological heritage; and
- Deliver economic and community benefit through conservation that facilitates productive use of built heritage assets and opportunities for investment, whilst safeguarding their historic or architectural integrity.

The SPPS acknowledges that archaeological sites and built heritage assets contribute to our sense of place and history, represent key tourism and recreational assets and notes that sustainable management of this resource makes a valuable contribution to the environment, economy and society.

Local Policy Context

Two of the strategic priorities of our Corporate Plan are to grow the local economy and develop our tourism potential. A vibrant historic environment will attract visitors, stimulate business, and create jobs and opportunities to acquire skills and deliver heritage led urban regeneration and rural development. Reinforcing historic character, reusing historic fabric and maintaining locally distinctive patterns of development can play a significant role in the recovery of declining villages and towns. The economic significance of our built heritage is recognised in the Heritage Lottery Fund approved Carrickfergus Townscape Heritage Initiative which aims to stimulate and support the wider economic regeneration of Carrickfergus.

The conservation and protection of our heritage assets also supports our Community Plan themes of promoting ‘Good Health and Wellbeing’ and ‘increasing awareness’ and ‘positive attitudes’ towards ‘Our Environment’. Heritage sites are important for a variety of cultural, social and environmental reasons. They make significant contributions to the distinctiveness of places by enhancing their character and identity. This, in turn, plays a positive influence on the quality of life enjoyed by communities. Regeneration, housing, education, economic growth and community engagement are examples of the ways in which heritage can make a positive contribution to community life and help improve and broaden access to, and understanding of, local heritage.



Existing Development Plans

Table 9.1 Existing Archaeological and Built Heritage Designations in Mid and East Antrim

LDP Designation	Location
1 Area of Significant Archaeological Interest	Knockdhu – Map 9.1
3 Areas of Archaeological Potential	Ballycarry, Carrickfergus and Whitehead – Map 9.2
5 Conservation Areas	Carnlough, Carrickfergus, Glenarm, Gracehill and Whitehead – (See Maps in Appendix C)
5 Areas of Townscape Character	CS 12 - Belfast Road, Carrickfergus. CS 13 - Larne Road, Carrickfergus. GD 05 - Greenisland. GD 06 - Shore Road, Greenisland. Galgorm Road, Ballymena.

Identification of Key Issues

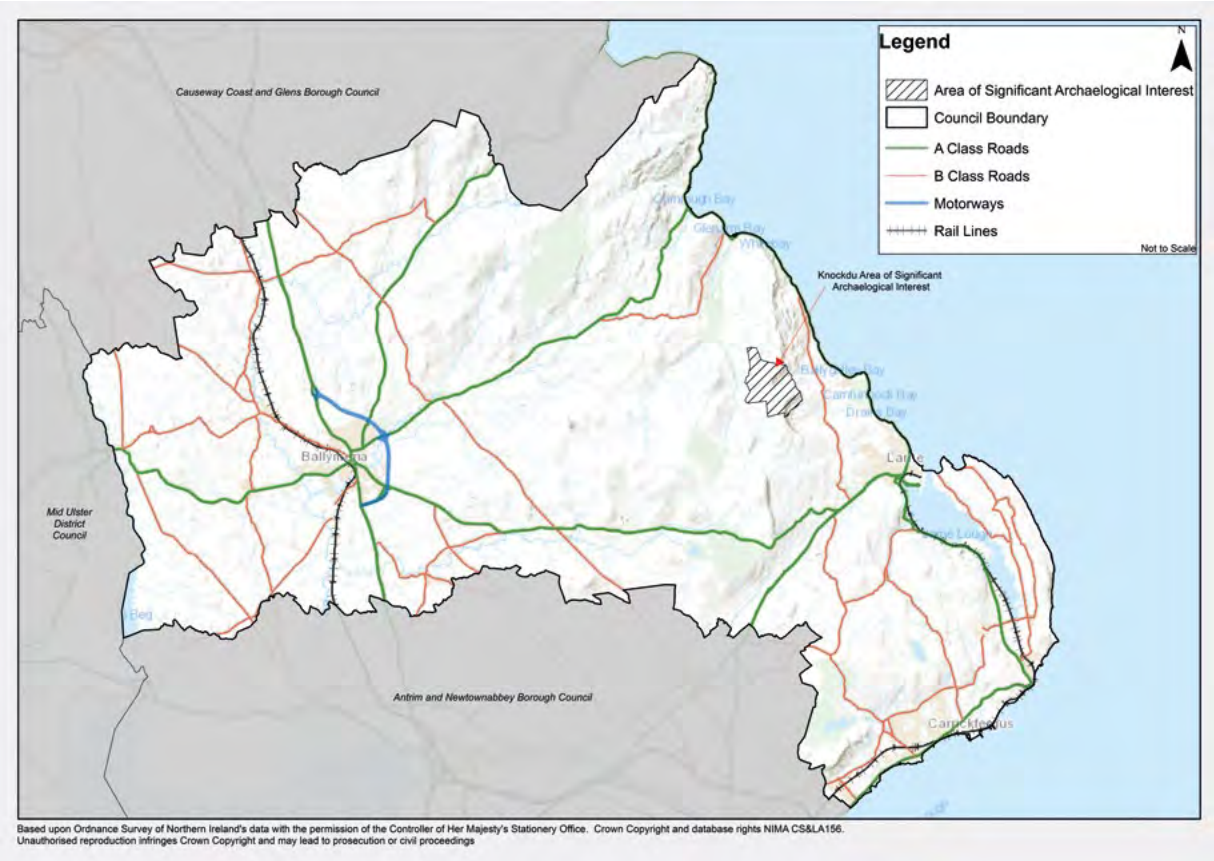
To ensure that the LDP brings forward an appropriate strategic framework, the remainder of this section sets out key issues that have emerged from the evidence base, consultee engagement, the regional policy framework, our Plan aims and objectives and other relevant sources. They are considered with reference to alternative options that may be adopted through the LDP and amendments to existing regional planning policy that may be deemed necessary.

Three main issues relating to the following areas have been

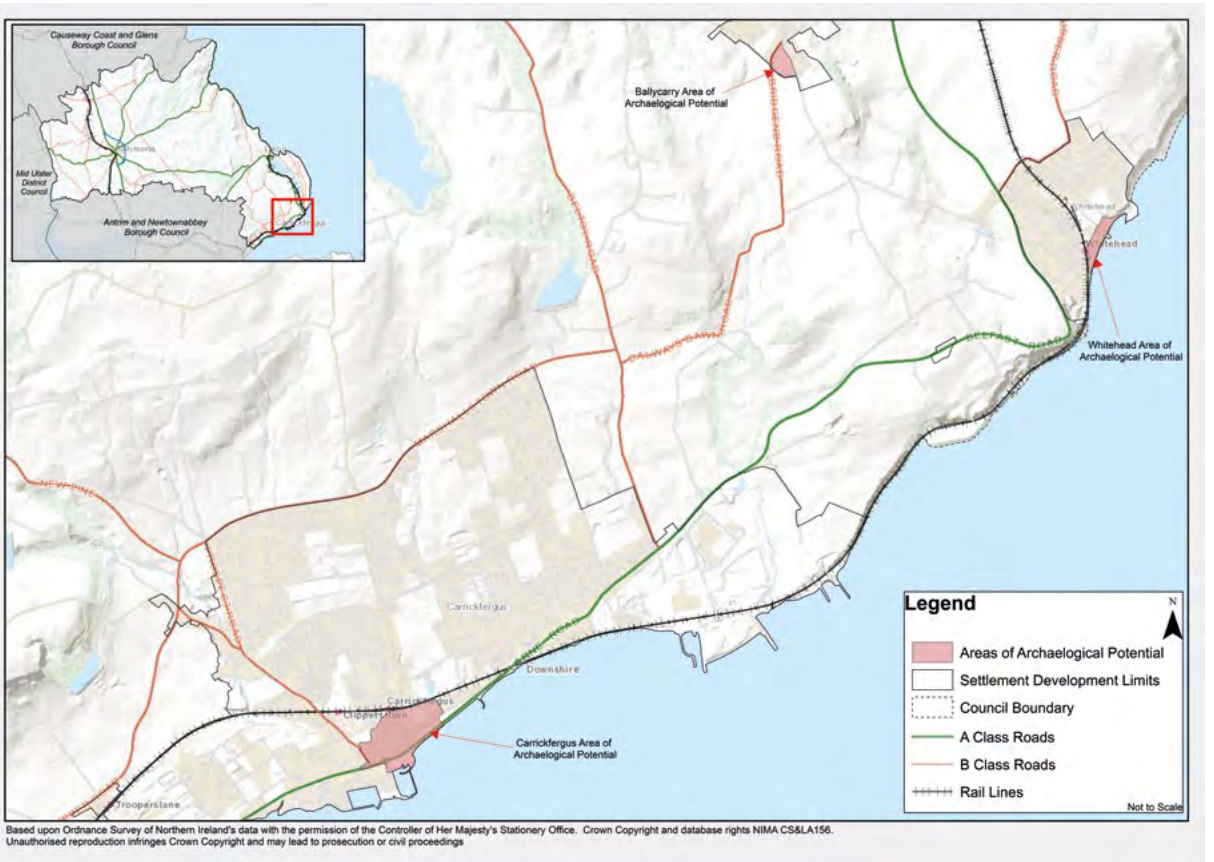
identified and are considered as being of key strategic importance in conserving, protecting and where possible enhancing our archaeological and built heritage assets:

- Key Issue 26: Protecting regionally significant archaeological sites and remains (and their settings) from harmful development
- Key Issue 27: Protecting architectural and historical character within our conservation areas
- Key Issue 28: Safeguarding Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Map 9.1 Area of Significant Archaeological Interest - Knockdhu



Map 9.2 Areas of Archaeological Potential



Key Issue 26 Protecting regionally significant archaeological sites and remains (and their settings) from harmful development

Background

Mid and East Antrim has an abundance of archaeological remains and sites which can provide evidence of thousands of years of human activity and settlement within the Borough. They are individually important or can have group value as an area of historic landscape, such as the Area of Special Archaeological

Interest (ASAI) located at Knockdhu.

Our archaeological sites and remains are fragile and vulnerable and are a finite and diminishing resource which once destroyed cannot be replaced. Every archaeological site or monument which is damaged or destroyed means the loss of part of the record of our past.

The SPPS requires our LDP to identify the main archaeological heritage features within our Borough and bring forward appropriate policies or proposals for their protection, conservation and where possible their enhancement, and to consider the implications of our other relevant local policies and proposals.



Preferred Option

Option 26 (a):

Retain the current operational policies as set out in BH 1 of PPS 6, *and* provide increased policy protection to safeguard our archaeological sites and remains (and their settings) from harmful development through the designation of Specific Areas of Constraint (with regard to specific types of development) within, or adjacent to, existing or proposed Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest.

The benefit of applying such an approach within or adjacent to the existing ASAI at Knockdhu would ensure that specific types of development (such as tall structures or mineral extraction) which may adversely impact upon the ASAI or its setting would not be permitted.

Policy Implications

In addition to retaining the current policy as set out in BH 1 of PPS 6, this approach will provide additional protection for our regionally significant archaeological assets and their settings.

Alternative Options

Option 26 (b):

Retain the current operational policies as set out in BH 1 of PPS 6, *and* provide increased policy protection to safeguard our archaeological sites and remains (and their settings) from harmful development through the designation of a Special Countryside Area (SCA) to protect the Area of Special Archaeological Interest (ASAI) at Knockdhu.

Option 26 (b):

Retain the current operational policies as set out in BH 1 of PPS 6 but do not provide any increased policy protection.

Q73. Do you agree with our suggested approach to protecting regionally significant archaeological sites and remains (and their settings) from harmful development within the Borough?

Q74. Are there any other areas that you feel should be protected by designating them as an ASAI?

Key Issue 27 Protecting architectural and historical character within our conservation areas

Background

The SPPS states that in managing development within a designated conservation area the guiding principle is to afford special regard to the desirability of enhancing the character or appearance where an opportunity to do so exists, or to preserve its character or appearance where an opportunity to enhance does not arise. The designation of a conservation area is a means to safeguard and enhance the sense of place of the most valued historic places. Each conservation area has its own unique character and appearance which contributes to the larger picture of the historical evolution of our Borough.

In some conservation areas, it has become apparent that the cumulative effects of small-scale change are having a noticeable and detrimental impact on their special architectural and historic interest. This applies particularly to shopfronts, signage and unsympathetic alterations to non-listed buildings. In the case of unlisted buildings within conservation areas, the Planning (General Permitted Development)

Order (NI) 2015 allows a range of works to be carried out without the need to apply for planning permission. Many of these small scale 'permitted development' works such as the replacement of traditional timber or metal windows with plastic windows in modern styles, can over time, significantly harm the character and appearance of historic buildings and areas.

While designation as a conservation area introduces additional controls over demolition of existing buildings and the design of new developments, we can also make Article 4 directions to remove certain permitted development rights.

The effect of an Article 4 direction is not that development within a particular category of permitted development cannot be carried out, but simply that it is brought under planning control, i.e. a planning application must be submitted. This does not necessarily mean that we will refuse permission for the works but it does enable us to retain some control over the design and detailing of the proposed

development and to grant permission subject to appropriate conditions. Accordingly, we may consider making such directions where:

- *A robust assessment of an area's special architectural and historic interest has been undertaken;*
- *The importance to that special interest of the features to be included in the direction is established;*
- *There is evidence of local support for the direction, and*
- *The direction involves the minimum withdrawal of permitted development rights necessary to achieve its objective.*



Preferred Option

Option 27 (a):
Carefully manage change by introducing additional regulation through the implementation of Article 4 Directions to remove certain permitted development rights within areas which have been identified as still retaining their local character and distinctiveness.

In addition to retaining current policy, this approach would directly address the negative impact that small incremental change is having on some of our conservation areas.

Policy Implications

As there is legislative provision for making Article 4 Directions, no change in policy is required to facilitate implementation. However, subject to the outcome of public consultation, it is considered that clearer policy direction or guidance on this matter should be provided through the LDP.

Alternative Option

Option 27 (b):
Retain the current operational policies as set out in PPS 6 and do not introduce additional regulation through the implementation of Article 4 directions.

Q75. Do you agree with our proposed approach on providing additional protection in specific areas within our conservation areas where they still retain their intrinsic architectural and historic detailing?

Key Issue 28 Safeguarding our Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Background

There is growing concern about the continuing loss of those non-listed traditional buildings which have localised historical association and character, particularly in rural areas. Buildings of character which display local traditions of architecture and design are an important part of our unique heritage and identity. Although not all of our heritage is designated we recognise the value of our ‘local’ historic environment in planning for the future of the Borough.

The use of Local Heritage Lists can play an essential role in building and reinforcing a sense of local character and distinctiveness in our historic environment and can be used to identify significant local heritage assets to support the development of our LDP. These lists can play an important role in celebrating heritage that is valued by the community and provide an opportunity for us and the community to work in partnership.

The SPPS states the effect of a development proposal on the

significance of a non-designated heritage asset such as an unlisted vernacular building or historic building of local importance should be taken into account in determining a planning application. Encouraging the formulation and use of Local Heritage Lists means that more weight will be attached to local heritage assets as a material consideration in the planning process.



Preferred Option

Option 28 (a):

Establish a criteria based approach with Historic Environment Division for identifying non-designated heritage assets within the Borough that will be used to create a Local Heritage List. Provide the strategic policy framework to enable the designation and retention of locally significant heritage assets through the LDP.

A local heritage list can support the LDP and help inform a proactive strategy for the conservation, protection and where possible the enhancement of our historic environment. The clarity that a Local Heritage List brings can assist in the determining of applications and help deliver successful development through the local planning process. Creating a Local Heritage List is a way for us to work with local communities to identify and celebrate historic buildings which enrich and enliven our area.

Policy Implications

Subject to the outcome of public consultation, the proposed amendments to BH 15 of PPS 6 would apply to any building included in a Local Heritage List.

Alternative Option

Option 28 (b):

Do not bring forward specific measures to safeguard against the potential loss of non-designated heritage assets.

Q76. Should we prepare a local list of non-designated heritage assets for our Borough?

Q77. Are you aware of any non-designated heritage assets that should be considered for local listing?

Planning Policy Review of Existing Relevant PPSs

Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage (PPS 6), Addendum to PPS 6: Areas of Townscape Character.

A full review and recommendations for amendments to PPS 6 and the Addendum is available in Chapter 11.

Q78. Are you aware of any other areas that would benefit from protection if they were designated as Areas of Townscape Character?

Q79. Do you think we should include specific policy wording within Policy BH 13 (Control of Advertisements in a Conservation Area) of PPS 6 relating to the control of flashing, scrolling, animated, intermittent or moving digital signage?

Place-Making and Good Design

Our Borough has unique urban areas and rural landscapes which in their totality help to define the distinctive character of Mid and East Antrim. This can include special views and vistas, extensive areas of open space, parks and gardens, historic places that include buildings and features of historic and architectural significance, and vibrant areas that are important for social activity and our economy. Some of these areas are the corner stones of our retail or tourism offer, and other areas provide opportunities for all sections of society to come together for leisure and recreation. We seek to enable such areas to fulfil their potential as pleasant places to live and work, and where people want to visit. Therefore, it is essential to appropriately and sustainably manage the development of such places within our Borough in order to conserve and enhance their key assets and address issues which detract from their character, attractiveness and ability to function.

Regional Policy Context

The RDS and SPPS place considerable emphasis on positive place-making and its part in promoting social cohesion and inclusion, connecting places, improving accessibility, promoting sustainable travel, and facilitating successful redevelopment and regeneration. Good design is seen as fundamental to positive place-making, but positive place-making must also be informed by those

who use these places and also by wider considerations such as the sustainable use of resources and adaptation to climate change.

Supporting Good Design and Positive Place-Making is a Core Planning Principle in the SPPS.

Good Design - The SPPS emphasises that good design can have positive impacts for people, communities, neighbourhoods and on the ability to attract business investment. The SPPS advises that good design furthers sustainable development, and promotes accessibility, inclusivity, healthy and active lifestyles and the creation of safe spaces.

Place-Making - The SPPS advises that new buildings and their surroundings have a significant effect on the character and quality of a place, as they define public spaces, streets and vistas and create the context for future development.

Local Policy Context

Our Corporate Plan seeks to improve the quality of life of our citizens, promote social inclusion, develop our tourism potential, protect and enhance the environment, attract inward investment to grow our economy, and make our Borough a “go-to” destination. Our Community Plan sets out five key themes and related outcomes intended to deliver its vision of Mid and East Antrim as “a strong, vibrant, safe and inclusive community”.

Underpinning this, the Community Plan will support key actions or strategic infrastructure projects. Examples of key actions or strategic infrastructure projects that good design and positive place-making can contribute to include:

- *redevelopment of the St. Patrick's Barracks site;*
- *masterplans for key tourism and regeneration projects;*
- *open space and recreational developments to support more active lifestyles;*
- *public shared space developments;*
- *re-imaging projects; and*
- *connecting existing walking and cycling routes and exploring options for coastal access paths.*

Existing Development Plans

Ballymena Area Plan 1986-2001

Ballymena Town Centre is defined within this Plan and new developments on street frontages are required to be of good quality design, particularly where there are significant numbers of listed buildings.

Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (2015)

Carrickfergus Town Centre is defined within this Plan and urban design criteria seek greater physical and visual connections in the Town Centre, conservation and protection of the existing

urban structure and Town Wall, and protection and enhancement of the setting of Carrickfergus Castle. A designated urban waterfront at Carrickfergus Castle and marina seeks to encourage uses that will help to promote a vibrant and attractive waterfront, protect its key assets and retain or further develop public access to the coast.

Larne Area Plan 2010

Larne Town Centre and an associated Commercial Core are defined within this Plan. Guidance on appropriate uses within these defined areas are set out in the Plan.

Good Design, Place-Making and a Collaborative Approach

The SPPS states that planning authorities must ensure, where relevant, the planning process takes account of the 10 qualities of urban stewardship and design set out in the “Living Places

Urban Stewardship and Design Guide” for Northern Ireland, and planning guidance contained within “Building on Tradition: a Sustainable Design Guide for the Northern Ireland Countryside”. The wider benefits of good quality design and positive place-making are recognised by the RDS and SPPS. Good quality design helps to create attractive, inviting and sustainable places for domestic, economic, recreational and social activity. Places developed using good design principles can create quality spaces that encourage civic pride and stewardship, whereby places are maintained, managed and enhanced by the community and other groups.

We recognise that part of successful place-making involves identifying the assets of a place and developing a vision for its future, and that often this is more successful using a collaborative approach which involves co-operating and communicating with communities and other

groups. Therefore, we encourage your input into identifying places and spaces within our Borough that have the potential to define and promote a positive image of our Borough, help grow our economy and tourism sector, promote social cohesion and inclusion and induce civic pride. We consider such areas to be potentially of strategic importance for our Borough and which could be promoted as focus areas for good quality design and positive place-making. Figure 9.1 sets out a model that may serve two purposes:

- *help people to identify such focus areas within their town or village, and;*
- *help people to think about how a place-making approach might be progressed so as to strengthen those positive factors (such as heritage or retail) which are seen as core drivers for the particular settlement.*

Figure 9.1
Model to aid identification of Strategic Focus Areas



Strategic Focus Areas

We have many buildings and places that help to create a positive image for our Borough by providing positive, well-designed spaces that support the economy, recreational and social activities and social cohesion. Examples include our vibrant town centres, marinas, tourism nodes and places rich in architectural and cultural heritage. However, some of these places are experiencing specific threats or barriers that, individually or cumulatively, are degrading their key assets and restricting opportunities. These include:

- *poor connectivity;*
- *physical and psychological barriers to movement on foot and/or cycle;*
- *poor quality design;*
- *low quality environment (for example, dereliction and vacant buildings); and*
- *erosion of character.*

The SPPS states that planning authorities should seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness, supported by clear policies and/or supplementary design guidance that seeks to address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development.

Our LDP’s overarching principles promote good quality design for all development. However, there

are places within our Borough that are exceptionally significant for creating a positive image for Mid and East Antrim. Such spaces represent unique opportunities for positive place-making. These areas would benefit from a design led approach seeking to ensure the application of good design standards and principles in order to maximise the potential of these areas.

Our approach for identifying these “Strategic Focus Areas” will begin by listening to local people and communities. We will then look at the areas emerging from the public consultation and conduct an initial appraisal of these areas. Further appraisals will identify the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) of selected areas. From the SWOT analysis bespoke design criteria will be developed for identified “Strategic Focus Areas”, seeking to ensure the key assets of these areas are conserved, protected and enhanced, and any opportunities exploited in a way that can maximise the benefits for our Borough. We will also assess how any weakness or threats might be tackled through design and other means.

With regard to the good design principles outlined in the SPPS and current supplementary design guidance (see Appendix A), bespoke design criteria applied to identified Strategic Focus Areas

will focus on the following:

High quality design

Good design requires a holistic approach in which all built and natural heritage assets of the site and surrounding area are given consideration in seeking to conserve and enhance local distinctiveness and sense of place. Consideration will be given to the appearance of buildings and places, how they function in use, and how they can adapt to changing circumstances over the life-time of the development e.g. ensuring developments are energy efficient, make optimal use of resources and are future proofed for modern technology.

Place-Making

The SPPS advises that the key to successful place-making is the relationship between different buildings; the relationship between buildings and streets, squares, parks, waterways and other spaces; the nature and quality of the public domain; the relationship between distinct areas within settlements; and the established movement and activity patterns. The compatibility of a development with its immediate and wider context, and the settlement pattern of a particular area, will be important considerations.

SWOT analysis

SWOT analysis will be used to appraise the urban structure (existing pattern of development in a place), significant views and vistas, street frontages, building heights, built and natural heritage assets and passive surveillance in key strategic locations. The subsequent evidence base will be used to develop bespoke design criteria for these areas with an emphasis on enhancing:

- Gateways

Important for a sense of arrival and supporting connectivity.

- Connectivity

Important for promoting

accessibility and inclusivity for all, and for promoting sustainable modes of travel e.g. linking places to public transport and community greenways

- Public Realm

Important for creating hospitable, safe and vibrant places that encourage social interaction and activity.

- Street Frontages

Appropriately designed shop fronts and signage and avoiding dead frontages are important factors for achieving vibrant and attractive streets.

- Built and Natural Environment

E.g. enhancing significant

buildings, incorporating high quality landscaping, and achieving benefits from ecosystem services.

- Evening Economy

In some circumstances this will be important for the vibrancy, adaptability and viability of a place.

Q80. Do you agree with our approach to identify and designate Strategic Focus Areas within some settlements, and develop bespoke design criteria for these areas?

Q81. Can you identify any areas within our Borough that would benefit from designation as a Strategic Focus Area?

10.0

Protecting and Accessing Our Natural Environment

Mid and East Antrim Coast
Other Sensitive Landscapes

This theme is derived from the LDP environmental objectives set out in Chapter Four, particularly the following:

- *To conserve, protect and, where possible, enhance environmental quality and biodiversity in Mid and East Antrim.*
- *To protect and enhance our landscape natural heritage assets including the Antrim Coast and Glens Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and areas designated for their nature conservation and /or scientific importance.*
- *To safeguard the unique character and amenity of our coastline, particularly the undeveloped coastline.*

This theme is also informed by the Sustainability Appraisal objectives as set out in the scoping report, particularly the following:

- *Protect natural resources and enhance biodiversity;*
- *Maintain and enhance landscape character.*

These objectives and the regional and local policy context referenced overleaf, relating to the natural environment have all informed the issues set out in this chapter.



As indicated in Chapter Four, many of the LDP Strategic Objectives are to some degree inter-related and mutually beneficial. Meeting objectives under this theme will also assist us in delivering on other social and economic objectives, for example, to:

- *Attract more visitors to Mid and East Antrim by creating and identifying opportunities for sustainable tourism development and by safeguarding key tourism assets from inappropriate development;*
- *Provide for quality public places and “Shared Spaces” that are accessible to and valued by everyone.*

The Evidence Base

Natural environment or heritage assets include habitats, species of flora and fauna, earth science features and definitive landscapes. Due to their importance within Mid and East Antrim, many of these natural heritage assets are included within designations that seek to provide for their protection from the adverse impacts of development (see Table 10.1 below).

Other areas within our Borough that contain significant natural heritage assets include:

- *Three Ancient or Long-Established Woodlands*
- *Woodlands managed by the Forest Service*

- *Significant tree groups and woodland*
- *Species-rich habitats e.g. wetlands including rivers and streams, peatlands including heathland and bogs, species-rich grasslands, marine ecosystems, urban wildlife corridors and parks.*

For further details relating to the evidence base please refer to LDP Position Paper 5 (Environmental Assets).

www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/plan-preparation-process

Table 10.1 Sites of Nature Conservation Importance within Mid and East Antrim

Sites of international importance

4 Ramsar Sites
3 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
5 Special Protection Areas (SPA)

Sites of national importance

2 National Nature Reserves
39 Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI)
1 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Sites of local importance

4 Local Nature Reserves
23 Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCI)



Regional Policy Context

The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035 and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) emphasise that the diverse range of habitats, species, landscapes and earth science features in Northern Ireland are highly valued assets, which should be conserved, protected and enhanced for their own intrinsic value. However, this is also justified by the tangible benefits these assets have for the economy, the environment, and the health and

wellbeing of society. Collectively, these derived benefits are known as ecosystem services. Examples of the benefits of ecosystem services are the purification of air and water, the provision of food, flood protection, and the provision of areas for recreation etc. The Northern Ireland (NI) and EU Biodiversity Strategies seek to halt the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services by 2020, and the Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (NI) 2011 places a statutory duty on every public body to further the conservation

of biodiversity. Through our ‘Mid and East Antrim Local Biodiversity Action Plan’, we recognise the threats to biodiversity and provide a framework for local action to help meet our commitment to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity.

Local Policy Context

Within our Corporate and Community Plans, our Council prioritises developing tourism through building our “brand” and making our Borough a “go to” destination. Safeguarding our tourism assets including built and natural heritage assets will be an important part in the delivery mechanism. These Plans state that our Council is committed to protecting, enhancing, and sustainably managing our environment, including the

natural environment and built heritage, and providing easy access to it. Our Community Plan proposes a list of actions that seek to address priorities related to Our Environment, targeting attitudes, access and assets. These actions include encouraging environmentally responsible behaviour, connecting and promoting walking and cycling routes, exploring options for a coastal access path, and managing development so as to avoid building in areas prone to flooding, coastal erosion and land instability.





It is recognised that these actions will have wider benefits that will help our Council meet other strategic objectives, for example, in relation to promoting education, good health and wellbeing.

Existing Development Plans

The landscape and natural environment designations within existing area plans, (see Table 10.2) have all informed the issues to be addressed in this chapter.

Figure 10.1 Ecosystem Services – The Functionality of Our Environment

Ecosystem Services

The Coast	Marine Areas	Open Waters and Wetlands (Loughs, Rivers, Streams, Floodplains etc.)	Peatlands including heathland and bogs
Biodiversity <i>e.g. seabirds</i>	Fisheries	Tourism <i>e.g. wildlife enthusiasts, water sports</i>	Carbon capture <i>e.g. peat bogs</i>
Tourism <i>e.g. The Gobbins</i>	Energy sector <i>e.g. gas storage chambers, potential tidal power generation</i>	Angling	Biodiversity
Recreation <i>e.g. scenic walks</i>	Recreation and tourism <i>e.g. sea kayaking</i>	Nature conservation <i>e.g. internationally important habitat for birds</i>	Scenic and recreational value
Flood protection	Carbon balance	Water storage and flood alleviation	Source of drinking water
	Nutrient and water cycles	Detoxification of pollutants	Flood alleviation
	Education		Low intensity livestock grazing
			





Significant Tree Groups and Woodlands	Species-Rich Grasslands	Agricultural Land	Urban Areas
Carbon capture	Low intensity livestock grazing	Food and energy production	Green and blue spaces important for recreation, tourism and biodiversity
Timber production	Valuable carbon store	Field boundaries important for biodiversity <i>e.g. hedgerows and wet drains</i>	Trees help detoxify air pollutants
Scenic and recreational value <i>e.g. Portglenone Forest</i>	Biodiversity	Landscape quality and cultural heritage	Built and cultural heritage
Flood regulation	Sites of nature conservation importance <i>e.g. Galboly and Rathsherry ASSIs</i>		Education
Nature conservation <i>e.g. Straidkilly Nature Reserve</i>			
Education			
			

Table 10.2 Existing Development Plan Landscape and Natural Environment Designations in Mid and East Antrim

LDP Designation	Objective
1 Special Countryside Area (SCA)	Protection of the quality and unique amenity value of exceptional landscapes within the countryside.
1 Belfast Metropolitan Area (BMA) Coastal Area designation	Protection of the qualities of the coastal landscape and associated nature conservation interests.
3 Areas of Constraint on Mineral Development (ACMD)	Protection of areas identified for their landscape, amenity, scientific or heritage value from the harmful effects of mineral extraction and/or processing.
2 Areas of High Scenic Value (AOHSV)	Protection of Areas of Scenic Quality (based on Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment 2000) that may be significant for the natural setting of a settlement, or otherwise important in defining local landscape character.
2 Rural Landscape Wedges	Utilise defined areas of the countryside as buffers to development in order to maintain the separate identities of settlements and protect their setting.
16 Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPA)	These designations do not preclude development, but seek to protect those areas within and/or adjoining settlements which are considered to be of greatest amenity value, landscape quality or local significance.
23 Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCI)	Protection of areas of local nature conservation importance designated on the basis of their important flora, fauna or earth science features.

Identification of Key Issues

In order to ensure that the LDP brings forward an appropriate strategic framework, the remainder of this section sets out key issues that have emerged from the evidence base, consultee engagement, the regional policy framework, our Plan aims and objectives and other sources. These key issues are particular to the natural heritage assets of our Borough and take account of the various mechanisms that could help to conserve, protect and enhance our natural heritage assets with the aim of deriving economic, environmental and social benefits for the Borough as a whole. They are considered with reference to alternative options that might be adopted through the Plan and amendments to existing regional planning policy that may be necessary.

The issues relate to the following areas which are seen as being of key strategic importance in protecting and accessing our natural environment:

Key Issue 29: The Southern Glens Coast

Key Issue 30: The Islandmagee Peninsula and Gobbins Coast

Key Issue 31: The Belfast Lough Shoreline (Mid and East Antrim)

Key Issue 32: Lough Beg and the Lower River Bann Corridor

Key Issue 33: Antrim Coast and Glens Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Key Issue 34: Areas of Scenic Quality

Key Issue 35: Local Landscape Policy Areas

Key Issue 36: Landscape Wedges



The Mid and East Antrim Coast

The Mid and East Antrim Coast stretches for approximately 65 miles from Garron Point in the north-eastern part of the Borough to Greenisland abutting Newtownabbey. Much of our coastline is of high scenic quality, and is important in terms of its science and nature conservation value, and diversity of habitats and wildlife. Our marine areas are biologically diverse ecosystems and places of activity, including transportation, fishing, aquaculture, tourism, and potentially renewable energy generation. The Mid and East Antrim Coast provides unique areas for recreation, including walking, cycling, fishing and ornithology, and is an inspirational place, where all sections of the community have access to exceptional scenery and shared spaces that promote active and healthy lifestyles and learning about our natural environment and wildlife.

The RDS sets out strategic guidance which aims to safeguard against the loss of coastal habitats, conserve the landscape setting of coastal features, and assist adaptation to climate change.

The SPPS sets out the following regional strategic objectives for coastal development:

- *To conserve the natural character and landscape of the undeveloped coast and to protect it from excessive, inappropriate or obtrusive development; and*
- *To facilitate appropriate development in coastal settlements and other parts of the developed coastline (subject to all other relevant planning policies) that contributes to a sustainable economy and which is sensitive to its coastal location.*

Given the high quality of our coastline, and with regard to the RDS and SPPS, the LDP will seek

to facilitate the conservation, protection, enhancement and sustainable use of this significant natural resource. Going forward, our LDP will also seek to complement any future adopted Marine Plans.

Our coast varies in character and three distinct stretches of coastline are identifiable each with their own unique characteristics. These distinct stretches of coast closely align with Seascape Character Areas defined by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and are considered under the following sub-headings:

- *The Southern Glens Coast*
- *Islandmagee Peninsula and Gobbins Coast*
- *The Belfast Lough Shoreline (Mid and East Antrim Borough).*



Key Issue 29 The Southern Glens Coast

Background

- The Southern Glens Coast Seascape Character Area is defined in the Northern Ireland Regional Seascape Character Assessment (2014).
- Currently included within a Special Countryside Area (SCA) (Undeveloped Coast) designated by the Larne Area Plan 2010.
- Within the Antrim Coast and Glens Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- Contains five Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI). The Southern Glens Coast is an

exceptional landscape important for nature conservation interests, biodiversity, tourism, recreation and the identity of the Borough. This area provides the setting for the Antrim Coast Road, and outside of the settlements of Ballygalley, Carnlough and Glenarm the coastline is largely undeveloped. The diversity of the geology is both interesting, spectacular and important as an educational resource.

Other areas adjacent to this coastal area, and outside of the current SCA, are within highly sensitive

scenic areas with important biodiversity and nature conservation interests. Examples include Glencloy and Glenarm Glens and registered Historic Parks and Gardens.

The SPPS allows for the designation of Special Countryside Areas (SCAs), and associated policies, to ensure the protection of exceptional landscapes in the countryside from unnecessary and inappropriate development.

Alternative Options

Option 29 (b): Retain the existing Special Countryside Area (SCA) designation and associated policy.

Option 29 (c): Remove the existing Special Countryside Area (SCA) designation, relying only on regional planning policies carried forward (such as PPS 2, PPS 18 and PPS 21) to provide protection for this exceptional coastal landscape and its environment.

Q82. Do you agree with our preferred approach to protecting the exceptional landscape character, environment and natural heritage assets of the Southern Glens Coast?



Preferred Option

Option 29 (a): Retain the existing Special Countryside Area (SCA) designation and associated policy, and accommodate spatial and policy amendments to the designation if considered appropriate.

Under this policy option, this exceptional landscape would be afforded protection commensurate with its scenic beauty, natural heritage, conservation and science interests, and its importance for tourism and as a recreational resource. This option would also provide appropriate protection for the settings of the settlements of Ballygalley, Carnlough and Glenarm, and ensure views from the coast, and of the coast, are

safeguarded, and will provide an opportunity to assess whether other areas outside of the current SCA designation are of such landscape or nature conservation importance that they warrant inclusion within this designation.

Policy Implications

Under this option the current policy associated with the existing SCA designation will be retained.

However, it may be amended to allow some exceptions to the policy such as minor development within the curtilage of a dwelling which is ancillary in use to the main dwelling house, and replacement dwellings.

Map 10.1: The Southern Glens Coast



Key Issue 30 The Islandmagee Peninsula and Gobbins Coast

Background

- The northern and eastern coastline of Islandmagee are included within The Gobbins Coast Seascape Character Area as defined in the Northern Ireland Regional Seascape Character Assessment (2014).
- The western shoreline of Islandmagee is included within the Larne Lough Seascape Character Area as defined in the Northern Ireland Regional Seascape Character Assessment (2014).
- The majority of the Islandmagee Peninsula is included within the Islandmagee Area of Scenic Quality (ASQ) as assessed under the Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment (NILCA 2000).
- Larne Lough is a designated Ramsar site, Special Protection Area and Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI).
- The Islandmagee Peninsula has five ASSIs.

The eastern part of Islandmagee has a strong sense of remoteness, tranquillity and natural beauty. The hills in the eastern part of Islandmagee provide an important backdrop to the open cliffs along the coast and the setting of Browns Bay. On approach to the Gobbins, there are extensive views of the undeveloped clifftops on the eastern coastline and of the open sea. The eastern coastline is an important habitat for sea birds and seals and an attractive destination for wildlife enthusiasts. The rugged cliffs between Portmuck and Whitehead are a popular part of

the East Coast Canoe Trail. Much of the eastern part of the peninsula has not been impacted significantly by wind turbines and electricity pylons, however, this area is highly sensitive to change. The ASQ’s unspoilt rural landscape and the views to the west over Larne Lough provide the setting for the Browns Bay Scenic Route.

The western part of the Islandmagee Peninsula is more developed than the eastern part. The nature conservation interests and marine ecosystem of Larne Lough are considered to have sufficient protection under wider regional planning policies such as PPS 2, particularly as Larne Lough is a designated Ramsar site, Special Protection Area and Area of Special Scientific Interest.

Alternative Option

Option 30 (b): Rely only on regional planning policies carried forward (such as PPS 2, PPS 18 and PPS 21) to protect designated nature conservation sites, the landscape setting and natural heritage features on the Islandmagee Peninsula and Gobbins Coast.

Q83. Do you agree that eastern and north-eastern parts of the Islandmagee Peninsula should be afforded extra protection to safeguard the landscape character, environment and natural heritage assets?



Preferred Option

Option 30 (a): Provide increased policy protection for the Islandmagee Peninsula with an emphasis on the eastern and north eastern parts of the peninsula. Increased policy protection could be provided through designation of a Special Countryside Area, an Area of Constraint on particular types of development, an extension of the BMA Coastal Policy Area or a designated Area of High Scenic Value.

Under this option additional protection would be provided for the landscape character and setting of the eastern and north-eastern parts of Islandmagee, and this would have benefits for biodiversity, the landscape character of the ASQ, the setting of significant

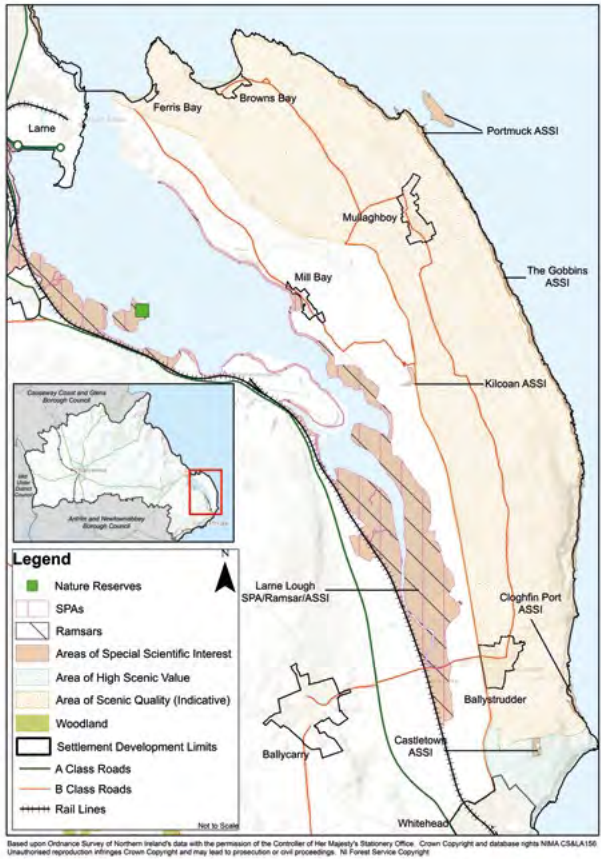
destinations on the coast, and enhance the protection of habitats important for wildlife. This policy approach will seek to manage development on the eastern and north-eastern parts of Islandmagee to protect against the potentially harmful impacts of development

such as tall structures, solar farms, and the cumulative impacts of development.

Policy Implications

This option would mean the introduction of new policy to manage development in order to meet the aims of the designation.

Map 10.2: The Islandmagee Peninsula and Gobbins Coast



Key Issue 31

The Belfast Lough Shoreline (Mid and East Antrim)

Background

- This area is included within the Belfast Lough Seascape Character Area as defined in the Northern Ireland Regional Seascape Character Assessment (2014).
- The shoreline is currently included within the BMA Coastal Policy Area designated by the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) 2015.
- Includes part of Belfast Lough Ramsar site, Special Protection Area and Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI).

This coastal area stretches from Whitehead Point to Greenisland. Due to the extensive areas of built development along this part of our coastline, this area is not as sensitive in landscape terms as the Southern Glens Coast and the Gobbins Coast. However, this coastal area is visually sensitive in that it forms the foreground to views of the Carrickfergus Escarpment, is very open to views from Belfast Lough, and the views

from this coastline have high amenity value. Additionally, parts of this coastline are important wintering areas for seabirds and waders and is protected by international and national nature conservation designations. The coastal setting is also significant in terms of prominent built heritage landmarks such as the 12th Century Carrickfergus Castle.

In regard to the Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area (BMUA), the RDS contains Spatial Framework Guidance (SFG 5) to protect and enhance the quality of the setting of the BMUA and its environmental assets, with particular reference made to the undeveloped coastline and Belfast Lough.



Preferred Option

Option 31 (a): Retain the existing BMA Coastal Area (to be renamed the Belfast Lough Shoreline (Mid and East Antrim) Policy Area) designation and associated policy, and accommodate spatial amendments to the designation if considered appropriate.

Under this option, retention of the existing BMA Coastal Area designation will provide appropriate protection for the coastal landscape, important views and vistas, built and natural heritage assets, and the marine ecosystem of the shoreline.

This option will seek to restrict development considered harmful

to the landscape and ecosystem of this part of the coast. It will not seek to restrict development which is acceptable in principle and where it can be demonstrated that such development will not adversely impact the coastal landscape, coastal ecosystem, and its nature conservation interests.

Policy Implications

No policy implications.

Alternative Options

Option 31 (b): Retain the existing BMA Coastal Area designation and associated policy.

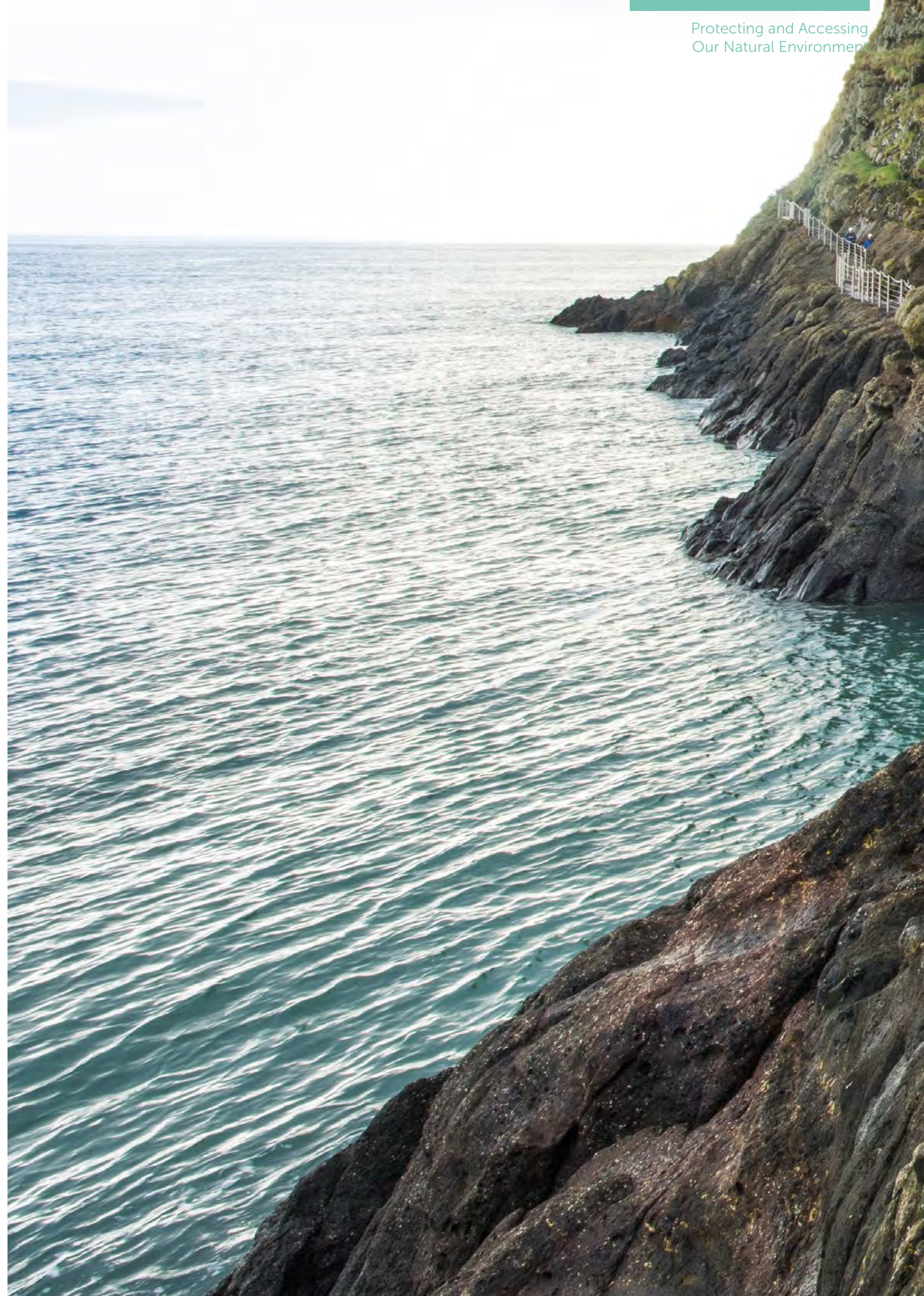
Option 31 (c): Remove the existing BMA Coastal Area designation and rely only on regional planning policies carried forward to provide protection for this important coastal landscape and environment.

Q84. Do you agree with our preferred approach to protect the landscape character, environment and natural heritage assets of the Belfast Lough Shoreline (Mid and East Antrim)?

[illegible]

A full review and recommendations for amendments to the existing coastal policies (Policy CO 1 – CO 4) of the PSRNI are available in Chapter 11.

224



Other Sensitive Landscapes

Key Issue 32 Lough Beg and the Lower River Bann Corridor

Background

- Lough Beg is a designated Ramsar site, Special Protection Area (SPA) and Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI).
 - The farmlands adjacent to the eastern fringes of Lough Beg and the Lower River Bann have been assessed by the Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment (NILCA 2000) as an Area of Scenic Quality (ASQ) and sensitive to change.
- The designation of Lough Beg as

a site of international and national nature conservation importance recognises the importance of this wetland habitat for biodiversity, breeding waders, migrating birds and wintering wildfowl. Lough Beg and the Lower River Bann and their floodplains exhibit high scenic quality and provide opportunities for angling, boating, ornithology, and water sports. The identified Area of Scenic Quality is open, remote, tranquil, and highly sensitive to development.

PPS 2 provides robust protection against development that would

impact upon the integrity of the Lough Neagh and Lough Beg Ramsar and Special Protection Area, and the Lough Beg Area of Special Scientific Interest. However, the sensitivity of the ecosystem and landscape character in this area, and the significance of the area’s habitats and wildlife, provide strong justification for additional policy protection for the wider area, particularly along the Lower River Bann corridor and fringes of Lough Beg.

Alternative Option

Option 32 (b): Rely only on regional planning policies carried forward (such as PPS 2, PPS 18 and PPS 21) to protect designated conservation sites, the landscape setting and natural heritage features in the Lough Beg fringe area and Lower River Bann corridor.

Q86. Do you agree that the most scenic and environmentally important areas associated with the Lough Beg fringe and the Lower River Bann corridor should be afforded extra protection to safeguard the landscape character, environment and natural heritage assets of these areas?



Preferred Option

Option 32 (a):
Provide increased policy protection for the most scenic and environmentally important areas associated with Lough Beg and the Lower River Bann corridor.

Increased policy protection could be provided through designation of a Special Countryside Area or an Area of Constraint on particular types of development which pose a specific threat to the environmental and/or visual integrity of the area.

Under this option greater protection would be provided for the high landscape quality and unique amenity value of the Lough

Beg fringe and the Lower River Bann corridor.

This option will provide additional protection for the Area of Scenic Quality identified along the eastern fringes of Lough Beg and the Lower River Bann.

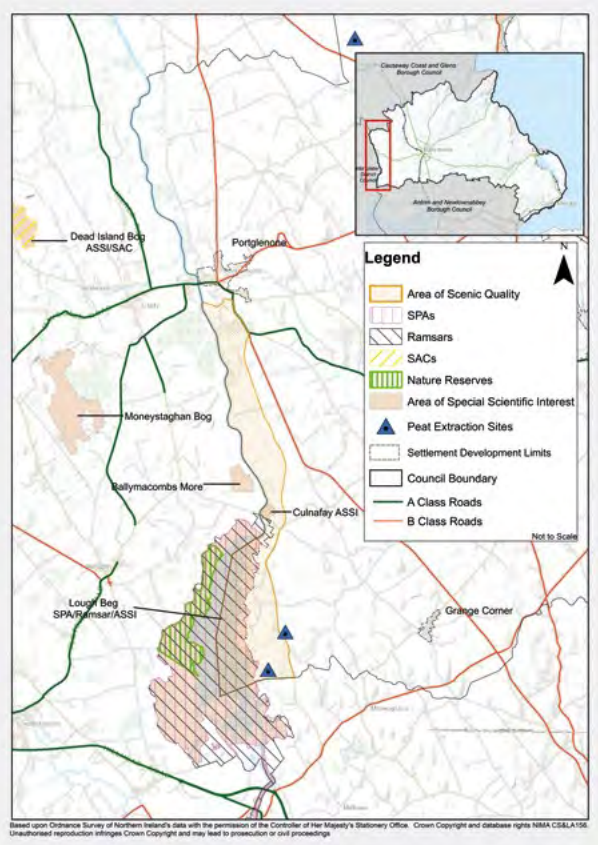
It will seek to manage development to protect against the potentially harmful impacts of tall structures,

solar farms, minerals development and the cumulative impacts of development.

Policy Implications

This option would mean the introduction of new policy to manage development in order to meet the aims of the designation.

Map 10.4: Lough Beg and the Lower River Bann Corridor





Key Issue 33

Antrim Coast and Glens Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Background

- The AONB covers approximately 370 square kilometres of Mid and East Antrim.
- Contains Sites of International Nature Conservation Importance (one Ramsar, one SPA, one SAC).
- Contains Sites of National Nature Conservation Importance (11 ASSIs, One National Nature Reserve).
- The AONB has one Area of Special Archaeological Interest.
- Slemish is located within the AONB.
- Contains Development Plan environmental designations (one Special Countryside Area, three Areas of Constraint on Mineral Development).

The Antrim Coast and Glens AONB was designated as an AONB in 1989 for its high quality landscape, wildlife importance and rich cultural and architectural heritage under the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (NI) Order 1985.

The AONB as a whole is not a uniform landscape and areas within it have different levels of sensitivity to development. The AONB has dramatic prominent headlands, bays and glens along the coast, wild open expanses of moorland, and significant areas of woodland. Garron Plateau has

extensive peat bogs, Slemish is a prominent volcanic plug, and there is an Area of Special Archaeological Interest at Knockdhu. A quality section of the Ulster Way cuts a scenic route through the AONB, and points of interest on the route include Glenarm Forest, Scawt Hill and Sallagh Braes. The International and National Sites of Nature Conservation Importance within the AONB contain unique and vulnerable habitats which are important for wildlife and various protected species.

The special character of some parts of the AONB is threatened by the cumulative impacts of development, the steady loss of distinctive features of built and natural heritage, and the degradation of important habitats. The SPPS states that development proposals in AONBs must be sensitive to the distinctive special character of the area, and the quality of their landscape, heritage and wildlife. Policy NH 6 of PPS 2 seeks to protect the distinctive character, landscape quality and wildlife of all AONBs. However, there has been continued pressure from wind energy development in highly sensitive areas of the AONB, and some other areas are so special that they would benefit from added protection from the cumulative impacts of development or from protection against the harmful impacts of particular types of development.



Preferred Option

Option 33 (a): Provide increased policy protection to protect exceptional landscapes and areas considered highly sensitive to particular types of development within the Antrim Coast and Glens Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Increased policy protection could be provided through designation of a Special Countryside Area or an Area of Constraint on particular types of development which pose a specific threat to the environmental and/or visual integrity of specific	areas. Under this option designated policy areas will seek to protect areas considered to be sensitive or vulnerable to particular types of development, or so special as to justify additional protection.	Policy Implications This option would mean the introduction of new policy to manage development in order to meet the aims of the designation(s).
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Alternative Option

Option 33 (b): Rely only on regional planning policies carried forward (such as PPS 2, PPS 18 and PPS 21) to protect the distinctive special character of the AONB, the quality of its landscape and its heritage assets.

Q87. Do you agree that the most scenic and environmentally important areas in the AONB should be afforded extra protection to safeguard the landscape character, environment and the heritage assets of these sensitive areas?

Q88. Are there any specific areas in the AONB that you consider should be included within spatial policy areas designed to protect the landscape character, environment and the heritage assets of these identified areas?



Key Issue 34

Areas of Scenic Quality

Background

- *There are three Areas of Scenic Quality (ASQ) in our Borough (Carrickfergus Escarpment, Islandmagee, Lough Neagh Fringe) identified by NILCA 2000.*
- *Two of these ASQ are designated by the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) 2015 as Areas Of High Scenic Value (AOHSV) (Carrickfergus Escarpment and Islandmagee). The Islandmagee AOHSV only includes the part of the ASQ within the former Carrickfergus Borough.*

ASQ are defined as landscapes of regional or local importance for their scenic quality and unspoilt character. They are areas sensitive to change, and may include significant sites or features of nature conservation, historic or cultural importance. The SPPS states that local policies may be brought forward to maintain the landscape quality and character of Areas of High Scenic Value.



Preferred Option

Option 34 (a): Retain the existing designated Areas of High Scenic Value and associated policy, and designate other areas within the Borough as Areas of High Scenic Value if considered appropriate.

Under this option the two existing designated AOHSV within our Borough will be retained, and other ASQ identified will be assessed to determine whether designation as AOHSV is appropriate e.g. the Lough Beg and the Lower River Bann fringes, and the majority of the Islandmagee Peninsula.

Within these designations, development proposals will be required to have regard to the siting, massing, scale and design, materials, finishes and landscaping in order to ensure that development will integrate well into the topography and landscape, and respect the features of interest

e.g. wooded areas, unspoilt rural character, buildings of high quality design etc.

Policy Implications

No policy implications.

Alternative Options

Option 34 (b): Retain the existing designated Areas of High Scenic Value and associated policy.

Option 34 (c): Remove the existing designated Areas of High Scenic Value and rely only on regional planning policies carried forward (such as PPS 2, PPS 18 and PPS 21) to provide protection for the landscape setting, nature conservation interests and important heritage features in these areas of particular landscape merit.

Q89. Do you agree with our preferred approach to protecting the landscape and natural heritage assets of identified Areas of Scenic Quality?

Key Issue 35

Local Landscape Policy Areas

Background

- *There are 16 designated Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs) within our Borough. These LLPAs are exclusively within the former Carrickfergus Borough and were designated by BMAP 2015.*
- *There are currently no LLPAs designated within the former Ballymena and Larne Boroughs due to the age of the existing development plans.*

LLPAs are designated in accordance with PPS 6 "Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage", and seek to protect those areas within and/or adjoining settlements which are considered to be of greatest amenity value, landscape quality or local significance. These areas can include archaeological sites and monuments, listed and other locally important buildings, river banks and shorelines and associated public access, attractive vistas, localised hills, other areas of local amenity importance, and areas of local nature conservation importance e.g. areas of woodland and important tree groups.

The SPPS states that LDPs should where appropriate, designate LLPAs and bring forward local policies and guidance to maintain the intrinsic landscape, environmental value and character of such areas. The SPPS recognises that nature and green and blue infrastructure in our neighbourhoods can improve our health and quality of life.



Preferred Option

Option 35 (a):

Retain the existing designated Local Landscape Policy Areas and associated policy, and identify and designate other Local Landscape Policy Areas where appropriate.

Under this option, the existing LLPAs designated through BMAP 2015, and the associated policy, would be retained. The identification and protection of other areas assessed as appropriate for LLPA designation would ensure a consistent approach across the Borough.

These designations can help to ensure new development does not dominate distinctive landscapes and the character of

settlements, can act as buffer zones between different uses, and can help to safeguard the setting of settlements. The protection of these areas can help to protect and/or enhance biodiversity, ecological networks, the attractiveness of our urban areas, and help mitigate against the impacts of air and noise pollution. This option will also assist in the promotion of green infrastructure through the LDP.

LLPAs do not preclude development. Rather, these designations enable development which is appropriately sited and sensitively designed with regard to the character of urban areas and their associated built and natural heritage assets.

Policy Implications

No policy implications.

Alternative Options

Option 35 (b): Retain the existing designated Local Landscape Policy Areas and associated policy.

Option 35 (c): Remove existing designated Local Landscape Policy Areas and rely only on regional planning policies carried forward (such as PPS 2 and PPS 21) to provide protection for the environmental and heritage features in these areas.

Q90. Do you agree with our preferred approach to protecting features and areas within and/or adjoining settlements which are considered to be of greatest amenity value, landscape quality or local significance, and worthy of protection from undesirable or damaging development?



Key Issue 36

Landscape Wedges

Rural Landscape Wedges

- *Rural landscape wedges are buffer landscapes and open areas which abut and separate settlements or urban areas that are in close proximity to each other.*
- *Within our Borough, there are two existing Rural Landscape Wedges. These are located between Carrickfergus and Greenisland, and Greenisland and Newtownabbey at Jordanstown, and are designated by the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) 2015.*
- *There are currently no designated Rural Landscape Wedges within the former Ballymena and Larne Boroughs.*

The RDS recognises that the attractive natural setting of the Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area (BMUA) reinforces its uniqueness and bring benefits to the economy and society. In accordance with Spatial Framework Guidance (SFG 5) of the RDS, Rural Landscape Wedges are designated by BMAP 2015. These Rural Landscape

Wedges aim to distinguish and maintain the separate identities of the component parts of the BMUA, prevent the merging of the component parts of the BMUA, provide for the protection of the setting of settlements, and maintain the rural character of the countryside.

The SPPS states that development in the countryside must not mar the distinction between a settlement and the surrounding countryside, or result in urban sprawl. Further, between built up urban areas, open areas can provide spaces important for walking and formal or informal recreation, reinforce a sense of place and character for the urban community, and help maintain or enhance biodiversity and wildlife corridors in areas where significant development pressure exists. Landscape wedges can also assist in the promotion of green infrastructure through the LDP.



Preferred Option

Option 36 (a):

Retain the existing designated Rural Landscape Wedges and associated policy, and designate other areas within the Borough as Rural Landscape Wedges if considered appropriate.

Under this option, the existing Rural Landscape Wedges will be retained in these areas of high development pressure to protect the separate identities of Carrickfergus, Greenisland and Newtownabbey. This option would also allow the opportunity to assess if other areas

within our Borough would be appropriate for Rural Landscape Wedge designation. Within any designated Rural Landscape Wedges, development proposals compliant with prevailing regional planning policy will be allowed provided it can be

demonstrated that the visual separation between settlements will be maintained.

Policy Implications

No policy implications.

Alternative Options

Option 36 (b): Retain the existing designated Rural Landscape Wedges and associated policy.

Option 36 (c): Remove existing designated Rural Landscape Wedges and rely only on regional planning policies carried forward (such as PPS 2, PPS 18 and PPS 21) to provide protection for buffer landscapes and open areas recognised as essential for the protection of the setting of particular settlements and maintaining their visual separation.

Q91. Do you agree with our preferred approach to protecting buffer landscapes and open areas recognised as essential for the protection of the setting of particular settlements and maintaining their visual separation, and maintaining the rural character of the countryside?

Q92. Are there any areas within our Borough, outside of existing Rural Landscape Wedges, which should be considered for Rural Landscape Wedge designation?

Urban Landscape Wedges

PPS 8 states that areas of existing open space within or adjoining settlements may be designated as landscape wedges, in particular those larger areas which perform a strategic function. Strategic functions listed under PPS 8 include:

- *defining and separating urban areas;*
- *providing community greenways;*

- *“green lungs” or landscape buffers within urban areas;*
- *better linking of town and country; and*
- *serving recreational needs over a wide area.*

There are currently no designated Urban Landscape Wedges within our Borough. However, there are some informal areas of open space within the settlements of Ballymena and Larne which, due to their size and location, may be regarded

as performing some of the aforementioned strategic functions within these towns.

Bespoke planning policy would be developed to accompany any designated Urban Landscape Wedges introduced through the LDP.

Q93. Are there any open areas within or adjoining settlements in our Borough that, due to their size and location, have the capacity to perform any of the strategic functions listed above?

Planning Policy Review of existing policies
related to the Natural Environment

Planning Policy Statement 2: Natural Heritage (PPS 2)

A full review and recommendations for amendments to PPS 2 are available in Chapter 11.
Policy NH 1, NH 2, NH 3, NH 4, NH 6 –

Q94. Do you agree that these existing policies should be adopted by our Council with minor amendments to reflect the wording of the SPPS?

Policy NH 5: Habitats, Species or Features of Natural Heritage Importance –

Q95. Do you agree that this existing policy should be adopted by our Council?

Q96. Do you agree that the following features should be added to the list of habitats, species or features of Natural Heritage Importance identified for protection under Policy NH 5?

- Significant groups of trees and woodland;
- Species-rich grasslands;
- Green and Blue Infrastructure (e.g. significant nature corridors and waterways);
- Undeveloped Coastal Areas

Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCIs)

There are 23 SLNCIs designated in the former Carrickfergus Borough through BMAP 2015. SLNCIs are not designated in the rest of our Borough due to the age of the existing Ballymena and Larne Area Plans. Currently the evidence base does not exist to appropriately identify SLNCIs for the rest of the Borough. However, consultee meetings indicated that proposals impacting on non-designated sensitive sites could be assessed on a case by case basis against Policy NH 5 of PPS 2.

Q97. Do you agree with our approach, that sites containing features of local nature conservation importance and not designated in our LDP, can be afforded sufficient protection under Policy NH 5 of PPS 2?

A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland Policy PSU 10: Development at Risk

A full review and recommendations for amendments to Policy PSU 10 are available in Chapter 11.

Policy PSU 10: Development at Risk –

Q98. With reference to our policy review, do you agree with our policy approach to preclude development within areas of known risk of coastal erosion and land instability?

11.0

Existing Planning Policy Review

To conclude this paper we have undertaken a review of all existing policy as contained within the existing Planning Policy Statements (PPSs)⁴ and 'A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland' (PSRNI)⁵ as previously published by central government.

The chapter sets out the background to policy review, provides details of the policy review process before finally setting out a summary table of our findings.

⁴ PPS 1: General Principles, PPS 5: Retailing and Town Centres and PPS 9: The Enforcement of Planning' Control have been cancelled by the introduction of the SPPS and therefore are not included in the review.

⁵ Many of the original policies in 'A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland' have been superseded by the subsequent Planning Policy Statements. The review relates to the residual policies.



Background to Planning Policy review

Regional Planning policy is set out in:

- The current suite of suite of Planning Policy Statements (see Appendix A); and
- 'A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland'.

The Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS) combines the strategic elements of the PPSs to provide the overarching regional planning framework. As noted in the SPPS, any conflict with a PPS is to be resolved in favour of the SPPS. Under the transitional arrangements set out in the SPPS, the existing PPSs and the remaining provisions of 'PSRNI' are to be retained until such time as a Council adopts its Plan Strategy. From that point they shall cease to have effect. Although the SPPS remains in place, it does not provide sufficient detailed operational policy to facilitate the development management process. In these circumstances a review of the existing regional policies is necessary to ensure that we have a suite of policies that takes full account of the SPPS and other relevant policies and strategies, as well as being appropriate to the circumstances of our area.

Local Planning Policy

Local Planning Policies are set out in the following extant area plans:

- Ballymena Area Plan (adopted 1989);
- Larne Area Plan (adopted 1998); and
- Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (adopted 2014) insofar as it relates to the former Carrickfergus Borough.

The Ballymena and Larne Area Plans are well past their notional end dates. Even though they continue to be material considerations in the determination of planning applications their local policies predate the RDS, SPPS and the PPS's. In many circumstances they fail to reflect the more recently established regional direction. For this reason they have not been subject to review. However, as reflected throughout this Paper, local policies and proposals in extant development plans have been considered in the formulation of strategic issues and options and have therefore been taken fully into account.

The Policy Review Process

A detailed policy review has been carried out of all of the operational policies contained

within the PPSs and the extant policies within 'A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland'. The review was carried out with consideration of the following:

- The evidence base for the LDP, as currently included in our 14 position papers;
- Our current area plans;
- An assessment of how existing planning policies take account of the objectives and policy direction contained within the SPPS;
- Changes to any other relevant national or regional policy or legislation since the original policy was adopted;
- Ministerial Reviews;
- Appeal decisions/Judicial Reviews;
- Feedback from Statutory Consultees and Council representatives received in response to the ten consultee meetings held by our Development Plan team;
- Consultation carried out with Elected Representatives at five workshops; and
- Consultation carried out with Development Management and Enforcement Teams which highlighted any difficulties or issues arising from the implementation of policies through the development management and appeal process.

In this review, we have made recommendations as to how each operational policy should be dealt with in broad terms in our Plan Strategy i.e. bring forward, amend or omit. Detailed reasoning for the chosen approach is also provided (see Table 11.1).

It should be noted that existing policy in the SPPS relating to development in the countryside and renewable energy are under review by the Department for Infrastructure. The outcome of these reviews will be reflected in amendments to the SPPS and this could change our current policy position.

It is our intention that the supplementary planning documents as set out in Appendix A will be carried forward alongside our new LDP. We may review some of these guidance documents at a future date.

We welcome your views on our policy review. Specific questions in relation to proposed amendments to existing policies are set out in the relevant subject area chapters (Chapters 6 to 10).





Existing Planning Policies Review Table

11.1

Current Operational Policy

PPS 2: Natural Heritage
<p>Policy NH 1: European and Ramsar Sites – International</p> <p>Under Policy NH 1, planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to have a significant effect on a European or Ramsar site. Where a development proposal is likely to have a significant individual or cumulative effect, an appropriate assessment needs to be carried out by the planning authority. Mitigation measures in the form of planning conditions may be imposed.</p> <p>Where a development proposal could adversely affect the integrity of a European or Ramsar site, development may only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where it is required for imperative reasons of overriding public interest and subject to other stringent tests.</p>
<p>Policy NH 2: Species Protected by Law</p> <p>Under Policy NH 2, planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to harm a European protected species (listed under Annex IV of the Habitats Directive). In exceptional circumstances a development proposal that is likely to harm these species may only be permitted if it meets 4 specific criteria.</p> <p>Under Policy NH 2 planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to harm any other statutorily protected species (including national) and which can be adequately mitigated or compensated against.</p>
<p>Policy NH 3: Sites for Nature Conservation Importance – National</p> <p>Under Policy NH 3, planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity, including the value of the site to the habitat network, or special interest, of a site of national nature conservation importance.</p> <p>Development proposals which could adversely affect a site of national nature conservation importance may only be permitted where the benefits of the proposed development clearly outweigh the value of the site.</p>

Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS)

SPPS
<p>SPPS (para 6.176, 6.177, 6.178) accords with Policy NH 1 in regard to assessing proposals that may impact on European or Ramsar sites.</p> <p>SPPS does not set out exceptions but refers to these in the relevant statutory provisions.</p>
<p>SPPS (para 6.180, 6.181, 6.182) accords with Policy NH 2.</p> <p>SPPS (para 6.179) sets out guidance on the actions that must be carried out by the planning authority in order to inform decision making on a development proposal.</p>
<p>SPPS (para 6.183, 6.184) accords with Policy NH 3.</p> <p>SPPS (para 6.183) states that, “There is a legal duty to take reasonable steps to further the conservation and enhancement of the features by which the ASSI is of special scientific interest.”</p> <p>In the SPPS (para 6.183) Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) replace Marine Nature Reserves (MNRs) in the list of National Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, in accordance with the Marine Act (NI) 2013.</p>

Comment (see Chapter 10)
<p>Policy NH 1 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy NH 1 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy with a minor amendment to bring forward the stronger wording used in SPPS (para 6.177), in regard to the requirement by law for the Planning Authority to carry out an appropriate assessment in cases where a development proposal is likely to have a significant effect on an international site or where there is reasonable scientific doubt.</p>
<p>Policy NH 2 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy NH 2 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy, with wording amended as necessary to reflect the SPPS (para 6.179).</p>
<p>Policy NH 3 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy NH 3 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy, with wording amended as necessary to align more closely with SPPS.</p> <p>MCZs will substitute MNRs in the list of National Sites of Nature Conservation Importance in accordance with the Marine Act (NI) 2013.</p>

Policy NH 4: Sites for Nature Conservation Importance – Local

Under Policy NH 4, planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal that is not likely to have a significant adverse impact on a site of local nature conservation importance.

Development proposals which could have a significant adverse impact on a site of local importance may only be permitted where the benefits of the proposed development outweigh the value of the site.

Policy NH 5: Habitats, Species or Features of Natural Heritage Importance

Under Policy NH 5 planning permission will only be granted for a development proposal which is not likely to result in the unacceptable adverse impact on, or damage to, known habitats, species or features of natural heritage importance listed under this policy.

Development proposals which are likely to result in an unacceptable adverse impact may only be permitted where the benefits of the proposed development outweigh the value of the habitat, species or feature.

Policy NH 6: Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Under Policy NH 6, planning permission for new development within an AONB will only be granted where it is of an appropriate design, size and scale for the locality and where additional tests are met in regard to respecting the special character of the AONB and the conservation of its heritage assets.

Policy NH 6: Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (cont'd.)

SPPS (para 6.190) accords with Policy NH 4.

It is noted that neither the SPPS nor Policy NH 4 make reference to the designation of Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance through the LDP.

SPPS (para 6.192, 6.193) accords with Policy NH 5.

SPPS (para 6.192) explicitly states that other natural heritage features worthy of protection include “trees and woodland”.

SPPS generally accords with Policy NH 6 and reflects the guidance therein.

Policy NH 4 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.

It is recommended that the wording of Policy NH 4 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.

BMAP 2015 designated Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCIs) within the former Carrickfergus Borough. There are no designated SLNCIs within the former Ballymena and Larne Boroughs due to the age of their plans. The issue of ensuring a consistent approach across the Borough will be addressed through the POP. Environmental consultees have indicated that the features of nature conservation interest within existing SLNCIs can be sufficiently protected under Policy NH 5.

Policy NH 5 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended. Environmental consultees have stressed the importance of protecting trees and woodland.

It is recommended that the wording of Policy NH 5 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy, and that the following natural heritage features which are of particular importance in Mid and East Antrim, be added to the list brought forward with Policy NH 5:

- Significant groups of trees and woodland
- Species-rich grasslands
- Green and Blue Infrastructure
- Undeveloped Coastal areas

Policy NH 6 essentially seeks to regulate the siting, scale and design of new development within AONBs, and the retention of natural and man-made features that characterise the particular AONB. It is considered that the greater level of detail (compared to SPPS) referred to under Policy NH 6 is advantageous, in that it identifies the key characteristics to be taken in to account in assessing proposals for new development within AONBs.

Consultees raised concerns about the cumulative impacts of development within the Antrim Coast and Glens AONB. Policy NH 6 may not be robust enough to protect against the cumulative impacts of development, particularly certain types of development, in highly visually sensitive areas within the AONB. SPPS (para 6.188) explicitly states that “cumulative impacts” are a material consideration when assessing development proposals,

and as such this wording would strengthen Policy NH 6 in regard to mitigating against the harmful impacts of cumulative development on the special character of the AONB. Therefore, it is recommended to bring forward the wording of SPPS (para 6.188).

Key Issue 33 addresses the protection of the special character and environment of the AONB and considers the visual sensitivity of some areas of the AONB to the cumulative impacts of development, particularly in regard to highly obtrusive forms of development. The Preferred Option is to bring forward Areas of Constraint on particular types of development within the AONB, and to consult on where any Special Countryside Area (SCA) designation would be appropriate within the AONB.

It is recommended that the wording of Policy NH 6 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy with amendments to reflect the wording of SPPS (para 6.188) and to recognise any spatial designation of Areas of Constraint and further SCAs that may be introduced through the LDP.

PPS 3: Access, Movement and Parking	
Policy AMP 1: Creating an Accessible Environment Aims to create a more accessible environment for everyone. It outlines criteria for the external layout of development proposals required to ensure the specific needs of people with disabilities or impaired mobility are met.	
Policy AMP 2: Access to Public Roads States that permission will only be granted for a development proposal involving direct access, or the intensification of the use of an existing access, onto a public road where it does not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic, or conflict with Policy AMP 3. It also outlines factors that will be considered in relation to the accessibility of access arrangements, including the number of access points onto the public road.	
Policy AMP 3: Access to Protected Routes Superseded by PPS 3 Access Movement and Parking clarification of Policy AMP 3: Access to Protected Routes (October 2006)	
Clarification on AMP 3 Access to Protected Routes This policy restricts the number of new accesses and controls the level of use of existing accesses onto Protected Routes. The policy is broken into three sections dealing with protected routes, protected routes outside settlement limits and protected routes within settlement limits and outlines exceptional circumstances within each section. Annex 1 of PPS 21 also includes a consequential revision to Policy AMP 3 of PPS 3. This revision removed the word 'direct' from proposals involving access on to a Protected Route and clarified that where access could not be reasonably obtained from an adjacent minor road, then proposals will be required to make use of an existing access on to the Protected Route.	
Policy AMP 4: Protection for New Transport Schemes Policy AMP 4 does not permit development that would prejudice the implementation of transport schemes identified in a development plan. This policy offers protection for land needed to facilitate new transport schemes such as road schemes, improvements to pedestrian or cycle networks or a public transport scheme and associated facilities.	
Policy AMP 5: Disused Transport Routes Policy AMP 5 does not permit development that would prejudice the future re-use of a disused transport route identified in a Development Plan for transport or recreational purposes.	
Policy AMP 6: Transport Assessment Policy AMP 6 requires, where appropriate, developers to submit a Transport Assessment in order to evaluate the transport implications of a development proposal.	
Policy AMP 7: Car Parking and Servicing Arrangements Requires development proposals to provide adequate car parking and appropriate servicing arrangements. The precise amount of car parking will depend on the characteristics of the development and its location, having regard to the Departments published standards. The policy details circumstances where a reduced level of parking in all new developments may be acceptable within an area designated in a development plan. These areas are referred to as 'areas of parking restraint'. Policy AMP 7 also states that a proportion of the required spaces are to be for people with disabilities in accordance with best practice. Where a reduced level of parking is applied, this will not normally apply to the number of reserved spaces to be provided.	

SPPS	
SPPS is less detailed than Policy AMP 1. However one of its regional strategic objectives (para 6.297) for transportation and land use planning directly addresses the thrust of Policy AMP 1.	
SPPS, although less detailed than Policy AMP 2, accords with it.	
N/A	
SPPS (para 6.301) accords with Policy AMP 3. SPPS also states that LDPs may contain additional local policies in order to apply further restrictions, usually for road safety or traffic flow reasons. SPPS (para 6.301) reiterates the wording of this consequential revision to Policy AMP 3 of PPS 3.	
SPPS (para 6.301) accords with Policy AMP 4 and states that LDPs should identify and safeguard land required to facilitate new transport schemes or planned improvements to the transport network. SPPS (para 6.301) accords with Policy AMP 5 and states that LDPs should identify and safeguard disused transport routes where there is reasonable prospect of re-use for future transport purposes, or protect them in the Plan for alternative purposes such as a recreational, nature conservation or tourism related use. SPPS also highlights (para 6.210) the importance of protecting linear open spaces such as pedestrian and cycle routes, community greenways, former railway lines and river and canal corridors many of which are valuable in linking larger areas of open space and providing important wildlife corridors/ecological networks.	
SPPS (para 6.303) accords with Policy AMP 6 and requires developers to submit a Transport Assessment for development proposals likely to generate a significant volume of traffic.	
SPPS is less detailed than Policy AMP 7, but accords with it.	

Comment (see Chapter 8)	
Policy AMP 1 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended. It is recommended that the wording of Policy AMP 1 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.	
Policy AMP 2 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended. It is recommended that the wording of Policy AMP 2 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.	
N/A	
Policy AMP 3 appears to be generally working well. However evidence suggests consideration should be given to amending the wording of Policy AMP 3 in the LDP Plan Strategy. The following points have been raised: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Consideration be given to adding to the list of exceptional circumstances to include direct access on to a protected route for major economic development zonings where there is no reasonable alternative access, or for facilities that would reduce congestion (e.g. Park and Rides sites).That the wording of (b) 'Other Protected Routes – within Settlement Limits' should be amended to remove the wording 'or resulting in an unacceptable proliferation of access points', so as to afford more weight for design and regeneration considerations. It is recommended that amended wording of Policy AMP 3 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.	
Policy AMP 4 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended. It is recommended that the wording of Policy AMP 4 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.	
Policy AMP 5 appears to be generally working well, however evidence suggests consideration should be given to amending the wording of Policy AMP5 in the LDP Plan Strategy to take into consideration the SPPS particularly in reference to Greenways. Key Issue 17 considers the issue of Greenways, it is proposed to add wording to Policy AMP 5 to allow for the protection of designated community greenways/pathways, including those designated by other bodies. It is recommended that the wording of Policy AMP 5 is expanded upon to reflect Greenways as well as the wider purposes stated in the SPPS.	
Policy AMP 6 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended. It is recommended that the wording of Policy AMP 6 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.	
Policy AMP 7 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended. However, it may be prudent to consider combining this policy with other car parking policies in bringing forward the LDP. Further, Key Issue 21 considers whether or not Areas of Parking Restraint should be designated in main towns through the LDP. Accordingly, it is recommended that the wording of this aspect of the policy is reviewed at Plan Strategy stage, pending the outcome of public consultation on the POP.	

Policy AMP 8: Cycle Provision	Policy AMP 8 seeks to ensure that development proposals providing jobs, shopping, leisure and services, including educational and community uses will only be granted planning permission where the needs of cyclists are taken into account.
Policy AMP 9: Design of Car Parking	Policy AMP 9 outlines criteria required to secure a high standard of design layout and landscaping for car parking proposals. These include respecting the character of the local townscape/ landscape, visual amenity and providing security including direct and safe access for pedestrians and cyclists.
Policy AMP 10: Provision of Public and Private Car Parks	Policy AMP 10 outlines criteria that must be demonstrated to gain planning permission for development or extension of public or private car parks, including park and ride and park and share. Criteria include impact on congestion and local environmental quality, meets an identified need, and is compatible with adjoining land uses.
Policy AMP 11: Temporary Car Parks	States that planning permission for a temporary car park will not be granted unless it complies with Policy AMP 10 and the developer can show that a need exists which cannot be met in the short term by the Planning Authority or the private sector. Applications will also have to be submitted in conjunction with programmed proposals to develop/redevelop the site in question. Planning permission will be subject to a time-limited condition for a period of 1 year.

SPPS (para 6.297) promotes the provision of adequate facilities for cyclists in new development. It is less detailed in the criteria to be adhered to, however, it generally accords with Policy AMP 8.	
SPPS does not specifically refer to the design of car parking.	
SPPS generally accords with AMP 10, although it adds (para 6.305) that the planning authority should be supported by a need for the development by reference to the council's overall car parking strategy, following a robust analysis by the applicant, and in consultation with the Department for Infrastructure. In addition, the SPPS recommends a Plan-led approach to the identification and protection of existing and proposed town centre car parks (para 6.301).	
There is no provision for temporary car parks in SPPS.	

Policy AMP 8 appears to be working well, however evidence suggests consideration should be given to amending the wording of Policy AMP 8 in the LDP Plan Strategy to include all new development (not only development providing jobs, shopping, leisure and services, educational and community uses) and to also add criteria in relation to Greenways. It is recommended that updated wording of Policy AMP 8 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.	
Policy AMP 9 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended. It is recommended that the wording of Policy AMP 9 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy. It may be prudent to consider combining this policy with other car parking policies in bringing forward the LDP.	
Policy AMP 10 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended. It is recommended to bring forward the wording of Policy AMP 10 in the LDP but updated to align with the SPPS in relation to the Council's car parking strategy and the recommended Plan-led approach in regard to town centre car parking. It may be prudent to consider combining this policy with other car parking policies in bringing forward the LDP.	
Policy AMP 11 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended. It is recommended extending the time limit from a period of 1 year (which will not normally be renewed) to 'a maximum period of 2 years which will not be renewed'. It is considered this would be more realistic in enabling the use of the site as a car park for the temporary period, whilst providing more certainty for the longer term use of the site. It is recommended that the updated wording of Policy AMP 11 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy. It may also be prudent to consider combining this policy with Policy AMP 10 in bringing forward the LDP Plan Strategy.	

PPS 4: Planning and Economic Development	
Policy PED 1: Economic Development in Settlements	Outlines the types of B Class Business uses which are allowed for economic development within cities, towns, villages and smaller rural settlements. This policy seeks to concentrate employment and services associated with this type of development within the main hubs, and for B1 uses more specifically within town centres.
Policy PED 2: Economic Development in the Countryside	This is a directional policy that signposts other policies in the PPS which provide opportunity for economic development in the countryside. This policy also outlines that any economic development associated with farm diversification schemes and proposals involving the re-use of rural buildings will be assessed under the provisions of PPS 21 ' Sustainable Development in the Countryside'. All other proposals for economic development in the countryside will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.
Policy PED 3: Expansion of an Established Economic Development Use in the Countryside	States that proposals for the expansion of an Established Economic Development Use in the Countryside will be permitted where it does not harm the rural character of the area and there is no major increase in the site area of the enterprise. Proposals for extension will normally be expected to reuse or extend existing buildings on site. Where it is demonstrated that this is not possible, new buildings may be permitted provided they are in proportion and integrate as part of the overall development. Exceptional circumstances are also outlined including where the proposal would make a significant contribution to local economy, or where relocation is not operationally possible.

SPPS	SPPS generally accords with Policy PED 1 and states that Class B1 business uses in larger settlements should be permitted within town centres or in other areas specified for such use in the LDP (para 6.85).
SPPS (para 6.87) accords with Policy PED 2.	
SPPS is less detailed than Policy PED 3 in the criteria to be adhered to, however, it generally accords with Policy PED 3.	
SPPS (para 6.87) supports rural economic development of an appropriate nature and scale and states that farm diversification, the re-use of rural buildings, and appropriate redevelopment and expansion proposals for industrial and business purposes normally offer the greatest scope for sustainable economic development in the countryside.	

Comment (see Chapter 6)	Policy PED 1 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended. Key Issue 6 considers the Location of Class B1 Business Use. The Preferred Option allows for Class B1 Business Uses within town centres, district or local centres as well as economic development land (or identified parts thereof) as part of a sequential approach. It is recommended that the updated wording of Policy PED 1 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.
As a directional policy, Policy PED 2 does not need to be amended. It is recommended that the wording of Policy PED 2 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.	
Policy PED 3 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended. It is recommended that the wording of Policy PED 3 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.	

Policy PED 4: Redevelopment of an Established Economic Development Use in the Countryside

Sets out criteria for the redevelopment of an established economic development use in the countryside for industrial or business purposes.

It also includes criteria relating to storage and distribution uses.

This policy also facilitates proposals for the redevelopment of rural economic development sites for tourism, outdoor sport and recreation or local community facilities where the policy criteria can be met and where the proposal does not involve land forming all or a substantial part of an existing industrial estate.

The policy also notes that retail will not be permitted.

Exceptionally proposals for social and affordable housing may be permitted on former industrial sites that cannot realistically be redeveloped for industry, provided they meet the policy provisions of PPS 21.

Policy PED 5: Major Industrial Development in the Countryside

Sets out criteria for Major Industrial Development proposals in the Countryside, which make a significant contribution to the regional economy. The policy also suggests that edge of town locations will be favoured over a location elsewhere in the rural area.

Policy PED 6: Small Rural Projects

Sets out criteria based policy for a small community enterprise park/centre or a small rural industrial enterprise on land outside a village or smaller rural settlement.

Subsequent proposals should be sited to cluster or visually link to this, subject to amenity and environmental considerations.

Policy states that storage or distribution uses will only be permitted where these are clearly ancillary to a proposal for a community enterprise park/centre or an industrial use.

SPPS is less detailed than Policy PED 4, however, the thrust of the SPPS accords with Policy PED 4.

Policy PED 4 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.

It is recommended that the wording of Policy PED 4 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.

SPPS is less detailed than Policy PED 5, however it accords with it.

Policy PED 5 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.

SPPS (para 6.88) also favours an edge of settlement location where there is no suitable site within the settlement; or where a major or regionally significant proposal is required to be in the countryside.

It is recommended that the wording of Policy PED 5 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.

SPS is less detailed than Policy PED 6, however it accords with Policy PED 6.

Policy PED 6 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.

It is recommended that the wording of Policy PED 6 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.

Policy PED 7: Retention of Zoned Land and Economic Development Uses

Sets out a general presumption against the loss of land for economic development, unless the land has been substantially developed for alternative uses.

The policy also provides for 'sui generis' employment uses within zonings, subject to these being compatible with the predominant use and to other normal planning considerations. Retailing and commercial leisure development is specifically excluded, except where ancillary to the economic development use.

The policy also applies the same general presumption to unzoned land in economic development use in settlements (or land last used for this purpose) as detailed in a subsequent clarification to the policy. The policy sets out a list of detailed criteria to be met before a proposal for an alternative use on such land can be permitted and there is also provision for compatible 'sui generis' uses.

The Department issued further guidance on the implementation of this policy in November 2015 which largely reflects the policy position of the SPPS (column 2 refers).

Clarification of Policy PED 7: Retention of Zoned Land and Economic Development Uses (2011)

This clarified that even if zoned or unzoned economic development land is cleared, the presumption for future economic development use remains.

Policy PED 8: Development incompatible with Economic Development Uses

Ensures that development in the vicinity of an existing or approved economic development use that would be incompatible with this use or that would prejudice its future operation will be refused.

SPPS (para 6.90) accords with Policy PED 8.

Policy PED 8 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.

Taking account of Key Issue 8, it is recommended that the wording of Policy PED 8 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.

Policy PED 9: General Criteria for Economic Development

Sets out general criteria which economic development proposals will be required to meet, in addition to the other policy provisions within PPS 4.

SPPS accords with Policy PED 9.

SPPS adds that there is a need for LDPs to consider sustainable development, including connectivity with the (public) transport system when zoning land for economic development (as well as for sites outside of this zoned area (para 6.92 and 6.97)). SPPS also advises that LDPs should provide guidance in terms of key design, layout and landscaping requirements for economic development.

Policy PED 9 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.

It is recommended that the wording of Policy PED 9 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.

PPS 6: Planning Archaeology and the Built Heritage

Policy BH 1: The preservation of Archaeological Remains of Regional Importance and their Setting

States that development proposals that would adversely affect such sites of regional importance or the integrity of their settings will not be permitted unless there are exceptional circumstances. The policy does not define what is likely to constitute 'exceptional circumstances'.

Policy BH 2: The Protection of Archaeological Remains of Local Importance and their Setting

States that development proposals which would adversely affect archaeological sites or monuments which are of local importance (or their settings) will only be permitted where the planning authority considers that the proposed development outweighs the value of the remains.

Policy BH 3: Archaeological Assessment and Evaluation

Requires that in circumstances where it is uncertain what impact a development will have or where the relative importance of the remains is unknown, developers will normally be requested to provide an archaeological assessment or evaluation.

Policy BH 4: Archaeological Mitigation

Stipulates that if permission is granted for a development that will affect sites known to have archaeological remains, then conditions will be attached to ensure that appropriate measures are taken for the identification and mitigation of the archaeological impacts of the development.

Policy BH 5: The Protection of World Heritage Sites

Policy BH 6: The Protection of Parks, Gardens and Demesnes of Special Historic Interest

This policy offers protection for Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes and will not normally permit development which would lead to the loss of, or cause harm to, the character, principal components or setting of parks, gardens and demesnes of special historic interest. Where planning permission is granted this will normally be conditional on the recording of any features of interest which will be lost before development commences.

Policy BH 7: Change of Use of a Listed Building

Policy BH7 - The Department will normally permit the change of use of a listed building where this secures its upkeep and survival and the character and architectural or historic interest of the building would be preserved or enhanced.

Policy BH 8: Extension or Alteration of a Listed Building

Sets out the criteria to enable the assessment of development proposals for the extension or alteration of a listed building – it stipulates that the Planning Authority will normally only grant consent to proposals for the extension or alteration of a listed building where all the following criteria are met:

- (a) the essential character of the building and its setting are retained and its features of special interest remain intact and unimpaired;
- (b) the works proposed make use of traditional and/or sympathetic building materials and techniques which match or are in keeping with those found on the building; and
- (c) the architectural details (e.g. doors, gutters, windows) match or are in keeping with the building.

SPPS

Paragraph 6.9 of SPPS accords with Policy BH 1 in that it states that development which would adversely affect such sites or the integrity of their settings must only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Again, there is no guidance on what is likely to constitute 'exceptional circumstances'.

SPPS (para 6.9) accords with Policy BH 2 in that it states that development proposals which would adversely affect archaeological remains of local importance or their settings should only be permitted where the planning authority considers that the need for the proposed development or other material considerations outweigh the value of the remains and/or their settings.

In addition, the SPPS recommends a Plan-led approach to the identification of Areas of Archaeological Potential (AAP) within settlement limits where, on the basis of current knowledge archaeological remains may be encountered. The intention is to provide more certainty for prospective developers.

Paragraph 6.10 of SPPS accords with Policy BH 3 – retains the presumption of refusal if the requested information is not submitted.

Paragraph 6.11 of SPPS generally accords with Policy BH 4 but does not refer specifically to the use of planning conditions but instead refers to 'appropriate measures' being taken.

SPPS refers to World Heritage Sites in paragraph 6.29.

SPPS generally accords with Policy BH 6 in that it states that planning permission should not be granted for development that would lead to the loss of, or cause harm to, the overall character, principal components or setting of Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes.

SPPS accords with Policies BH 7 and BH 8 in that development involving a change of use and/or works or extension/alteration may be permitted, particularly where this will secure the ongoing viability and upkeep of the building.

Such development should respect the essential character and architectural or historic interest of the building and its setting, and features of special interest should remain intact and unimpaired.

Proposals should be based on a clear understanding of the importance of the building/place/heritage asset and support the best viable use that is compatible with the fabric, setting and character of the building.

Comment (see Chapter 9)

Policy BH 1 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.

Key Issue 26 which deals with the protection of regionally significant archaeological remains. The Preferred Option would allow for the designation of Specific Areas of Constraint (with regard to specific types of development) within existing or proposed Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest.

It is recommended that the wording of Policy BH 1 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy with potential amendments to recognise any spatial designation of Areas of Constraint that may be introduced through the LDP.

Consideration will also be given to providing some guidance on 'exceptional circumstances' for example whether 'exceptional circumstances' should relate only to 'regionally significant proposals'.

Policy BH 2 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.

It is recommended that the wording of Policy BH 2 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy with amendments to recognise any spatial designation of existing or new AAPs that may be introduced through the LDP.

Policy BH 3 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.

It is recommended that the wording of Policy BH 3 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.

Policy BH 4 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.

It is recommended that the wording of Policy BH 4 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.

As there are no designated World Heritage Sites within our Borough it is recommended that this policy is not brought forward through the LDP.

Policy BH 6 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.

It is recommended that the wording of Policy BH 6 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy with potential amendments to recognise any spatial designation of Specific Areas of Constraint that may be introduced through the LDP.

It is also recommended that the wording 'will not normally' within Policy BH 6 be removed and replaced 'should not' in order to be more in keeping with the language of the SPPS.

Policies BH 7 and BH 8 appear to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that they need to be substantially amended.

It is recommended that the wording of Policy BH 7 and BH 8 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy but make reference to the requirement for a Design and Access Statement as part of any proposal.

It is also recommended that the word 'normally' within Policy BH 8 be removed and replaced with 'should' in order to be more in keeping with the language used in the SPPS.

<p>Policy BH 9: The Control of Advertisements on a Listed Building</p> <p>States that advertisement consent will normally only be granted for consent for advertisements or signs on a listed building where these are carefully designed and located to respect the architectural form and detailing of the building.</p>	
<p>Policy BH 10: Demolition of a Listed Building</p> <p>Sets out a general presumption in favour of retaining listed buildings and seeks to prevent the demolition of a listed building unless there are exceptional reasons why the building cannot be retained in its original or in a reasonably modified form. Where, exceptionally, listed building consent is granted for demolition this will normally be conditional on prior agreement for the redevelopment of the site and appropriate arrangements for recording the building before its demolition.</p>	
<p>Policy BH 11: Development affecting the Setting of a Listed Building</p> <p>Sets out the policy criteria to enable the consideration of applications which may affect the setting of a listed building. It will not normally permit development which would adversely affect the setting of a listed building. Development proposals will normally only be considered appropriate where all the following criteria are met:</p> <p>(a) the detailed design respects the listed building in terms of scale, height, massing and alignment;</p> <p>(b) the works proposed make use of traditional or sympathetic building materials and techniques which respect those found on the building; and</p> <p>(c) the nature of the use proposed respects the character of the setting of the building.</p>	
<p>Policy BH 12: New development in a Conservation Area</p> <p>Stipulates that permission will normally only be granted approval for new buildings, alterations, extensions and changes of use in, or which impact on the setting of, a conservation area where all the criteria (a) to (g) are met.</p> <p>Criterion (a) requires that the development preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the area.</p>	
<p>Policy BH 13: The control of advertisements in a Conservation Area</p> <p>Requires that any consent for the display of advertisements in or close to a conservation area does not adversely affect the character, appearance or setting of the area or be detrimental to public safety.</p>	
<p>Policy BH 14: Demolition in a Conservation Area</p> <p>Policy BH14 will normally only permit the demolition of an unlisted building in a conservation area where the building makes no material contribution to the character and appearance of the area. Where conservation area consent for demolition is granted this will normally be conditional on prior agreement for the redevelopment of the site and appropriate arrangements for recording the building before its demolition.</p>	
<p>Policy BH 15: The Re-use of Non-Listed Vernacular Buildings</p> <p>Policy BH 15 sets out the criteria in relation to the re-use of non-listed vernacular buildings – planning permission will normally only be granted for the sympathetic conversion of non-listed vernacular buildings to other appropriate uses where this would secure their upkeep and retention. In the countryside conversion to residential use will normally only be considered appropriate where the building to be converted is an important element in the landscape and of local architectural merit or historic interest.</p>	

<p>Paragraph 6.14 of SPPS generally accords with Policy BH 9 in that it states that advertisement consent should only be forthcoming where these are carefully designed and located to respect the architectural form and detailing of the building, and also meet the requirements of strategic policy on the Control of Outdoor Advertisements.</p>	
<p>SPPS accords with Policy BH 10 in that it stipulates that the total demolition or demolition of any significant part of a listed building must not be permitted unless there are exceptional reasons as to why it cannot be retained in its original or reasonably modified form. Where consent is given this will normally be conditional on prior agreement for the redevelopment of the site and appropriate arrangements put in place to enable the recording of the building prior to demolition.</p>	
<p>SPPS does not have specific policy wording directly relating to the impact of proposed development on the setting of a listed building – it makes passing reference in paragraph 6.12 and 6.13 but would be considered to accord with Policy BH 11.</p>	
<p>SPPS amends criterion (a) of Policy BH 12 to take account of legislative change introduced by Section 104 of the Planning Act 2011.</p> <p>Accordingly, in managing new development within a designated Conservation Area the amended guiding principle is to afford special regard to the desirability of enhancing the character or appearance where an opportunity to do so exists', or to 'preserve its character or appearance where an opportunity to enhance does not arise'. There will be a presumption against the granting of planning permission for development where proposals would conflict with this principle.</p>	
<p>SPPS generally accords with Policy BH 13 in that the consent for the display of an advertisement in or close to a Conservation Area should only be granted where it would not adversely affect the overall character, appearance or setting of the area.</p> <p>SPPS also states that it may be appropriate to bring forward policies within LDP for the control of outdoor advertisements, tailored to local circumstances but any policy must be compatible with other policies set out within the SPPS.</p>	
<p>SPPS amends criterion (a) of Policy BH 14 to take account of legislative change introduced by Section 104 of the Planning Act 2011.</p> <p>Accordingly, in managing demolition within a designated conservation area the amended guiding principle is to afford special regard to the desirability of enhancing the character or appearance where an opportunity to do so exists', or to 'preserve its character or appearance where an opportunity to enhance does not arise'.</p> <p>There will be a presumption against the granting of planning permission for demolition where proposals would conflict with this principle.</p>	
<p>SPPS generally accords with Policy BH 15, but widens the scope of the policy to refer to 'non-designated heritage assets'. Such assets include not only vernacular buildings, but also historic buildings of local importance. The SPPS also goes beyond the 're-use' of the assets, by requiring the planning authority, to consider the impact of any application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset.</p> <p>The SPPS does not provide any specific criteria but does suggest that it may be prudent to bring forward bespoke policies in the LDP for such buildings.</p>	

<p>Policy BH 9 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the word 'normally' be removed and replaced with 'should' in order to be more in keeping with the language used in the SPPS.</p>	
<p>Policy BH 10 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy BH 10 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy with an amendment that stipulates that any structural information/report submitted as part of any case for demolition, be to a specified minimum standard as agreed by the Council.</p>	
<p>Policy BH 11 is working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy BH 11 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>	
<p>The Conservation Area policy within the SPPS places a greater emphasis on new development that will 'enhance' the character of the area.</p> <p>Only where an opportunity to enhance does not exist should the lesser test of 'preserving' be considered. There is now a requirement to amend this policy to reflect the change in the policy slant.</p> <p>It is recommended that Policy BH 12 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy and amended to reflect the SPPS as indicated.</p>	
<p>Policy BH 13 appears to be working well, but it has become apparent that there are some issues relating to the display of certain types of advertisements within conservation areas which benefit from 'deemed consent'.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy BH 13 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy but consideration given to the introduction of specific policy wording relating to the control of flashing, scrolling, animated, intermittent or moving digital signage.</p> <p>Any separate strategic policy on Advertisement in the form of an Advertisement Strategy should take account of the special architectural or historic interest of conservation areas.</p>	
<p>The Conservation Area policy within the SPPS places a greater emphasis on 'enhancing' the character of the area. There will be a general presumption against the grant of conservation area consent for demolition of unlisted buildings, where proposals would conflict with this principle. Only where an opportunity to enhance does not exist should the lesser test of 'preserving' be considered. There is now a requirement to amend this policy to reflect the change in the policy slant.</p> <p>It is recommended that Policy BH 14 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy and amended to reflect the SPPS as indicated.</p>	
<p>Whilst Policy BH 15 seems to be working well, it is recommended that the policy is revised and updated to take account of the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">the language and wider scope of the SPPS;the need to incorporate sections of policy outlined in PPS 21 relating to Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside (Policy CTY 3) and the Conversion and Re-use of Existing Buildings in the Countryside (Policy CTY 4) insofar as they relate to non-listed vernacular dwellings and buildings;potential relaxation of criteria (d) of Policy BH 15 which sets out a presumption against extending such buildings. It is thought that this criterion could hinder delivery of the intent of the policy which is to secure the long term re-use of non-listed vernacular buildings.	

PPS 6 Addendum: Areas of Townscape Character	
Policy ATC 1: Demolition Control in an Area of Townscape Character	States that there is a presumption in favour of retention where it is determined that the building makes a positive contribution to the character of the ATC. Demolition will normally only be allowed if it is considered that the building makes no material contribution. Where permission for demolition is granted this will normally be conditional on prior agreement for the redevelopment of the site.
Policy ATC 2: New Development in an Area of Townscape Character	States that development will only be permitted where it is considered to either maintain or enhance the overall character of the area. Existing trees, archaeological or other landscape features which contribute to the distinctive character of the area are to be protected and integrated in a suitable manner into the design and layout of the development.
Policy ATC 3: The Control of Advertisements in an Area of Townscape Character	States that consent will only be granted for the display of an advertisement in an Area of Townscape Character where: (a) it maintains the overall character and appearance of the area; and (b) it does not prejudice public safety.

SPPS	SPPS accords with ATC 1 in that the demolition of an unlisted building in an ATC should only be permitted where the building makes no material contribution to the distinctive character of the area and subject to appropriate arrangements for the redevelopment of the site.
	SPPS carries through the general thrust of Policy ATC 2 in paragraph 6.21 which states that in managing development within ATCs designated through the LDP process, new development should only be permitted where this will maintain or enhance the overall character of the area and respect its built form.
	SPPS paragraph 6.23 accords with Policy ATC 3.

Comment (see Chapter 9)	Policy ATC 1 is working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended. It is recommended that the wording of Policy ATC 1 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy and amended to reflect the language of the SPPS (e.g. in regard to the replacement of the term 'normally').
	Policy ATC 2 is working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended. It is recommended that the wording of Policy ATC 2 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.
	Policy ATC 3 is working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended. It is recommended that the wording of Policy ATC 3 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy but consideration should be given to the introduction of specific policy wording relating to the control of flashing, scrolling, animated, intermittent or moving digital signage within ATCs. Any separate strategic policy on Advertisement in the form of an Advertisement Strategy should take account of the special architectural or historic interest of ATCs.

PPS 7: Quality Residential Environments	Policy QD 1: Quality in New Residential Development Outlines specific policy criteria for the assessment of new residential developments in relation to site context, site characteristics, layout considerations, local neighbourhood facilities, form, materials and detailing, density, landscape design, public open space, private open space, movement, parking, privacy and security from crime.
	Policy QD 2: Design Concept Statements, Concept Master Plans and Comprehensive Planning Sets out the criteria for the submission of design concept statements, concept master plans and comprehensive planning as tools in achieving high quality housing schemes that are design-led and responsive to site characteristics and opportunities.

SPPS	SPPS sets out broad strategic policy with emphasis on the contribution that new housing development should strive for in meeting broader government objectives. These include the securing of sustainable forms of development and balanced communities. It also sets out the broad methodology for allocating housing land through the LDP and refers to meeting specific housing needs (e.g. through supported housing and traveller accommodation). In all of this the SPPS is more closely aligned with PPS 12: Housing in Settlements, than with the more design related focus of PPS 7. SPPS states that Councils should bring forward local planning policy or guidance for achieving quality in residential developments including residential extensions and alterations.
	The Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 makes the submission of a Design and Access Statement mandatory for all major applications or for proposals of 1 dwelling or more in a designated area, such as a Conservation Area. SPPS does not provide the same level of detail as Policy QD2 and it does not differentiate between design concept statements for all housing development and concept master plans for larger developments. SPPS devalues the need for the submission of a concept statement by using the term 'should be sought' rather than 'will require' as stated in QD 2. It does however seek the design concept to incorporate sustainable elements such as good linkage to schools, community facilities etc. As well as promoting the use of SuDS and energy efficient design.

Comment (see Chapter 7)	Policy QD 1 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended. NIHE did however recommend that new policy requiring nearly zero energy housing, passive solar design and promoting the use of renewable energy could contribute to quality development and benefit the environment. NIHE also recommended that all dwelling units should be designed to Lifetime home standards (see review of Policy HS 4 in PPS 12 below). Consideration of NIHE proposals: Policy in regard to Zero Energy Homes was investigated, taking account of current building control standards, and at present is considered too high a standard to bring forward as policy in the LDP (See review of PPS 18 Policy RE 2 regarding energy efficient design). It is recommended that the wording of Policy QD 1 is amended to introduce an additional criteria promoting energy efficient design and SuDS where appropriate (see Key Issue 24), and brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy. Alternatively, such criteria may be included in a general policy to apply to all new buildings. In addition, the amplification could provide direction to guidance in Creating Places and Living Places.
	Policy QD 2 appears to be working well, however the threshold for triggering the requirement for a concept master plan (300 or more dwellings/15 hectares or more site area) is considered to be too high for Mid & East Antrim, where most housing proposals are significantly smaller. It is recommended that the wording of Policy QD 2 is amended to reduce the threshold for a concept master plan to 200 dwellings or above or on sites of 10 hectares and above. It is also recommended that the amplification to Policy QD 2 should be expanded to include reference to the need for good linkages to existing infrastructure and community facilities. Whilst new legislation requires housing developments over 50 units/over 2 hectares to submit a Design and Access Statement, failure to retain the wording of QD 2 could result in, housing proposals of less than 50 units/under 2 hectares not being required to submit a concept statement nor a Design and Access Statement.

Addendum to PPS 7: Residential Extensions and Alterations	
Policy EXT 1: Residential Extension and Alterations	
Sets out criteria to ensure proposals are of an acceptable design, scale, massing and materials and which take account of the existing property, character of the area, landscape features, amenity space and the residential amenity of neighbours.	
Also sets out detailed guidance in Annex A relating to the appropriate application of the policy criteria.	

SPPS	
SPPS provides a strategic approach to achieving quality residential extensions and alterations. It does not provide the detail of Policy EXT 1 in terms of the individual criteria or the additional guidance provided in its associated Annex.	
SPPS states that Councils should bring forward local planning policy or guidance for achieving quality in residential developments including residential extensions and alterations.	

Comment (see Chapter 7)	
Policy EXT 1 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.	
It is recommended that the wording of Policy EXT 1 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.	

Addendum to PPS 7: Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas	
Policy LC 1: Protecting: Local Character, Environmental Quality and Residential Amenity (in addition to Policy QD1)	
Seeks to protect local character, environmental quality and residential amenity in established residential areas in addition to the criteria contained within Policy QD1.	
Sets out criteria in relation to density, pattern of development as well as specifying space standards for new dwellings and apartments.	
Policy LC 2: The Conversion or Change of Use of Existing Buildings to Flats or Apartments (in addition to QD 1)	
Sets out 5 criteria that must be met one of which states that a building to be converted or adapted must have a floor area greater than 150 sq. metres.	
Other criteria seek to ensure each unit is self-contained, not solely to the rear of the proposal and access to the public street is maintained.	
Policy LC 3: Permeable Paving in New Residential Development	
Promotes the use of permeable paving within new residential developments to reduce the risk of flooding.	
Annex A: Space Standards	
Internal floor space standards for apartments and dwellings.	
Annex E: Definition of an Established Residential Area	

SPPS	
SPPS generally accords with Policy LC1, however it does not provide space standards.	
SPPS encourages sustainable development by accommodating housing through recycling buildings and encouraging compact urban forms.	
The detail in Policy LC 2 aligns with SPPS strategic policy to increase housing density without town cramming and other policies to achieve quality residential environments. SPPS is not prescriptive.	
SPPS states that a design concept should be submitted with proposals and it should incorporate sustainable elements such as the use of SuDS where appropriate therefore following the thrust of Policy LC 3.	
Detail not provided in the SPPS	
Detail not provided in the SPPS	

Comment (see Chapter 7)	
Policy LC 1 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.	
It is recommended that the wording of Policy LC 1 and related Annex A is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.	
As some criteria in Policy LC 1 overlap with Policy QD 1 there may be opportunity to consolidate policy wording from the two existing policies in the LDP.	
Policy LC 2 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.	
It is recommended that the wording of Policy LC 2 is amended to include an additional criteria requiring adequate waste storage areas that are well designed as an integral part of the proposed development, and brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.	
Alternatively, such a criterion could be included within a general policy in the LDP Plan Strategy so it would apply to new apartments.	
As some criteria in Policy LC 2 overlaps with Policy QD1 there may be opportunity to consolidate policy wording from the two existing policies in the LDP Plan Strategy.	
It is recommended that the wording of Policy LC 3 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.	
It is recommended that the wording of Annex A is brought forward in the LDP.	
It is recommended that the wording of Annex E is brought forward in the LDP.	

PPS 8: Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation

Policy OS 1: Protection of Open Space

Presumption against the loss of open space irrespective of its physical condition/appearance.

Two exceptions are listed: (i) where it is demonstrated that there is substantial community benefit and (ii) or when the loss of open space will have no significant detrimental impact on amenity, character or biodiversity of an area.

The second exception only applies where either of the following circumstances occur: - (i) where the area of open space to be lost is 2 hectares or less and appropriate alternative provision is made and (ii) where playing fields within settlement limits are to be lost, it must be demonstrated that the retention and enhancement of the facility can only be achieved by developing a small part of the existing space (limited to a maximum of 10%).

Policy OS 2: Public Open Space in New Residential Development

Requires that a development of 300 units or more or 15 hectares or more should provide a normal expectation of around 15% of the total site area as open space. Developments of 25 units or more should provide a normal expectation of at least 10% of the total site area as open space with smaller schemes being considered on their individual merits. The policy includes examples of circumstances when a relaxation of the standard may warrant consideration e.g. when the site is close to and would benefit from existing public open space.

Provides criteria against which to assess open space provision.

A children's play area is required for developments of 100 units or more or sites of 5 hectares or more.

Future management of open space provided has to be provided and 3 examples of suitable arrangements are provided in the policy.

Policy OS 3: Outdoor Recreation in the Countryside

Sets out 8 detailed criteria such development in the countryside must meet in order to be considered acceptable. The amplification provides further guidance on individual types of recreation e.g. Golf courses, driving ranges, equestrian uses etc.

Recognises the importance of outdoor recreation in countryside provided it is sustainable and does not conflict with need to preserve and enhance the environment.

Policy OS 4: Intensive Sports Facilities

Outlines sports facilities such as stadia, leisure centres and sports halls are generally only permitted in settlements. An exception may be permitted where 4 criteria can be met – no alternative site in the settlement, must be close to edge of settlement/visually associated with it, no adverse impact on settlement and in scale with settlement.

In all cases, 5 criteria must also be met including no impact on amenity, heritage, high standard of design, access, adequate car parking and infrastructure.

A definition of intensive sports facilities is provided in the amplification along with additional user guidance.

Policy OS 5: Noise Generating Sports and Outdoor Recreational Activities

Such developments are only permitted where 3 criteria are met: no impact on amenity, no disturbance to livestock, no conflict with sensitive locations.

SPPS

SPPS accords with PPS 8 although it simply states 'loss of open space' whereas PPS 8 states 'existing open space or land zoned for provision of open space'.

SPPS refers to the general exceptions listed in Policy OS 1.

However, in regard to the second exception it does not include the same detail as Policy OS 1. SPPS simply states that the loss of open space will be acceptable where it is demonstrated that there will be no detrimental impact and does not detail the two caveats listed in Policy OS 1.

SPPS requires new residential developments of appropriate scale (generally 25 units or more, or on sites of one hectare and above) to provide adequate and well-designed open space as an integral part of the development. Suitable mechanisms to secure future management and maintenance of open space should be put in place.

SPPS does not specify minimum areas in the same way that Policy OS 2 does. Emphasis is on well-designed open space however it does not offer any clarification on this term or how it could be demonstrated. No specific criteria are identified and it also does not offer any direction with regards to what are suitable mechanisms for management.

SPPS is not prescriptive in terms of children's play provision in residential developments but rather it is mentioned within the wider context of assessing the overall provision of public and private open space. The SPPS calls for Councils to carry out a survey to inform the LDP in order to establish existing provision and identify future need and to bring forward appropriate local policies and proposals for the plan area.

Comment (see Chapter 7)

Policy OS 1 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.

NIHE have stated that they would like to see a policy similar to that set out in PPS 8 (Policy OS 1 and Annex C) which allows an exception to the retention of open space, where development will provide community benefit, retained in the LDP.

It is recommended that the thrust and exceptions of Policy OS 1 are brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy and that the current NIHE Protocol (or amended as necessary following discussion with NIHE) is included in the justification text or as an accompanying guidance document.

The issue of open space in new residential developments is considered in Chapter 7:

Key Issue 19 deals with provision of open space in new residential developments. The Preferred Option is to retain current strategic criteria based policy regarding public open space contained in Policy OS2 of PPS 8 i.e. setting out a 10% requirement of open space in residential developments of 25 units or more and a 15% requirement for development over 300 units and a slightly amended list of locations where a rate less than 10% may be acceptable unless otherwise specified through key site requirements.

Key Issue 18 deals with playpark provision. The Preferred Option is to retain current policy i.e. residential developments of 100 units or more, or on sites of 5 hectares or more will be required to provide an equipped children's play area unless otherwise specified through key site requirements.

In regard to the management and maintenance of open space it is recommended that the existing policy wording in OS 2 is retained but with additional criteria that proposed open space must meet in order to be considered for adoption by Council i.e. a minimum size of useable play/recreation space of 1,000 sq. m or more (e.g. 50m x 20m) and structured play spaces with an area of no less than 600 sqm.

Policy OS 2: Public Open Space in New Residential Development (cont'd.)

This approach would require developers to engage with Council early in the design process to ensure provision of open space/ play parks that are suitable for the site and which meets the specific needs of the local area.

It is recommended that minor amendments above are made to the wording of Policy OS 2 in line with Key Issues 18 and 19 and brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.

SPPS generally accords Policy OS 3. It states that LDP's should contain policy for outdoor recreation in the countryside which should have regard to a range of issues e.g. visual and residential amenity, public and road safety, accessibility and impact on nature conservation, landscape character, archaeology or built heritage.

Relevant planning consideration broadly align with Policy OS 3, with some differences for example the SPPS refers to hours of operation but does not mention loss of good quality agricultural land.

Policy OS 3 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.

It is recommended that the wording of Policy OS 3 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy with an additional criteria referring to hours of operation to take account of the SPPS. In addition it is recommended that the amplification text on equestrian uses should be expanded to clarify that this policy only applies to commercial equestrian uses.

SPPS generally accords with Policy OS 4, advising that such facilities must be in settlements. It does allow for exceptions just outside of a settlement but only where clear criteria can be established to justify a departure.

Overall the policy objectives of the SPPS and PPS 8 are the same. The SPPS requires clear criteria to be set and Policy OS 4 provides this.

SPPS also clarifies that an intensive sports facility is defined as a purpose built indoor or outdoor resource which facilitates one or more activity fundamental to maintaining health and fitness.

Policy OS 4 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.

It is recommended that the wording of Policy OS 4 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.

SPPS generally accords with Policy OS 5.

SPPS states that particular attention should be paid to development proposals that generate high levels of noise. It states they will only be permitted where there will be no unacceptable level of noise to nearby noise sensitive uses, farm animals or wildlife, or where it impacts on local character.

Additional strategic guidance on noise as a material consideration is set out in Annex A of the SPPS.

It is recommended that the wording of Policy OS 5 is amended so as to better reflect the SPPS.

Policy OS 6: Development of Facilities ancillary to Water Sports Such developments are permitted provided that 7 criteria can be met e.g. compatibility with existing use of the water, no adverse impact on nature conservation, no adverse impact on character of local landscape, no pollution noise or disturbance, appropriate design and scale.	
Policy OS 7: The Floodlighting of Sports and Outdoor Recreational Facilities Such development is only permitted when 3 set criteria can be met. There must be no unacceptable impact on nearby residential amenity, no adverse impact on visual amenity or character of the locality and no prejudice to public safety.	
Annex A: Definition of Open Space Definition of Open Space provided along with a typology illustrating a range of examples of open space that are of public value.	
Annex B: Summary of the National Playing Fields Association Minimum Standard for Outdoor Recreation Sets out detail on the ‘6 acre standard’ and the definition of outdoor playing space.	
Annex C: Key bodies which make valuable contribution to the development of Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation Lists the role of key bodies such as Councils, Sports Council, and National Trust etc. NIHE are also listed and the Annex refers to large areas of Open Space in some of their estates which if there is substantial community benefit it may be appropriate to redevelop.	

SPPS generally accords with Policy OS 6. It lists a range of relevant planning considerations that all proposals for sport and recreation activities, including facilities ancillary to watersports should adhere to. These are similar to those listed in Policy OS 6 save for the addition of reference to hours of operation, access and links to public transport, floodlighting, public safety (including road safety) and biodiversity.	
SPPS generally accords with Policy OS 7. Floodlighting is listed as one of the relevant planning considerations for all proposals for sport and recreation activities. SPPS does not provide detailed policy wording beyond this.	
The Glossary of the SPPS includes a definition of Open Space as per Annex A but it does not include the same level of detail.	
SPPS states that the provision of open space in LDP should be assessed against the National Playing Fields Standard. SPPS does not include the same level of detail.	
SPPS does not contain corresponding text.	

Policy OS 6 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended. It is recommended that the wording of Policy OS 6 is brought forward in the LDP, and amended to include some of the relevant additional criteria in SPPS.	
Feedback from consultees indicates that Policy OS 7 is generally sound. NIEA Natural Environment Division recommend an additional criterion in regard to safeguarding bats. Having taken account of this comment, it was considered that other policies in the LDP will address this issue. It is recommended that the wording of Policy OS 7 is brought forward in the LDP and the amplification text extended to direct applicants to guidance such as The Institute of Lighting Profession thresholds or equivalent.	
It is recommended that the detail in Annex A should be brought forward in the LDP.	
It is recommended that Annex B is not brought forward in the Plan Strategy as it does not refer to operational policy.	
NIHE have stated that they would like to see a policy similar to that set out in PPS 8 (Policy OS 1 and Annex C) which allows an exception to the retention of open space, where development will provide community benefit, retained in the LDP. It is recommended that only the wording in Annex C regarding NIHE is brought forward in LDP guidance, and amended as necessary following further discussions with NIHE.	

PPS 10: Telecommunications	
Policy TEL 1: Control of Telecommunications Development Sets out criteria for the control of telecommunications development along with necessary enabling works, where it will not result in unacceptable damage to visual amenity or harm environmentally sensitive features or locations.	
Policy TEL 2: Development and Interference with Television Broadcasting Services Sets out criteria for the development and interference with television and broadcasting services, planning permission would be refused for development proposals which would result in undue interference within terrestrial television broadcasting services. This policy was cancelled by the SPPS.	

SPPS	
SPPS is less detailed than Policy TEL 1 in the criteria to be adhered to, however, the SPPS accords with Policy TEL 1.	
Policy TEL 2 cancelled by SPPS.	

Comment (see Chapter 8)	
Policy TEL 1 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended. It is recommended that the wording of Policy TEL 1 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy. This policy may be re-examined after consideration of responses to Key Issue 33 and whether to restrict or prevent certain types of development within these areas of sensitive landscapes if identified.	
It is considered that there is no need to carry forward Policy TEL 2.	

PPS 11: Planning and Waste	SPPS	Comment (see Chapter 8)
Policy WM 1: Environmental Impact of a Waste management facility Sets out criteria for proposal for the development of waste management facilities subject to a thorough examination of environmental effects. A proposal will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that all of the criteria are met.	<p>SPPS is less detailed than Policy WM 1 in the criteria to be adhered to, however, it accords with Policy WM 1.</p>	<p>Policy WM 1 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended other than to update wording to reflect the value waste as a resource.</p> <p>It is recommended that an amended Policy WM 1 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>
Policy WM 2: Waste Collection and Treatment facilities Sets out criteria for the development of waste collection or treatment facilities. It also sets out locational criteria where the proposed development would have to comply with one or more of the criteria. It also sets out other additional criteria to be met including transport, suitable buildings, and environmental impact.	<p>SPPS is less detailed than Policy WM 2 in the criteria to be adhered to, however, it accords with Policy WM 2.</p> <p>SPPS adds detail regarding updated recycling targets; 'EU Waste Framework Directive (WFD) target of recycling including preparing for re-use) 50% of households waste by 2020, as well as the Executives Programme for Government commitments.</p> <p>SPPS adds in the case of a regional scale waste collection or treatment facilities, that it must be located close to and benefit from easy access to key transport corridors, particularly rail and water (para 6.314).</p>	<p>Policy WM 2 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended other than to update wording to reflect the value of waste as a resource, and integrated better within new development.</p> <p>Policy WM 2 will also require updating to remove references to Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO) which was removed as a material consideration in November 2013.</p> <p>It is recommended that an amended Policy WM 2 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>
Policy WM 3: Waste Disposal Sets out criteria for the development of landfill or land raising facilities for the disposal of waste. This Policy also provides for the development of interim landfill or land raising facilities for the disposal of waste, subject to meeting several criteria.	<p>SPPS is less detailed than Policy WM 3 in the criteria to be adhered to, however, it accords with Policy WM 3.</p>	<p>Policy WM 3 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended other than to update wording to reflect the value of waste as a resource, and integrated better within new development.</p> <p>Policy WM 3 will also require updating to remove references to Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO) which was removed as a material consideration in November 2013.</p> <p>It is recommended that an amended Policy WM 3 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>
Policy WM 4: Land Improvement Sets out criteria for the disposal of inert waste by its deposition on land where it is demonstrated that it will result in land improvement.	<p>There is no provision for Land Improvement in the SPPS.</p>	<p>Policy WM 4 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy WM 4 is updated to remove references to Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO) which was removed as a material consideration in November 2013.</p> <p>It is recommended that an amended Policy WM 4 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>
Policy WM 5: Development in the Vicinity of Waste Management Facilities Sets out criteria for proposals involving the development of land in the vicinity of existing or approved waste management facilities and waste water treatment works (WWTW).	<p>SPPS (6.318) accords with Policy WM 5.</p>	<p>Policy WM 5 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy WM 5 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>

PPS 12: Housing in Settlements	
PCP 1: Increased Housing Density without Town Cramming A principle rather than policy, but relates to HS 1: Living Over the Shop (set out below) and reiterates PPS 7. Promotes increased density in housing developments by encouraging compact urban forms and promoting more housing within existing urban areas.	
PCP 2: Good Design A principle rather than policy and reiterates PPS 7. Promotes that all new housing development should demonstrate a high quality of design, layout and landscaping.	
PCP 3: Sustainable Forms of Development A principle rather than policy and reiterates PPS 7. Promotes the reuse of brownfield land and the recycling of buildings within settlements.	
PCP 4: Balanced Communities A principle rather than policy, but relates to Policy HS 2 to HS 4 (set out below). Promotes the provision of social housing within larger developments, travellers accommodation where there is an identified need and a range of house types and sizes as a means of achieving balanced communities. It also states that where there is a need for Travellers specific accommodation it should be facilitated at specific sites.	
Suggests the use of planning agreements may be used to secure a portion of social housing in new developments.	
Policy HS 1: Living over the Shop Promotes the sustainable reuse of existing buildings and promotes 'Living over the Shop' to provide vitality and viability to town centres. Proposals are subject to the provision of a suitable living environment, adequate refuse storage space and acceptable design and materials. A flexible approach to parking may be acceptable in certain circumstances.	
Policy HS 2: Social Housing Outlines that social housing should be provided as an integral element of new residential developments. This should be delivered through the provision of a mix of house types and size to promote choice and assist in meeting community needs in locations where a need has been identified by NIHE. Relates to principle PCP 4 above.	
Policy HS 3: Travellers Accommodation (as amended) Provides criteria for the assessment of Travellers Accommodation (a grouped housing scheme, a serviced site or a transit site) identified by a NIHE local housing needs assessment. The criteria relates to landscaping, site context, environmental amenity and the provision of workspace, play space and visitor car parking. This policy requires a sequential approach in relation to the location of such accommodation. In addition, a single family traveller transit or serviced site will be approved in exceptional circumstances in the countryside, without a requirement to demonstrate a need.	
Policy HS 4: House Types and Size This policy compliments PPS 7 and requires that new residential developments over 25 units/on sites 1 hectare or above should	

SPPS	
The strategic policy of the SPPS generally accords with PCP 1 and promotes higher density housing developments within city and town centres and other locations that benefit from high accessibility to public transport facilities. There are subtle changes to the text in the SPPS such as the word 'privacy' has been substituted with 'amenity' and 'safeguarding' has replaced 'not significantly eroded'.	
‘Good Design’ is a regional strategic policy within the SPPS and is also one of the Core Planning Principles identified, alongside ‘Place-Making’. SPPS recognises the contribution that good design can have on achieving sustainable development by providing safe and attractive places to live, it also calls for roads infrastructure to be considered in relation to good design. SPPS generally accords with PCP 2 and states that Councils should bring forward local planning policy or guidance for achieving quality in residential development including proposals for residential extensions or alterations. ‘Sustainable Development’ is a Core Planning Principle of the SPPS. SPPS accords with PCP 3, and includes the additional line ‘the encouragement of compact town and village forms’. SPPS also replaces the wording ‘concentrated in sustainable locations’ with ‘located in sustainable locations’. The minor text revision does not dilute or substantially add to the policy context. SPPS addresses the need to provide balanced communities and generally accords with PCP 4. It recognises the requirement to provide social housing where need is identified by NIHE and reiterates the text in PCP 4. SPPS is further strengthened by Core Planning Principle ‘Creating and Enhancing Shared Space’. SPPS is silent on planning agreements to secure social housing within new developments.	
SPPS promotes guidance contained within Living Places.	
SPPS states that residential use above shops and other businesses should be facilitated where appropriate.	
SPPS recognises the requirement to provide social/affordable housing where need is identified by NIHE. SPPS states the LDP process will be the primary vehicle to facilitate any identified social housing need by zoning land or through key site requirements, this however does not preclude other sites coming forward through the development management process.	
Traveller Accommodation is referenced in the implementation section of the SPPS. It states that where a need is identified for a transit or a serviced site which cannot be readily met within an existing settlement proposals will have to meet the policy requirements in respect of rural planning policy for social and affordable housing. The criteria listed in HS 3 are repeated in the SPPS. SPPS does not set out a sequential approach for locating such accommodation but rather states that those proposed in rural locations should be designed to integrate sympathetically with their surroundings. SPPS does not refer to single family traveller transit or serviced sites in the countryside.	
SPPS includes as a Core Planning Principle and as a strategic policy objective the need to provide a variety of house types, sizes and tenures as a means of providing a good quality housing offering and as a way of achieving balanced communities.	

Comment (see Chapter 7)	
Principle PCP 1 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended. However, as this planning principle is not operational policy and has been transposed in the SPPS it does not need to be brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.	
Principle PCP 2 appears to be working well, however this planning principle is not currently operational policy. It is recommended that a General operational policy will be included in the LDP Plan Strategy promoting good design and urban design criteria developed for key strategic locations taking account of the SPPS Core Planning Principles and other relevant guidance such as Living Places and Creating Places.	
Principle PCP 3 appears to be working well. However, as this planning principle is not operational policy and has been transposed in the SPPS it does not need to be brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy. Sustainable forms of development will be addressed through appropriate zonings in the Local Policies Plan.	
Principle PCP 4 appears to be working well, however this planning principle is not currently operational policy. The proposed approach to the provision of social housing in the LDP is dealt with under Policy HS 2 below, and proposed operational policy dealing with travellers accommodation and the mix of house types and sizes in housing developments is dealt with under Policy HS 3 and HS 4 respectively (see below).	
Policy HS 1 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended. It is recommended that the wording of Policy HS 1 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.	
Key Issue 14 deals with the provision of social/affordable housing. The Preferred Option is to zone sites for social/affordable housing in the Local Policies Plan and indicate through key site requirements where a proportion of a housing zoning should be provided as social housing, where a need has been identified. This option also set out strategic policy requiring that every 10th unit within new housing developments, in settlements where a need has been identified, shall be a social housing unit. It is recommended that this amended policy approach is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.	
Policy HS 3 (as amended) appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended. NIHE have indicated that there is no current need for Travellers Accommodation in the Borough. It is recommended that the wording of Policy HS 3 (as amended) is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy and amended to remove the exception for permission in the countryside, without a requirement to demonstrate need, for single family traveller transit or serviced sites to reflect the SPPS.	
Policy HS 4 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.	

deliver of a mix of house types and sizes to promote balanced communities and create variety and interest. Smaller schemes will be considered on their individual merits.

SPPS does not specify a threshold.

NIHE would like new policy to ensure a mix of tenures in all developments tailored to urban and rural locations. This has been dealt with in Key Issue 14 (see Policy HS 2 above) in so far as it relates to social/affordable housing. NIHE also recommended that all dwelling units should be designed to Lifetime Home standards.

Bringing forward policy in the LDP for all housing units to be to Lifetime Home standards was considered to be too onerous within current Building Control Regulations. As a compromise, key issue 15, deals with the delivery of housing to meet the needs of people with mobility difficulties. The Preferred Option is to bring forward a new policy that all ground floor apartments in blocks of 2 storey or above should be wheelchair accessible units.

It is recommended that the wording of Policy HS 4 regarding a mix of house types and sizes in new residential developments is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy and expanded as per the Preferred Option in key issue 15.

PPS 13: Transportation and Land Use
General Principle 1: The integration of transportation policy and land use planning should be taken forward through the preparation of development plans and transport plans informed by transport studies
General Principle 2: Accessibility by modes of transport other than the private car should be a key consideration in the location and design of development
General Principle 3: The process of Transport Assessment (TA) should be employed to review the potential transport impacts of a development proposal
General Principal 4: Travel Plans should be developed for all significant travel generated uses
General Principle 5: Developers should bear the costs of transport infrastructure necessitated by their development
General Principle 6: Controls on parking should be employed to encourage more responsible use of the private car and to bring about a change in travel behaviour
General Principle 7: Park and ride and park and share sites should be developed in appropriate locations to reduce the need to travel by car and encourage use of public transport
General Principle 8: Land required to facilitate improvements in the transport network should be afforded protection

SPPS
SPPS incorporates most of these principles within it.

Comment
PPS 13 was prepared to assist in the implementation of the RDS and is intended to guide the integration of transportation and land use through the application of 12 General Principles. PPS 13 has, to a degree, been superseded by the RDS 2035 and the SPPS.
As PPS 13 does not contain operational planning policy, it is not considered appropriate to replicate the individual General Principles in the LDP. These will instead be incorporated into the Transportation policies in the LDP.

General Principle 9: Reliance on the private car should be reduced through a modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport

General Principle 10: Rural public transport schemes should be developed to link rural dwellers to essential facilities and larger settlements

General Principle 11: Innovative measures should be developed for the safe and effective management of traffic

General Principle 12: The integration of transport and land use planning should seek to create a more accessible environment for all


The first step in the process of developing a business plan is to conduct a thorough market research. This involves identifying the target market, understanding the needs and preferences of the customers, and analyzing the competitive landscape. Market research can be conducted through various methods, including surveys, interviews, and focus groups. The next step is to develop a clear and concise business model, which outlines the company's revenue streams, cost structure, and overall business strategy. This is followed by a detailed financial analysis, which includes projecting the company's financial performance over a period of time. The final step is to write the business plan, which is a comprehensive document that outlines the company's goals, objectives, and strategies. The business plan is a crucial tool for securing financing, as it provides potential investors and lenders with a clear understanding of the company's business model and financial projections.

In addition to the business plan, there are several other factors that can influence the success of a business. These include the quality of the products or services offered, the effectiveness of the marketing and sales strategy, and the overall management of the company. It is important for business owners to regularly monitor and evaluate their business performance, and to make adjustments as needed to ensure long-term success.

The business plan is a living document that should be updated regularly as the company's needs and market conditions change. It is a key tool for managing the business and ensuring that it remains on track to achieve its goals. By following the steps outlined in this guide, business owners can develop a comprehensive business plan that provides a clear roadmap for their business's future.

The business plan is a critical document for any business owner. It provides a clear and concise overview of the business's goals, objectives, and strategies. It is a key tool for securing financing, as it provides potential investors and lenders with a clear understanding of the company's business model and financial projections. The business plan is a living document that should be updated regularly as the company's needs and market conditions change. It is a key tool for managing the business and ensuring that it remains on track to achieve its goals.

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PPS 15: Revised Planning and Flood Risk

Policy FLD 1: Development in Fluvial (River) and Coastal flood plains

Sets out criteria where development will not be permitted within the 1 in 100 year fluvial flood plain (AEP of 1%) or the 1 in 200 year coastal flood plain (AEP of 0.5%) unless the applicant can demonstrate that the proposal constitutes a specific exception to the policy.

The policy also requires developers to submit a Flood Risk Assessment for all proposals. A development proposal within the floodplain that do not constitute an exception to the policy may be permitted where it is deemed to be of overriding regional or sub regional economic importance. This policy also sets out criteria for minor development and flood protection and management measures.

Policy FLD 2: Protection of Flood Defence and Drainage Infrastructure

Policy FLD 2 will not permit development that would impede the operational effectiveness of flood defence and drainage infrastructure or hinder access to enable their maintenance.

Policy FLD 3: Development and Surface Water (pluvial) Flood Risk Outside Flood Plains

This policy requires a Drainage Assessment to be submitted for all development proposals that exceed any of the following thresholds:

- A residential development comprising of 10 or more dwelling units
- A development site in excess of 1 hectare
- A change of use involving new buildings and / or hard surfacing exceeding 1000 square meters in area.

There is also a requirement for all development proposals (excluding minor development) to carry out a Drainage Assessment if the proposed development is located in an area where there is evidence of a history of surface water flooding. A drainage assessment will also be required when surface water run-off from the development may adversely impact upon other development or features of importance to nature conservation, archaeology or the built heritage.

SPPS			
	<p>SPPS accords with Policy FLD 1. Para 6.111 specifies the exceptions to general presumption against development in flood plains and the requirements for a flood risk assessment.</p>	<p>SPPS (para 6.123) accords with Policy FLD 2.</p>	<p>SPPS (paras 6.113 – 6.116) accords with Policy FLD 3 and specifies that a Drainage Assessment (DA) will be required for all development proposals that exceed any of the thresholds as specified in the PPS.</p>

Comment (see Chapter 8)
<p>Policy FLD 1 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy FLD 1 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>
<p>Policy FLD 2 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy FLD 2 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>
<p>Policy FLD 3 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.</p> <p>The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in new development is considered under Key Issue 24. The Preferred Option is to promote SuDS within our Borough to manage surface water in all new developments in urban areas where feasible.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy FLD 3 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy, subject to additional wording to incorporate SuDS.</p>

<p>Policy FLD 4: Artificial modifications of watercourses</p> <p>Sets out criteria for the artificial modification of a watercourse, including culverting or canalization operations. Exceptions will only be made where the culverting of short length of a watercourse is necessary to provide access to a development site or part thereof, or where it can be demonstrated that a specific length of watercourse needs to be culverted for engineering reasons and that there are no reasonable or practicable courses of action.</p>	<p>Policy FLD 5: Development in proximity to reservoirs</p> <p>Sets out criteria in relation to development in proximity to reservoirs for new development, replacement buildings and all other development.</p>
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<p>SPPS (para 6.125) accords with Policy FLD 4.</p>	
<p>SPPS (paras 6.120 – 6.122) generally accords with Policy FLD 5.</p>	

<p>Policy FLD 4 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy FLD 4 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>	<p>Concerns have been raised that Policy FLD 5 is presently unreasonable, unworkable and outside the remit of Planning. It is considered unduly onerous on the applicant to provide evidence on the safety of a reservoir, rather the focus should be on the regulatory system to ensure that reservoir infrastructure is safe.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy FLD 5 is not brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy. Further legal opinion may be sought before a final decision is reached on this.</p>
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<p>PPS 16: Tourism</p> <p>Policy TSM 1: Tourism Development in Settlements</p> <p>This policy sets out a general presumption in favour of tourism development in settlements whilst ensuring the development respects the site context, in terms of scale, size and design.</p> <p>Policy TSM 2: Tourist Amenities in the Countryside</p> <p>Focuses exclusively on tourist amenities (defined as an amenity, facility or service provide primarily for tourists but does not include tourist accommodation) in the countryside. The policy covers, 'new proposals' and 'extension of an existing tourist amenity'. Generally the policy is permissively worded to allow for a range of tourist amenities in the countryside. New development will be permitted provided there is locational need or the type of tourist activity requires a rural location. In both cases where buildings are required the scheme should utilise existing buildings or make provision of replacement buildings.</p> <p>Development of regional importance must demonstrate substantial benefits to the locality and it must be supported by a tourism benefit statement.</p> <p>Also refers to an extension of an existing tourist amenity and permits extensions provided their scale and nature do not harm rural character. Reuse of existing buildings is promoted. If it is demonstrated that this is not a feasible option new buildings will be considered and these should integrate with the overall development.</p> <p>Policy TSM 3: Hotels, Guest Houses and Tourist Hostels in the Countryside</p> <p>States that new or replacement hotels, guest houses and hostels will be permitted in the countryside in 2 circumstances: (i) replacement of an existing rural building or (ii) a new build proposal on the periphery of a settlement. Criteria are set out for each circumstance e.g. buildings to be replaced must be of permanent construction, be of suitable size and must not be listed, and vernacular buildings to be replaced have to demonstrate that they are not capable of being made structurally sound.</p>	
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<p>SPPS</p> <p>The aim of facilitating tourism development is mirrored in the SPPS but is further simplified to state that there will be a general presumption in favour of tourism development within settlements, subject to meeting normal planning requirements.</p> <p>SPPS requires a balance between the need to facilitate tourist developments in the countryside and safeguarding the environment.</p> <p>SPPS stipulates that all tourism development in the countryside must be carefully managed in the interests of rural amenity however the guiding principle is that appropriate tourism development should be facilitated where it supports rural communities and promotes a healthy rural economy. This principle covers both the creation of new, and the expansion of existing, tourist development.</p> <p>SPPS contains a similar principle delivered in a more concise manner and states where there is no suitable site within a settlement a new build hotel, guest house, or tourist hostel may be appropriate on the periphery of a settlement subject to meeting the normal planning requirements.</p>	
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<p>Comment (see Chapter 6)</p> <p>Policy TSM 1 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy TSM 1 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p> <p>Policy TSM 2 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.</p> <p>Key Issue 11 deals with Accommodating Future Tourism Demand. The Preferred Option is to retain current policy in PPS 16: Tourism (with minor amendments) and bring forward bespoke policy tailored to the tourism potential of Vulnerable, Sensitive and Opportunity areas within the Borough, which would be identified through the LDP.</p> <p>By taking this approach it could potentially restrict tourist amenities in certain vulnerable/sensitive countryside locations and increase opportunities in identified Tourism Opportunity Zones in the countryside.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy TSM 2 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy for the remainder of the</p> <p>Policy TSM 3 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.</p> <p>Key Issue 11 deals with Accommodating Future Tourism Demand. The Preferred Option is to retain current policy in PPS 16: Tourism (with minor amendments) and bring forward bespoke policy tailored to the tourism potential of Vulnerable, Sensitive and Opportunity areas within the Borough, which would be identified through the LDP.</p> <p>By taking this approach it could potentially restrict hotels, guest houses and hostels in certain vulnerable/sensitive countryside locations and increase opportunities in identified Tourism Opportunity Zones in the countryside.</p>	
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<p>Proposals for a new build facility on the periphery of a settlement must demonstrate that there is no suitable site within the settlement or nearby settlement and demonstrate that there are no existing opportunities in the locality either through the conversion and re-use of a suitable building or replacement of a suitable building.</p> <p>The development must not dominate or adversely affect the landscape setting of the settlement or otherwise contribute to urban sprawl. A sequential location test is also set out.</p> <p>Applications for change of use or replacement of tourist accommodation approved under this policy have to demonstrate that it is no longer viable long term and that sufficient local alternative provision offsets the loss of tourism benefit.</p>	<p>Policy TSM 4: Major Tourism Development in the Countryside – Exceptional Circumstances</p> <p>States major tourism development will be permitted in the countryside only in exceptional circumstances, 3 tests have to be demonstrated – i: exceptional benefit to the tourism industry, a site specific reason for the choice of site and sustainable benefit to the locality.</p>	<p>Policy TSM 5: Self-Catering Accommodation in the Countryside</p> <p>Such accommodation is permitted in 3 circumstances: (i) units within hotel, self-catering complex, guest house or holiday park; (ii) 3 or more close to tourist amenity and (iii) the restoration of a clachan. Units should be subsidiary in scale and ancillary to the primary tourism use.</p> <p>Refers to the conditions that will be placed on all permissions for this type of proposal.</p>	<p>Policy TSM 6: New and Extended Holiday Parks in the Countryside</p>	<p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy TSM 3 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy for the remainder of the countryside.</p>
	<p>SPPS advises that the LDP can include policies for major tourism development in the countryside but such proposals must meet the same tests as set out in Policy TSM 4.</p>	<p>SPPS states the importance of allowing self-catering accommodation, particularly in areas where tourist amenities and accommodation have become established or likely to be provided as a result of tourism initiatives, such as the Signature Projects.</p>	<p>SPPS requires new or extended holiday parks to be of a high quality and a sustainable form of tourism development.</p>	<p>Policy TSM 4 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy TSM 4 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy and the amplification text amended to relate to the new NI Tourism Strategy (when published), rather than the Tourism 'Priorities for Action' Plan.</p>
				<p>Policy TSM 5 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.</p> <p>Key Issue 11 deals with Accommodating Future Tourism Demand. The Preferred Option is to retain current policy in PPS 16: Tourism (with minor amendments) and bring forward bespoke policy tailored to the tourism potential of Vulnerable, Sensitive and Opportunity areas within the Borough, which would be identified through the LDP.</p> <p>By taking this approach it could potentially restrict self-catering accommodation in certain vulnerable/sensitive countryside locations and increase opportunities in identified Tourism Opportunity Zones in the countryside.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy TSM 5 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy for the remainder of the countryside.</p>
				<p>Policy TSM 6 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it need to be substantially amended.</p>
				<p>Key Issue 11 deals with Accommodating Future Tourism Demand. The Preferred Option is to retain current policy in PPS 16: Tourism (with minor amendments) and bring forward bespoke policy tailored to the tourism potential of Vulnerable, Sensitive and Opportunity areas within the Borough, which would be identified through the LDP.</p> <p>By taking this approach it could potentially restrict new/or extensions to holiday parks in certain vulnerable/sensitive countryside locations and increase opportunities in identified Tourism Opportunity Zones in the countryside.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy TSM 6 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy for the remainder of the countryside.</p>
	<p>Due to the strategic nature of the SPPS it does not specify the criteria listed within Policy TSM 7. SPPS states that all tourism development must be of appropriate nature and scale and design of the specific proposal must be appropriate to the site context.</p>			<p>Policy TSM 7 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy TSM 7 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p> <p>Alternatively, the criteria listed in Policy TSM 7 could form part of an overall general policy in the LDP as they are relevant to other types of development.</p>
	<p>SPPS recognises that there are many diverse features of built and natural heritage that can be regarded as tourism assets. It also repeats the wording of Policy TSM 8.</p>			<p>Feedback from consultees indicates that Policy TSM 8 is generally sound and provides the detail to the thrust of the SPPS.</p> <p>However, 'tourism value' on its own has proven difficult to quantify at recent planning appeals.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy TSM 8 is expanded to state that development should not have adverse impact on a tourism asset such as to significantly compromise its amenity, setting and tourism value.</p>
	<p>SPPS recognises that there are many diverse features of built and natural heritage that can be regarded as tourism assets. It also repeats the wording of Policy TSM 8.</p>			<p>Feedback from consultees indicates that Policy TSM 8 is generally sound and provides the detail to the thrust of the SPPS.</p> <p>However, 'tourism value' on its own has proven difficult to quantify at recent planning appeals.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy TSM 8 is expanded to state that development should not have adverse impact on a tourism asset such as to significantly compromise its amenity, setting and tourism value.</p>

PPS 17: Control of Outdoor Advertisements	
<p>Policy AD 1: Amenity and Public Safety</p> <p>Sets out regional planning policy and guidance relating to the display of outdoor advertisements. There are 2 main policy objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> it respects amenity, when assessed in the context of the general characteristics of the locality; and it does not prejudice public safety. <p>PPS 17 should be read in conjunction with policies BH 9, BH 13, and ATC 3 of PPS 6.</p>	

SPPS	
<p>SPPS accords with Policy AD 1. The general thrust of the policy approach as set out in the SPPS is to ensure that outdoor advertisements contribute positively to a quality environment and do not prejudice public safety.</p> <p>Paragraphs 6.58, 6.59 and 6.60 make reference to the need to ensure that advertisements do not detract from the unique qualities and amenity of the countryside nor diminish our archaeology or built heritage.</p>	

Comment (see Chapter 9)	
<p>Policy AD 1 is working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy AD 1 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy but Council should consider the introduction of specific policy wording relating to the control of flashing, scrolling, animated, intermittent or moving digital signage within conservation areas and ATCs.</p> <p>Ensure that the strategic advertisement policy conforms with and does not conflict with any retained advertisement policy for the historic environment.</p>	

PPS 18: Renewable Energy	
<p>Policy RE 1: Renewable Energy Development</p> <p>Sets out criteria for development that generates energy from renewable resources.</p> <p>This policy also requires proposals to be located in proximity to the source of the resource needed for that particular technology.</p> <p>The policy states that the wider environmental, economic and social benefits of all proposals for renewable energy projects are material considerations that will be given significant weight in determining planning applications.</p> <p>This policy also sets out a number of additional specific criteria in relation to wind energy development.</p>	
<p>Policy RE 2: Integrated Renewable Energy and Passive Solar Design (PSD)</p> <p>Sets out criteria for development proposals which integrate renewable energy technology including micro-generation, and PSD in its layout, siting and design. The policy requiring the provisions of Policy RE 1 to be met and the technology used is to be appropriate to the location.</p> <p>It outlines that new large scale urban developments, public sector development, and development in the countryside offer the greatest opportunity for such proposals.</p>	

SPPS	
<p>SPPS generally accords with Policy RE 1.</p> <p>SPPS (para 6.223) introduced a policy change in relation to the adoption of a 'cautious approach' to renewable energy development within areas designated for landscape importance, such as AONBs.</p> <p>SPPS (para 6.225) also changed the weight to be given to the wider environmental, economic and social benefits from 'significant' to 'appropriate'. The implication of this is that local circumstances are now to be afforded greater weight than before, but not determining weight.</p> <p>SPPS policy in relation to renewable energy is currently being reviewed.</p>	
<p>SPPS (para 6.219) accords with Policy RE 2 but does not set out policy criteria in regard to integrated renewable energy and passive solar design.</p>	

Comment (see Chapter 8)	
<p>Policy RE 1 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended other than to reflect the updated wording of the SPPS.</p> <p>In Issue 23 dealing with Renewable Energy, Option (a) aims to continue with a policy based approach, incorporating a cautious approach to renewable energy development within designated areas (e.g. AONB). However, it was also expressed that consideration should be given to Option (b) to restrict or prevent certain types of development within areas of sensitive landscapes if these are identified. This will be dependent on responses to Key Issue 33 in the POP.</p> <p>SONI (the electricity system operator for Northern Ireland) raised the issue of renewable energy developments in close proximity to existing electricity infrastructure 'wrapping around' such infrastructure and compromising or curtailing future network operations/expansions. SONI questioned if this could be addressed in the LDP.</p> <p>It is considered additional policy criteria could be added to ensure that such developments do not conflict with existing electricity infrastructure. It is recommended that this be raised as a question in the POP.</p> <p>It is also recommended that Policy RE 1 is kept under review pending the outcome of the public consultation on the POP and the ongoing review of the SPPS in relation to renewable energy.</p>	
<p>Policy RE 2 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy RE 2 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy, subject to any amendments as a result of the ongoing review of the SPPS in relation to renewable energy.</p>	

PPS 21: Sustainable Development in the Country	
Policy CTY 1: Development in the Countryside	
<p>A directional policy that signposts the types of developments which are considered acceptable in principle in the countryside, and references the policies (in PPS 21 and elsewhere) that are relevant.</p> <p>States that all proposals must be designed and sited to integrate sympathetically into the landscape and that they should meet other planning and environmental considerations including those for drainage, access and road safety.</p> <p>Advises that if an area is designated as a Special Countryside Area (SCA) then no development will be permitted unless it complies with the specific policy provisions of the relevant LDP.</p>	
Policy CTY 2: Development in Dispersed Rural Communities	
<p>Sets out circumstances where development will be permitted in designated DRC's. Allows for a small cluster or "clachan" style development of up to 6 houses at a focal point in a DRC. This is limited to one cluster per focal point.</p> <p>Appropriate economic, tourism, social or community facilities may also be accommodated in a DRC under CTY 2.</p> <p>Design should be high quality and sympathetic to the rural area.</p>	
Policy CTY 2a: New Dwellings in Existing Clusters	
<p>Provides opportunities to gain approval for a dwelling in an existing rural cluster provided the cluster is outside of a farm and consists of 4 or more buildings, 3 of which must be dwellings.</p> <p>The cluster must appear as a visual entity in the landscape and must be associated with a focal point e.g. community building or is located at a cross roads.</p> <p>The site must provide adequate enclosure and be bounded on at least 2 sides with other development in the cluster.</p> <p>The development of the site should not significantly alter the character of the site or countryside and should not impact on residential amenity.</p>	
Policy CTY 3: Replacement Dwellings	
<p>Provides policy for the provision of replacement dwellings where dwelling to be replaced exhibits essential characteristics of a dwelling and all external structural walls are substantially intact.</p> <p>States that agricultural buildings or buildings of a temporary construction will not be eligible for replacement.</p> <p>Sets out when a non-residential building can be replaced with a dwelling and deals with replacement of fire damaged dwellings.</p> <p>Seeks to help retain non-listed vernacular dwellings and promote their sympathetic renovation and continued use rather than replacement. However, exceptions are listed detailing when replacement of such dwellings will be acceptable.</p> <p>Sets out 5 criteria all replacement proposals must meet including siting, visual impact, high quality design, provision of services and safe access.</p>	
Policy CTY 4: The Conversion and Reuse of Existing Buildings	
<p>Provides for the conversion of 'a suitable building' to a variety of uses, including use as a single dwelling. The amplification section states this can include school houses, churches and older traditional barns and outbuildings.</p> <p>Proposals have to be of high design quality and meet 7 criteria, including be of permanent construction, maintain or enhance the building, should not affect the amenities of nearby residents, proposals for non-residential use should be appropriate to a countryside location, all proposals should provide necessary services and safe access. In addition, extensions should be sympathetic to the existing building.</p> <p>States that buildings of a temporary construction, including agricultural buildings are not eligible for conversion or re-use.</p> <p>Sets out criteria for the conversion of a traditional non-residential building to more than one dwelling and states that proposals for the conversion of listed buildings will be assessed against PPS 6.</p>	
Policy CTY 5: Social and Affordable Housing	

SPPS	
<p>SPPS does not have an overarching policy like Policy CTY 1 but rather has individual regional strategic policies.</p> <p>Aim of the SPPS with regard to the countryside is to manage development in a manner which strikes a balance between protection of the environment from inappropriate development, whilst supporting and sustaining rural communities.</p> <p>SPPS omits any reference to Dispersed Rural Communities (DRC's) whereas they are referred to specifically in Policy CTY 1.</p> <p>SPPS policy in relation to development in the Countryside is currently being reviewed.</p>	
<p>There is no provision for DRC's in the SPPS.</p> <p><i>Note: Mid & East Antrim currently does not have any designated Dispersed Rural Communities.</i></p>	
<p>SPPS adopts a policy approach based on clustering, consolidating and grouping new development, particularly new residential development, with existing established buildings.</p> <p>SPPS policy for new dwellings in existing clusters is less detailed than Policy CTY2a in the criteria to be adhered to, however, the main provisions are detailed and no new or additional criteria have been added.</p> <p>SPPS does not detail the types/number of buildings deemed to be a cluster, does not define what constitutes a focal point nor does it state that the site should provide a suitable degree of enclosure or avoid adversely impacting on residential amenity.</p>	
<p>SPPS is less detailed than Policy CTY 3 however it covers some of the primary themes.</p> <p>It does not mention that agricultural buildings or those of a temporary construction will be ineligible.</p> <p>SPPS is silent on the replacement of redundant non-residential buildings with single dwellings where their replacement brings about environmental benefits.</p> <p>It is also silent on the replacement of fire damaged buildings nor does it include specific criteria for the replacement of non-listed vernacular dwellings, nor criteria on design, services or safe access for all replacement cases.</p> <p>SPPS refers to unlisted vernacular buildings in Para 6.24, but not specifically under the section Development in the Countryside. It states that applications that directly or indirectly affect such buildings will be judged on the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. SPPS approach is to promote the re-use of previously used buildings.</p>	
<p>SPPS separates the policy for conversion and reuse into one for 'residential use' and another for when the end use will be 'non-residential'.</p> <p>The policy text in SPPS has been revised to clarify the intent of Policy CTY 4 in respect of the historical or architectural merit of a building to be converted/re-used. SPPS therefore refers to 'a locally important building' rather than 'a suitable building' as stated in Policy CTY 4.</p> <p>Under the policy for the conversion of an existing building to 'residential use', SPPS states that, in cases where an original former dwelling is retained as an ancillary building to the new dwelling, it will not be eligible for conversion back to a dwelling.</p> <p>SPPS does not provide detailed criteria save for repeating Policy CTY 4 and stating that conversions to a 'non-residential use' should be appropriate in nature and scale to its countryside location.</p> <p>SPPS (para 6.87) includes the re-use of rural buildings as one of the proposals which will offer the greatest scope for economic development in the countryside.</p>	
<p>SPPS is not as prescriptive as Policy CTY 5 and refers to development of a small group where the number will depend upon the identified need and the ability to integrate with its surroundings, rather than 'no more than 14 dwellings'.</p>	

Comment (see Chapters 6 & 7)	
<p>Policy CTY 1 appears to be working well, however it should be amended to reflect the SPPS removal of reference to Dispersed Rural Communities (CTY 2).</p> <p>It is recommended that a directional policy, in line with the thrust of Policy CTY 1, save for reference to DRC's, is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>	
<p>In order to reflect the SPPS, it is recommended that Policy CTY 2, regarding development in Dispersed Rural Communities is not brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>	
<p>Policy CTY2a appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended. However, unlike the other policies in PPS 21 it lacks any justification and amplification.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy CTY2a is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p> <p>In addition it is recommended that amplification is provided to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">state buildings or focal points within settlements cannot be used to support proposals;explain that the list of focal points is not exhaustive;explain that a suitable cluster depends on physical proximity as well as visual linkages; andprovide direction to guidance in Building on Tradition.	
<p>Policy CTY 3 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended. In regard to non-listed vernacular buildings, consultees generally felt that restoration should be encouraged particularly to help safeguard rural assets. Taking this into account it would appear prudent to, as a minimum, retain the wording of CTY 3 in regard to non-listed vernacular dwellings.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy CTY 3 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy and amended to reflect the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A requirement to submit verifiable evidence as to the extent of the original dwelling;Remove reference to fire damaged dwellings as per the SPPS;Relocate and include the criteria for the replacement of non-listed vernacular dwellings within an amended PPS 6 BH 15 built heritage policy.	
<p>When Policy CTY 4 terminology, 'a suitable building' was applied, many inappropriate buildings came forward for consideration. The PAC have found that the wording in the SPPS 'a locally important building' takes precedence over the term 'a suitable building'.</p> <p>In relation to Economic Development, Policy CTY 4 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy CTY 4 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy and amended to take account of the SPPS and therefore separated into policies for residential and non-residential end uses, to refer to 'a locally important building' and to state that a former dwelling previously replaced and retained as an ancillary building to the new replacement dwelling will not be eligible for conversion back into residential use.</p> <p>In addition this amended policy should signpost proposals for the conversion and reuse of non-listed vernacular buildings to an amended PPS 6 BH 15 built heritage policy.</p>	
<p>Policy CTY 5 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.</p>	

<p>Current planning policy normally resists groups of dwellings in the countryside but this policy is an exception, allowing registered Housing Associations approval for up to 14 dwellings, subject to a specific social/affordable housing need being demonstrated by NIHE which cannot be met within an existing settlement.</p> <p>Proposals have to be adjacent or near to a small settlement and a sequential test will be applied in terms of location.</p> <p>Proposals must be sited and designed to integrate with their surroundings and meet other planning criteria and policy requirements.</p> <p>Criteria relating to proposals in Dispersed Rural Communities is also provided and it is stated that only one group will be permitted in close proximity to any particular rural settlement.</p>
<p>Policy CTY 6: Personal and Domestic Circumstances</p> <p>This policy is centred on permitting dwellings in the countryside for those who may have special personal or domestic circumstances.</p> <p>Includes criteria which requires the applicant to demonstrate compelling and site specific reasons as to why they need a dwelling in a particular rural location.</p>
<p>Policy CTY 7: Dwellings For Non-Agricultural Business Enterprises</p> <p>This policy provides opportunity for an established non-agricultural business in the countryside to secure permission for a dwelling in circumstances where one of the firm's employees must live on site.</p> <p>Site specific need for a dwelling must be demonstrated and if the business has been operating successfully without a dwelling, the need for accommodation must be justified.</p> <p>The dwelling should be located beside or within the boundaries of the business and integrate. It will also be subject to an occupancy condition.</p>

<p>Unlike Policy CTY 5 it does not state that applications must be made by registered Housing Associations, nor does it set out a sequential test in terms of locating an acceptable site.</p> <p>SPPS also does not limit such proposals to only one group in close proximity to any particular rural settlement.</p>
<p>SPPS is less prescriptive than Policy CTY 6. Whilst it requires the applicant to demonstrate compelling and site specific reason for a dwelling as well as demonstrating there are no alternative solutions, it does not go on to refer to the level/type of detail required.</p>
<p>SPPS is similar but less detailed than Policy CTY 7.</p> <p>SPPS refers to 'an employee of the business' rather than 'one of the firm's employees'.</p> <p>SPPS does not include criteria relating to siting or integration and does not refer to approvals being subject to an occupancy condition.</p>

<p>Such proposals have been limited in this Borough to date and it is anticipated that the new LDP and subsequent reviews should identify sufficient sites within settlements to meet NIHE need.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy CTY 5 is brought forward in the LDP, save for reference to Dispersed Rural Communities.</p>
<p>Policy CTY 6 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy CTY 6 is brought forward in the LDP.</p>
<p>Policy CTY 7 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy CTY 7 is brought forward in the LDP, with a slight amendment to reflect the SPPS to refer to 'an employee of the business' rather than 'one of the firm's employees'.</p>

<p>Policy CTY 8: Ribbon Development</p> <p>This policy resists ribbon development in the countryside but allows for the development of a small gap site; sufficient only to accommodate up to a maximum of 2 houses within a built up frontage and provided this respects existing development patterns.</p> <p>Built up frontages are defined as a line of 3 or more buildings along a road frontage (including footpaths or private lanes) without accompanying development to the rear.</p> <p>In relation to economic development, provision is also made for infilling a small gap with an appropriate economic development proposal, including light industry. Such a proposal must meet 4 criteria -:- be in keeping with the scale of adjoining development, be of a high design standard, not impact on the amenity of neighbours, and meet other planning and environmental requirements.</p>
<p>Policy CTY 9: Residential Caravans and Mobile Homes</p> <p>Sets out two circumstances when a temporary residential caravan or mobile home may be acceptable in the countryside: when it is for provision of temporary accommodation pending development of a permanent dwelling or there are compelling and site specific reasons related to personal or domestic circumstances.</p> <p>Permissions are normally subject to a 3-year time limit and the same planning and environmental considerations as a permanent dwelling. Siting and integration policy also have to be met.</p>
<p>Policy CTY 10: Dwellings on Farms</p> <p>This policy was introduced in recognition of changing farming practices and to help support rural communities. It was considered that there was a continuing need for new dwellings on farms to accommodate those engaged in the farm business and other rural dwellers.</p>

<p>SPPS is similar but less detailed than Policy CTY 7.</p> <p>SPPS states that councils may bring forward policies in respect of the development of a small gap site within an otherwise substantial and continuously built up frontage.</p> <p>It does not, define the size of an acceptable gap, nor provide a definition of a substantial and continuously built up frontage unlike Policy CTY 8.</p> <p>SPPS does not have provision for the infilling of a gap site with an economic development proposal.</p>
<p>SPPS uses similar wording to Policy CTY 9 and sets out the same two circumstances when a temporary residential caravan or mobile home may be acceptable in the countryside.</p> <p>SPPS does not specify that permissions will be subject to a 3-year time limit nor does it include siting, integration, planning or environmental criteria.</p>
<p>The SPPS reflects the thrust of Policy CTY 10, and restates the 3 main criteria to be met.</p> <p>The requirement to visually link or site a proposed dwelling to cluster with an existing group of buildings on the farm is restated, however the SPPS does not give the option of siting a dwelling at an alternative site away from the farm buildings.</p> <p>SPPS clarifies the original policy intent of Policy CTY 10 by stating, that in addition to the requirement to cluster or visually link, proposals for dwelling houses must also comply with LDP policies in respect of integration and rural character.</p>

<p>Concerns have been raised about the inconsistency in the interpretation of Policy CTY 8, particularly in regard to the wording of 'a line of 3 or more buildings without accompanying development to the rear' and the types of buildings that can be counted as part of the built up frontage. For example, domestic garages may not be considered appropriate. A stricter policy for the infilling of a small gap may help reduce the potential number of new single dwellings in the open countryside.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy CTY 8 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy to allow the infilling of a gap site with an appropriate economic development proposal.</p> <p>It is also recommended that the remaining wording of Policy CTY 8 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy and amended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">clarify that only substantial buildings will constitute part of a substantial and continuously built up frontage;clarify that this is a visual test;clarify that buildings within settlements cannot be used to support proposals for gaps sites in the countryside.
<p>Policy CTY 9 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it need to be amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy CTY 9 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>
<p>Under Policy CTY 10 it is considered that the standard of evidence to demonstrate an active and established farm seems to be low.</p> <p>It is recommend that the wording of Policy CTY 10 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy, updated to refer to the definition of agricultural activity set out in SPPS and amended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">state exactly what information is required in order to demonstrate what qualifies as an active and established farm e.g. make clear hobby farming will not qualify.

<p>To gain permission for a dwelling on a farm, 3 criteria must be met: (i) the farm business must be currently active and established for at least 6 years, (ii) no dwellings or development opportunities should have been sold off from the holding in the previous 10 years and (iii) the new building should visually link/cluster with a group of buildings on the farm.</p> <p>Provision is also set out for siting elsewhere on the farm in 2 cases, either (i) for health and safety reasons or (ii) if there are verifiable plans to expand the farm business at the existing building group.</p> <p>Proposals must also meet the requirements of CTY 13 regarding integration and design, CTY 14 regarding rural character and CTY 16 regarding sewerage disposal.</p> <p>A dwelling under this policy will only be acceptable once every 10 years.</p> <p>This policy is also used to assess proposals for a dwelling by those involved in keeping horses for commercial purposes.</p>
<p>Policy CTY 11: Farm Diversification</p> <p>This policy permits a farm or forestry diversification proposal where it can be demonstrated that is to be run in conjunction with the agricultural operations on the active and established farm.</p> <p>It also sets out criteria which must be met, and states proposals will only be acceptable where they involve the re-use or adaptation of existing farm buildings. A new building is only allowed in prescribed exceptional circumstances.</p>
<p>Policy CTY 12: Agricultural and Forestry Development</p> <p>This policy permits development on an active and established holding and where it can be demonstrated that policy criteria are met. New build proposals will also have to demonstrate that they meet additional criteria.</p>
<p>Policy CTY 13: Integration and Design of Buildings in the Countryside</p> <p>This policy is applied to all development in the countryside and seeks to ensure new buildings in the countryside are visually integrated and are of appropriate design.</p>

<p>SPPS is silent on the assessment of a dwelling for those involved in keeping horses for commercial purposes.</p> <p>Finally, following the repeal of Article 3 of the European Council Regulations No. 74/2009, the definition of agricultural activity for the purposes of the SPPS has been updated to that set out in Article 4 of European Council Regulations (EC) 1307/2013.</p>
<p>SPPS (para 6.87) accords with Policy CTY 11 and refers to farm diversification and the re-use of existing buildings as proposals which will offer the greatest scope for economic development in the countryside.</p> <p>It also states (para 6.73) that new buildings will only be acceptable in exceptional circumstances.</p>
<p>SPPS (para 6.73) is less detailed than Policy CTY 12, however it accords with Policy CTY 12.</p>
<p>SPPS is less detailed than Policy CTY 13 and states that all development in the countryside must integrate into its setting, respect rural character and be appropriately designed.</p>

	<p>Policy CTY 11 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy CTY 11 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>
	<p>Policy CTY 12 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy CTY 12 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>
	<p>Policy CTY 13 appears to be working well.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy CTY 13 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy but amended to set out when a building will be acceptable rather than when it will be unacceptable.</p>

<p>Sets out 7 circumstances when a new building will be unacceptable, including when it is prominent, lacks natural boundaries, relies on new landscaping, ancillary works do not integrate, the design is inappropriate, fails to blend with natural or built backdrops and in the case of a dwelling on a farm is not visually linked or clustered with existing farm buildings.</p>
<p>Policy CTY 14: Rural Character</p> <p>Seeks to ensure all new buildings in the countryside do not result in a detrimental change to, or further erode the rural character of an area.</p> <p>Sets out 5 circumstances when a new building will be unacceptable, including when it is unduly prominent, results in suburban style build-up, does not respect traditional settlement patterns, creates or adds to ribboning, or ancillary works would damage rural character.</p>
<p>Policy CTY 15: The Setting of Settlements</p> <p>Recognises the importance of landscapes around settlements and how they have a role in maintaining the distinction between town and country.</p> <p>Development that mars the distinction between a settlement and the surrounding countryside or that results in urban sprawl will be refused.</p>

<p>SPPS is less detailed than Policy CTY 14 and states that all development in the countryside must integrate into its setting, respect rural character and be appropriately designed.</p>	
<p>SPPS uses similar wording to Policy CTY 15 and states that development in the countryside must not mar the distinction between a settlement and the surrounding countryside, or result in urban sprawl.</p>	

<p>It is also recommended that proposals within the AONB are signposted to the additional criteria in the bespoke policy for the AONB.</p>	<p>Policy CTY 14 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy CTY 14 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy but amended to set out when a building will be acceptable rather than when it will be unacceptable.</p> <p>It is also recommended that proposals within the AONB are signposted to the additional criteria in the bespoke policy for the AONB.</p>
	<p>Policy CTY 15 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy CTY 15 is brought forward in the LDP and amended to state that buildings within settlements cannot be used to justify development in the countryside.</p>

<p>Policy CTY 16: Development Relying on Non-Mains Sewerage</p> <p>States the development relying on non-mains sewerage will only be permitted where the applicant demonstrates that it will not create or add to a pollution problem.</p> <p>In areas having a pollution risk, development relying on non-mains sewerage will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.</p>

<p>SPPS is silent on non-mains sewerage issues.</p> <p>However, the SPPS states within its core planning principles that the adverse environmental impacts of sewerage should be a consideration in all development.</p>
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<p>Policy CTY 16 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy CTY 16 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p> <p>Alternatively, it could be incorporated in general policy applicable to all development.</p>
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PPS 23: Enabling Development for the Conservation of Significant Places	
<p>Policy ED 1: Enabling Development</p> <p>This policy seeks to provide flexibility to depart from normal planning policy, in order to accommodate unforeseen imaginative development proposals that are for the long term public benefit. The policy relates to significant places, defined as any part of the historic environment that has heritage value.</p> <p>Under this policy proposals involving enabling development relating to the re-use, restoration or refurbishment of significant places will only be permitted where a set of criteria are met. Best Practice Guidance should be used to assess proposals. Planning conditions or a planning agreement are used, as appropriate, to secure the associated public benefit.</p>	

SPPS	
<p>The SPPS (para 6.25, 6.26) reiterates the introductory text to PPS 23 which emphasises the intention and objectives of the policy.</p> <p>SPPS (para 6.27) states that Councils may bring forward LDP policies to provide for flexibility to accommodate unforeseen imaginative development proposals which are clearly in the public interest.</p>	

Comment (see Chapters 9)	
<p>Policy ED 1 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy ED 1 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>	

A Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland	
<p>Design</p> <p>Policy DES 2: Townscape</p> <p>Requires development proposals in towns and villages to make a positive contribution to townscape and be sensitive to the character of the area surrounding the site in terms of design, scale and use of materials.</p> <p>Policy DES 10: Landscaping</p> <p>States that a landscape scheme will normally be required for all development proposals involving new building.</p> <p>Industry and Commerce</p> <p>Policy IC 15: Roadside Service Facilities</p> <p>States that the provision of roadside service facilities on the trunk roads network in the open countryside may be considered acceptable where there is a clear indication of need and subject to any retailing being ancillary to the main petrol filling station use.</p> <p>Policy IC 16: Office Development</p> <p>Sets out policy to facilitate office development in established town centres. This policy applies to office uses falling within Use Class A2 (of the Planning (Use Classes) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015) which provide financial professional and other services which are appropriate in a shopping area where the services are provided principally to visiting members of the public.</p> <p>Its aim is to facilitate office development in established town centres in order to retain the vitality and viability of existing urban centres, and resist out of centre office development nodes.</p>	

SPPS	
<p>‘Good Design’ is a regional strategic policy within the SPPS and is also one of the Core Planning Principles identified, alongside ‘Place Making’.</p> <p>SPPS recognises the contribution that good design can have on achieving sustainable development by providing safe and attractive places to live, it also calls for roads infrastructure to be considered in relation to good design.</p> <p>‘Good Design’ is a regional strategic policy within the SPPS and is also one of the Core Planning Principles identified, alongside ‘Place Making’.</p> <p>SPPS recognises the contribution that good design can have on achieving sustainable development by providing safe and attractive places to live.</p> <p>SPPS is silent on Roadside Service Facilities. However, it is not listed as one of the specified exceptions to the general presumption against retail development in the countryside (para 6.279 refers to farm shops, craft shops etc.)</p> <p>SPPS recognises the importance of town centres and the variety of appropriate uses to be promoted within town centres, including office development.</p>	

Comment	
<p>(see Chapter 9)</p> <p>It is recommended that a general operational policy will be included in the LDP Plan Strategy promoting good design and urban design criteria developed for key strategic locations taking account of the SPPS Core Planning Principles and other relevant guidance such as Living Places and Creating Places.</p> <p>It is recommended that a general operational policy will be included in the LDP Plan Strategy promoting good design and urban design criteria developed for key strategic locations taking account of the SPPS Core Planning Principles and other relevant guidance such as Living Places, Creating Places and Building on Tradition.</p> <p>(see Chapter 6)</p> <p>It is recommended that the thrust of Policy IC 15 will be included within new Policy on Retailing to be included in the LDP Plan Strategy, subject to confirmation of the status of the policy from DfI.</p> <p>Partly superseded by PPS 4 in so far as it applies to Use Class B1 Uses.</p> <p>It is recommended that the remaining wording of Policy IC 16 in relation to Class A2 Uses (Financial, professional and other services) will be included within new Policy on Town Centres and Retailing to be included in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>	

<p>Policy IC 17: Small Office and Business Development</p> <p>Sets out policy to facilitate the development of small office and business uses in appropriate locations.</p> <p>Its aim is to facilitate the development of office and business uses in appropriate locations such as in or adjacent to existing or proposed commercial areas or neighbourhood centres subject to certain criteria.</p>
<p>Minerals</p>
<p>Policy MIN 1: Environmental Protection To assess the need for the mineral resource against the need to protect/conserv e the environment</p> <p>In seeking to achieve an appropriate balance between environmental protection and the need for mineral resources Policy MIN 1 states that decision making on a particular minerals proposal will take account of all relevant environmental, economic and other considerations.</p> <p>In regard to environmental considerations, the policy attaches particular weight to safeguarding areas which have been designated for their natural / scientific or built heritage importance. The importance of protecting boglands from commercial peat extraction is also emphasised.</p> <p>The policy states that extensions to existing mineral workings which minimise environmental disturbance in the countryside will normally be preferred to new workings on greenfield sites.</p> <p>In regard to mitigation, the policy requires applications to demonstrate measures designed to prevent the pollution of rivers, watercourse and groundwater.</p>
<p>Policy MIN 2: Visual Implications To have regard to the visual implications of mineral extraction</p> <p>Specifies that applications for new mineral workings or extensions to existing workings in sensitive landscape areas such as AONB/AOHSV will be subject to rigorous examination with particular attention being given to the landscape implications of the proposals.</p> <p>Where permission for mineral development is granted, the policy seeks to ensure that landscape quality will be protected through appropriate mitigation measures secured through planning conditions.</p>

<p>SPPS recognises the importance of town centres and the variety of appropriate uses to be promoted within town centres (and district and local centres identified by the LDP), including small office and business development.</p>	<p>Partly superseded by PPS 4 in so far as it applies to use Class B1 Uses. Guidance in PPS 4 relating to homeworking also needs to be taken into account.</p> <p>It is recommended that the remaining wording of Policy IC 17 in relation to Class A2 (Financial, professional and other services) and other town centre compatible Sui Generis uses be addressed in the LDP Plan Strategy (as it relates to town centres).</p>
	<p>(see Chapter 6)</p>
	<p>It is recommended that the wording of this policy is updated to reflect the greater detail contained in the SPPS in regard to economic considerations.</p> <p>It is also recommended that policy is amended to recognise any spatial designations (for example relating to Areas of Constraint on Minerals Development) that may be brought forward in the LDP.</p>
	<p>Policy MIN 2 is working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy MIN 2 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy and amended to reflect the more recent provisions of the SPPS.</p>

	<p>SPPS accords with Policy MIN 1 and reiterates the need to balance the requirement for mineral resources against the need to protect and conserve the environment (paragraph 6.154 and 6.162).</p> <p>The SPPS addresses the same environmental issues as Policy MIN 1 but provides more policy direction on economic considerations, thereby seeking to achieve a more rounded balance between these aspects of sustainable development as they relate to the minerals sector.</p>
	<p>SPPS reflects the general thrust of Policy MIN 2.</p> <p>Further, the SPPS adds that where a designated area such as an AONB covers expansive tracts of land, there should be consideration of the scope for some minerals development that would avoid key sites and that would not unduly compromise the integrity of the area as a whole or threaten to undermine the rationale for the designation (paragraph 6.158).</p>

<p>Policy MIN 3: Areas of Constraint To identify Areas of Constraint on Minerals Development (ACMD)</p> <p>Sets out that if for visual, conservation or other reasons, areas require to be protected from mineral developments they will be identified as an ACMD.</p> <p>Specifies that within an ACMD there will be a general presumption against granting planning permission for the extraction and/or processing of minerals. It is outlined that exceptions to this policy may be made where the proposed operations are short-term and the environmental implications are not significant. On-site processing facilities are unlikely to</p>	<p>Policy MIN 3 is working well and there is no evidence to suggest it needs substantially amended.</p> <p>In Key Issue 12 the Preferred Option is to facilitate minerals development in appropriate locations while safeguarding key landscape and environmental assets through the expansion of existing ACMDs and/or designation of new ACMDs.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy MIN 3 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy and amended to reflect the slightly more detailed approach of the SPPS.</p>
	<p>SPPS reflects the thrust of Policy MIN 3.</p>
	<p>SPPS accords with Policy MIN 4 in that there will not be a presumption against the exploitation of discovered minerals valuable to the economy and that when considering a site within a statutory policy area, due weight will be given to the reason for the statutory zoning (paragraph 6.157).</p> <p>SPPS also addresses unconventional hydrocarbon extraction which is not mentioned in PSRNI. It reflects the government position that there should be a presumption against unconventional hydrocarbon extraction until there is sufficient and robust evidence on all environmental impacts (paragraph 6.157).</p>
	<p>Policy MIN 4 is working well and there is no evidence to suggest it needs substantially amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy MIN 4 is updated to reflect the SPPS stance with respect to unconventional hydrocarbon extraction.</p>
	<p>Policy MIN 5 is working well and there is no evidence to suggest it needs substantially amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy MIN 5 is amended to set out the broad type of areas where the protection of mineral resources is likely to be appropriate.</p>
	<p>Policy MIN 6 is working well and there is no evidence to suggest it needs substantially amended.</p>

	<p>SPPS reflects the thrust of Policy MIN 4.</p> <p>SPPS adds that areas most suitable for minerals development may be identified in the LDP. Such areas will normally include mineral reserves where exploitation is likely to have the least environmental and amenity impacts, as well as offering good accessibility to the strategic transport network.</p>
	<p>SPPS reflects the thrust of Policy MIN 5.</p> <p>SPPS adds that areas most suitable for minerals development may be identified in the LDP. Such areas will normally include mineral reserves where exploitation is likely to have the least environmental and amenity impacts, as well as offering good accessibility to the strategic transport network.</p>
	<p>SPPS reflects the thrust of Policy MIN 6.</p>

<p>Policy MIN 4: Valuable Minerals Applications to exploit minerals, limited in occurrence and with some uncommon or valuable property, will be considered on their merits</p> <p>Sets out that there will not be a presumption against the exploitation of discovered minerals that are particularly valuable to the economy.</p> <p>Outlines that where a proposal lies inside a statutory policy area due weight will be given to the reason for the statutory zoning when making a decision.</p>	<p>Policy MIN 4 is working well and there is no evidence to suggest it needs substantially amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy MIN 4 is updated to reflect the SPPS stance with respect to unconventional hydrocarbon extraction.</p>
	<p>SPPS accords with Policy MIN 4 in that there will not be a presumption against the exploitation of discovered minerals valuable to the economy and that when considering a site within a statutory policy area, due weight will be given to the reason for the statutory zoning (paragraph 6.157).</p> <p>SPPS also addresses unconventional hydrocarbon extraction which is not mentioned in PSRNI. It reflects the government position that there should be a presumption against unconventional hydrocarbon extraction until there is sufficient and robust evidence on all environmental impacts (paragraph 6.157).</p>
	<p>SPPS reflects the thrust of Policy MIN 5.</p> <p>SPPS adds that areas most suitable for minerals development may be identified in the LDP. Such areas will normally include mineral reserves where exploitation is likely to have the least environmental and amenity impacts, as well as offering good accessibility to the strategic transport network.</p>
	<p>SPPS reflects the thrust of Policy MIN 6.</p>

<p>Policy MIN 5: Mineral Reserves Surface development which would effect future exploitation of valuable mineral reserves will not be permitted</p> <p>Seeks to ensure that where there are mineral reserves which are considered to be of particular value to the economy and where those reserves have been proven to be of acceptable standards, surface development which would prejudice their exploitation will not be permitted. Outlines that Mineral Policy Areas in respect of such minerals will be defined by LDPs, where appropriate.</p>	<p>Policy MIN 5 is working well and there is no evidence to suggest it needs substantially amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy MIN 5 is amended to set out the broad type of areas where the protection of mineral resources is likely to be appropriate.</p>
	<p>Policy MIN 6 is working well and there is no evidence to suggest it needs substantially amended.</p>

<p>Policy MIN 6: Safety and Amenity To have particular regard to the safety and amenity of the occupants of development in close proximity to mineral workings</p>	<p>Policy MIN 6 is working well and there is no evidence to suggest it needs substantially amended.</p>
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<p>Sets out the planning considerations that will be taken into account in seeking to safeguard the safety and amenity of people living or working in close proximity to mineral workings. These considerations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintaining safe separation distance from existing buildings, particularly where mineral operations involve blasting;• Maintaining satisfactory standards of amenity;• Preventing minerals development likely to prejudice public safety through potential for rendering surface land unstable, and conversely, to manage development in proximity to existing minerals operations in the interests of public safety.
<p>Policy MIN 7: Traffic To take account of the safety and convenience of road users and the amenity of persons living on roads close to the site of proposed operations</p> <p>Sets out that where there would be prejudice to the safety and convenience of road users arising from access to a minerals site or the deficiency of the public road network, then planning permission will normally be refused, unless these matters can be addressed.</p>
<p>Policy MIN 8: Restoration To require mineral workings to be restored at the earliest opportunity</p> <p>Ensures that applications for the extraction of minerals must include satisfactory restoration proposals and where practicable such proposals should provide for the progressive restoration of sites.</p>
<p>Tourism</p>
<p>Policy TOU 5: Advance Direction Signs</p> <p>Sets out that signs directing visitors to tourist attractions will generally be permitted, subject to amenity and safety criteria. Advises that further guidance is available from Roads Service.</p>

<p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy MIN 6 is updated to reflect the SPPS presumption to refuse planning permission unless the developer can demonstrate how the effects of mineral proposals can be mitigated against.</p> <p>It is also recommended that policy is amended to recognise any spatial designations (for example relating to Areas of Potential Subsidence, Key Issue 13) that may be brought forward in the LDP.</p>
<p>Policy MIN 7 is working well and there is no evidence to suggest it needs substantially amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy MIN 7 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>
<p>Policy MIN 8 is working well and there is no evidence to suggest it needs substantially amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy MIN 8 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy and updated to reflect the SPPS.</p>
<p>(see Chapter 6)</p>
<p>It is recommended that this policy is removed as such signs are regulated by Transport NI (formerly Roads Service).</p>

<p>SPPS reflects the thrust of Policy MIN 7.</p>
<p>SPPS reflects the thrust of Policy MIN 8 and it accords with Policy MIN 8 where it states that applications for the extraction of minerals must include satisfactory restoration proposals (paragraph 6.161).</p> <p>The SPPS provides greater detail as to the type of information to accompany planning applications so as to ensure satisfactory restoration of sites subsequent to the completion of operations.</p>
<p>SPPS is silent on advance direction signs.</p>

<p>Public Services and Utilities</p>
<p>Policy PSU 1: Community Needs</p> <p>Requires development plans to allocate sufficient land to meet the anticipated needs of the community in terms of health, education and other public facilities. Emphasis on best possible use of existing sites.</p>
<p>Policy PSU 3: Transport Facilities</p> <p>This policy relates to proposals necessary for the improvement of strategic transportation facilities such as regional ports and airports.</p> <p>It states that development plans will zone adequate land for the known requirements of such a facility, and adds that development proposals adjacent to such facilities which would seriously jeopardise their future expansion should not be permitted.</p>
<p>Policy PSU 8: New Infrastructure</p> <p>This policy relates to the need for new infrastructure including major extensions to existing facilities, roads, sewerage treatment works, water sources or electricity generators.</p> <p>It includes criteria for consideration in determining such applications.</p>
<p>Policy PSU 10: Development at Risk</p> <p>This policy states that development will not normally be permitted in areas known to be at serious risk from flooding, coastal erosion or land instability.</p>

<p>(see Chapter 7 & 8)</p>
<p>Feedback from consultees involved with health, education and community facilities provision indicated that strategic policy in the LDP Plan Strategy should allow identification and safeguarding of specific locations for health, education and community facilities where there is a firm proposal e.g. Planning permission will not be granted for alternative uses on lands identified for the provision of education, health, community use or cultural facilities.</p> <p>In addition, there was general consensus from consultees that the LDP Plan Strategy should set out criteria based policy to apply generally across the Borough which supports the delivery of new health, education and community facilities, in locations that encourage active travel and sustainable development and the extension of such facilities.</p> <p>It is recommended that Council bring the policy approach discussed above, in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>
<p>Superseded by 'Control of Development in Airport Public Safety Zones' (insofar as it relates to Public Safety Zones).</p> <p>In relation to the remaining aspect of 'Ports', it is recommended Policy PSU 3 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy or a new bespoke policy for Larne Port brought forward to replace Policy PSU 3. This also needs to take into consideration any update to Policy CO 2 – Developed Coast.</p>
<p>Partly superseded by PPS 11 (insofar as it applies to applications for WWTW).</p> <p>For the remaining aspects of the policy, it is recommended that a new bespoke policy is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy to replace Policy PSU 8. In a Mid and East Antrim context, this also needs to take into consideration any update to Policy CO 2 – Developed Coast.</p>
<p>Superseded by PPS 15 insofar as it relates to flooding.</p> <p>Policy PSU 10 seems to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be amended.</p>

<p>SPPS does not directly deal with this topic however the following Core Planning Principles in the document are relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide safe, secure, accessible age-friendly environments;• Encourage and support quality, environmentally sustainable design;• Better connect communities with safe pedestrian movements;• Integrate land-use planning and transport.
<p>SPPS (para 6.247) accords with Policy PSU 3.</p> <p>It also adds that 'the developed coast' includes existing major developments such as ports.</p>
<p>SPPS generally accords with the thrust of Policy PSU 8 but the detailed criteria is not referred to.</p> <p>It states that the developed coast includes existing major developments such as ports, isolated industrial units and power stations.</p>
<p>SPPS (para 6.42, 6.46) accords with Policy PSU 10 in regard to a presumption against development in major at risk areas. However, SPPS explicitly states that development will not be permitted in areas of the coast known to be at risk from flooding, coastal erosion, or land instability.</p>

<p>Under this policy new development in coastal areas will not normally be permitted where expensive engineering works would be required to either protect development on land subject to coastal erosion, or defend land at risk from coastal flooding.</p> <p>Under this policy, development proposals will be determined with account being taken of known hazards of land instability which would affect the development of the site or would as a result of development pose a potential threat to neighbouring areas. In certain circumstances specialist assessments may be required to determine the stability of the ground and identify any remedial measures required to deal with any instability. The policy also outlines the circumstances when planning permission will normally be refused in regard to issues around land instability.</p>	<p>Policy PSU 11: Overhead Cables</p> <p>Sets out criteria for the siting of electricity power lines and other overhead cables in terms of visual impact on the environment with particular reference being given to designated areas of landscape and townscape character.</p>
<p>The Coast</p>	
<p>Policy CO 1: The Undeveloped Coast</p> <p>Policy CO 1 states that development proposals may only be permitted on the undeveloped coast in the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• where the proposed development is of such national or regional importance as to outweigh any potential detrimental impact to the coastal environment; and• where no feasible alternative site within an existing urban area exists. <p>Within the undeveloped coastal zone, the policy aims to minimise the visual and physical impact of development, maintain high design standards, and keep important public views of the coast free from development.</p>	
<p>In assessing development proposals which involve coastal protection schemes, particularly on the undeveloped coast, account will be taken of the visual and physical impact of such schemes.</p> <p>The policy will not normally permit development in major risk areas. New development will generally not be acceptable where it would require the provision of expensive engineering works to protect the development from erosion or coastal flooding.</p>	
<p>Policy CO 2: The Developed Coast</p> <p>This policy states that the Developed Coast includes urban areas and other major developments such as ports, isolated industrial units and power stations.</p> <p>This policy seeks to encourage and support development proposals for the enhancement and regeneration of urban waterfronts.</p> <p>This policy lists a set of criteria applicable to coastal development proposals within existing urban areas. The listed criteria seek attractive landscaping, the retention and enhancement of public access to the coast, protection of open space, preservation and conservation of natural and built heritage assets, protection and enhancement of views of the sea, and encourages uses which help promote a vibrant and attractive urban waterfront.</p>	
<p>Policy CO 3: Areas of Amenity or Conservation Value on the Coast</p> <p>This policy seeks to protect from development, the parts of the coast, within urban areas, which are important in terms of their amenity or nature conservation.</p> <p>Under this policy there will be a presumption against inappropriate development on green areas and open space along the coast within existing urban areas. Appropriate development would be considered to be small scale tourist or recreational development in association with existing open space uses.</p> <p>This policy encourages the enlargement and enhancement of existing amenity open space along the coastline within existing settlements, and promotes the introduction of new amenity areas or habitats in waterfront redevelopment schemes.</p>	

<p>SPPS does not explicitly state that new development in coastal areas will not normally be permitted where expensive engineering works would be required in coastal locations.</p> <p>In relation to land instability, the SPPS does not explicitly address specialist assessments or circumstances where planning permission will be refused.</p> <p>SPPS (6.46) reinforces Policy PSU 10 by stating that LDPs should identify areas of the coast known to be at risk from flooding, coastal erosion, or land instability where new development should not be permitted.</p>	<p>SPPS accords with Policy PSU 11 but adds (para 6.250) that any proposal for the development of new power lines should comply with the 1998 International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP).</p> <p>SPPS also adds that such proposals will be considered having regard to potential impact on amenity and should avoid areas of landscape sensitivity, including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs).</p>
<p>The undeveloped coast policy contained within the SPPS accords with Policy CO 1. Further, SPPS emphasises that LDPs and future adopted Marine Plans should be complementary, particularly with regard to the inter-tidal area.</p>	
<p>The developed coast policy contained within the SPPS accords with Policy CO 2.</p> <p>Further, SPPS states that development along the developed coast is subject to all other relevant planning policies and emphasises that LDPs and future adopted Marine Plans should be complementary, particularly with regard to the inter-tidal area.</p>	<p>SPPS (para 6.39) accords with Policy CO 3.</p> <p>However, the SPPS does not explicitly encourage the enlargement and enhancement of existing amenity open space along the coast within settlements, neither does it explicitly encourage the introduction of new amenity areas or habitats in waterfront redevelopment schemes.</p>

<p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy PSU 10 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy subject to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exclusion of flood risk as this is dealt with in revised PPS 15;• Further consultation with Department of Infrastructure in regard to alignment with SPPS;• Further information that may enable the LDP to spatially identify areas at risk (e.g. from coastal erosion) and to bring forward associated policy to align with SPPS.	<p>Policy PSU 11 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs to be substantially amended other than to reflect the updated wording of the SPPS.</p> <p>It is recommended that updated wording to Policy PSU 11 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy to reflect the SPPS wording which includes 'ICNIRP' as a requirement, and to avoid areas of landscape sensitivity. This policy may be combined with any new bespoke policy on 'new infrastructure' (as referred to above) to include broadband infrastructure, telecommunications masts and power lines.</p>
<p>(see Chapter 10)</p>	
<p>Bespoke policies tailored to different stretches of the undeveloped coast are an important policy tool to preserve and enhance distinctive heritage assets and landscape quality.</p> <p>It is recommended that the undeveloped coast is defined within the LDP and appropriate policies brought forward in the Plan Strategy taking account of the SPPS. It is also recommended that the Council bring forward bespoke policies that recognise any spatial designations that may be introduced through the LDP.</p>	
	<p>Bespoke policy tailored to different stretches of the coastline are an important policy tool to preserve and enhance distinctive heritage assets and landscape quality along the coast, and within developed sections, to promote the enhancement and regeneration of urban waterfronts.</p> <p>It is recommended that policy is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy to take account of the SPPS (Coastal Development) policy in regard to development within the developed coast. It is also recommended that the Council bring forward bespoke policies that recognise any spatial designations that may be introduced through the LDP.</p>
	<p>Superseded by PPS 16 Tourism insofar as it relates to tourism development or the protection of tourism assets from inappropriate development.</p> <p>Superseded by PPS 2 where the policy refers to Policy CON 1 and CON 2 of the PSRNI which relate to the protection of nature conservation interests.</p> <p>Superseded by PPS 6 where the policy refers to Policy CON 5 of the PSRNI which relates to the protection of historical and archaeological maritime heritage.</p> <p>Although not formally superseded by PPS 8 where Policy CO 3 relates to areas of public open space, the provisions of PPS 8 would be afforded significant weight in considering development proposals with implications for public open space.</p>

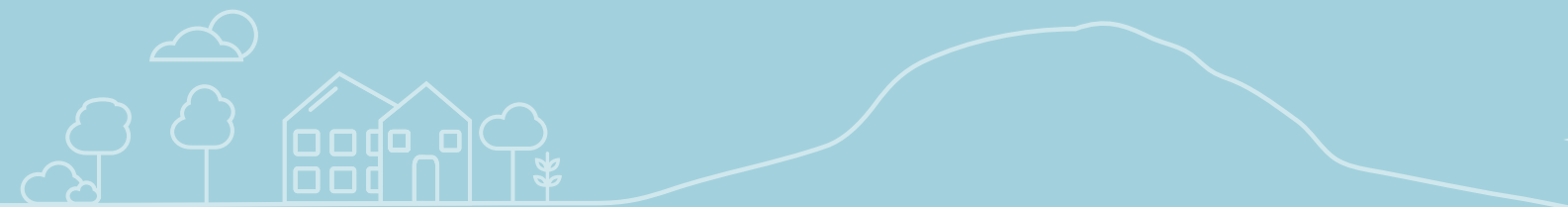
<p>Policy CO 3: Areas of Amenity or Conservation Value on the Coast (cont'd.)</p>	
<p>Policy CO 4: Access to the Coastline</p> <p>This policy seeks to encourage schemes which provide or extend public access to the coastline.</p> <p>This policy states that development which would result in the closure of existing access points will normally only be acceptable where a feasible alternative is provided. Under this policy development proposals to provide or extend access to the coastline will normally be permitted provided that natural and built heritage conservation interests, landscape quality and amenity of the local area are safeguarded.</p>	

	<p>SPPS (para 6.41) accords with Policy CO 4, however does not refer to safeguarding the amenity of the local area.</p>
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<p>Taking all of the above considerations into account, it is recommended that Policy CO 3 is not brought forward in the LDP.</p>	<p>Policy CO 4 appears to be working well and there is no evidence to suggest that it needs amended.</p> <p>It is recommended that the wording of Policy CO 4 is brought forward in the LDP Plan Strategy.</p>
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Abbreviations & Glossary



Term / Abbreviation	Definition
Active travel	An approach to travel and transport by physically active, human powered modes, as opposed to motorised ones (e.g. walking and cycling).
Affordable Housing	Comprises the social rented sector, housing benefit funded private rented and that part of the low cost owner occupation market which can be purchased utilising 30% or less of gross household income.
Area of Archaeological Potential (AAP)	Area of Archaeological Potential comprise those areas, usually within historic settlements, which may require mitigating measures (including excavation) in order to safeguard remains when sites are being developed.
Area of High Scenic Value (AOHSV)	Areas of High Scenic Value are designated by some Development Plans in recognition of their special landscape quality.
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	Area of countryside which has been designated for conservation reasons due to its significant landscape value.
Area of Parking Restraint	Areas of Parking Restraint allow for a reduction from the Department’s published car parking standards being applied within designated areas outside of the town centre, such as around train and bus stations. Currently new development within town centres can avail of a reduction from the Departments published car parking standards that apply elsewhere in the urban area.
Area of Significant Archaeological Interest (ASAI)	Areas designated in order to protect not just the individual sites and monuments but the overall landscape setting within which they are located.
Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI)	Designated on the basis of their national importance to nature conservation and scientific interest.
Area of Townscape Character (ATC)	Areas of Townscape Character exhibit distinct character and intrinsic qualities, often based on the historic built form or layout in many of our cities, towns and villages. These are designated by some Development Plans.
Areas of Constraint on Minerals Development	Areas of Constraint on Minerals Development protect the most valuable features of the natural environment and man-made heritage including areas of high scenic value from the adverse effects caused by the development of mineral resources. These are designated by some Development Plans.
Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP)	Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan is a development plan prepared by the former Department of the Environment (DOE). The Plan covers the legacy council areas of Belfast, Lisburn, Carrickfergus, Castlereagh, Newtownabbey and North Down.
Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area (BMUA)	The BMUA is defined as the continuous built up area centred on Belfast with an arc from Jordanstown to Knocknagoney and includes the city of Lisburn and towns of Bangor, Carrickfergus and Holywood.
Blue Infrastructure	Blue infrastructure comprises all inland watercourses and waterbodies and includes ponds, streams, rivers and lakes.

Bring Centres	Collection points throughout the Borough for the disposal of glass, cans, textiles, paper and small electrical goods. A list of where these are located through MEA can be found on the council website (www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/resident/waste-recycling/household-recycling-centres/bring-centres)
Brownfield Sites	Brownfield sites are sites within a settlement limit which are or were occupied by a permanent structure. These for example may include underused buildings or vacant buildings. May also be referred to as 'Previously Developed Land'.
Built Heritage	This relates to manmade features of the historic environment and can include archaeological sites and monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas, historic parks, gardens and demesnes and industrial heritage.
Causeway Coastal Route	Rated and marketed as one of the Top Five Road Trips. Starting in Belfast and follows the coast road through the nine Glens of Antrim, winding between picturesque villages and scenic locations. A large part of the Causeway Coastal Route runs through Mid and East Antrim.
Class B1: Business Use	Use – (a) As an office other than a use within Class A2 (Financial, Professional and other services); (b) As a call centre; or (c) For research and development which can be carried out without detriment to amenity by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust or grit.
Clusters	Defined in the RDS as; Cities and towns which can work together to create a critical mass to attract economic development and deliver services.
Community Cohesion	Community cohesion refers to the sense of togetherness and bonding exhibited by a community, which helps to hold that community together. It may include feelings of belonging together, shared purpose or identity, or a sense of place.
Community Infrastructure	The community, health, leisure, educational facilities and other services that serve and help to sustain a community.
Comparison Goods	Goods for sale in retail outlets not classified as convenience goods.
Comparison Shopping	Comparison shopping refers to shops selling comparison goods, but excludes retail warehouses.
Compatible Economic Uses	Businesses falling outside Part B 'Industrial and Business Uses' which would not usually impact adversely on industrial enterprise. Such uses could include the sale or display of motor vehicles; scrapyards; or a yard for the storage or distribution of minerals; or the breaking of motor vehicles.
Conservation Area	Conservation Areas are areas of special architectural or historic interest that have been designated by the Department under Article 50 of the Planning (NI) Order 1991.
Convenience Goods	Broadly defined as food, drinks, tobacco, newspapers, magazines, cleaning materials, toilet articles.

Countryside Policy Area	Countryside Policy Areas were designated in a number of Area Plans in areas of the countryside under significant development pressure and where it is thought that further development would impact adversely upon the landscape character of the area. Some have been changed in title to special countryside areas under PPS 21.
Density	Measure of the number of dwellings per hectare.
Development Contribution (Section 76)	A contribution, either financial or in kind, which allows the provision of infrastructure that is necessary for a development to go ahead. Usually tied in with a planning agreement with the developer/landowner and the planning authority.
District Centre	Groups of shops, separate from the town centre, usually containing at least one food supermarket or superstore and non-retail service such as banks, building societies and restaurants.
Electronic Commerce	Electronic Commerce is the buying and selling of goods and services, or the transmitting of funds or data, over an electronic network, primarily the internet.
Employment Land Evaluation Framework (ELEF)	The Employment Land Evaluation Framework is a methodology set out in the RDS for identifying economic development sites to meet anticipated future requirements.
Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future (ESTF)	Sets out the Department's 3 high level aims for transportation along with 12 supporting strategic objectives, covering the economy, society and the environment. It shows how strategic transportation intervention can be assessed against these to allow informed decisions to be made on future transportation investment.
Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)	An Equality Impact Assessment examines the likely effects of policies and proposals on the promotion of equality of opportunity between different groups in society and on promoting good relations.
Fields in Trust (FiT) standard	Fields in Trust (FiT) standard recommends of a minimum of 2.4 hectares of outdoor playing space per 1000 population. This is commonly referred to as the 'Six Acre Standard', comprising of 4 acres (1.6 hectares per 1000 population) for outdoor sport provision and 2 acres (0.8 hectares per 1000 population) for children's play. The 4 acres for outdoor sport is further refined to 3 acres for pitch sports and 1 acre to be provided through other outdoor recreational facilities such as tennis courts, bowling greens, athletic tracks etc. Fields in Trust (FiT) developed the 'Six Acre Standard' in order to promote the protection and future development of 'green' and 'open' space throughout the United Kingdom. FiT have not attempted to put a value on synthetic pitches in comparison to natural turf pitches. Sport NI consider the value of a synthetic pitch to be 6 times that of a natural turf surface.
Fluvial Flooding	Flooding from a river or other watercourse.
Footfall	Footfall is the number of people entering a shop or a shopping area at a given time.
Gateways	Defined in the RDS as strategically important transport interchange points which connect ports and airports to the internal transport network.
Green Belt	A Green Belt is a policy designation often used in land use planning in Northern Ireland to protect areas surrounding large settlement from excessive development.

Green Corridor	A strip of land that provides sufficient habitat to support wildlife, often within an urban environment, thus allowing the movement of wildlife along it. Can act as a vital linkage for wildlife movement between urban areas and the countryside. Green corridors include railway embankments, river banks and roadside grass verges. Green corridors can also incorporate paths and cycle routes, which can link housing areas to the town centre, places of employment and community facilities. They help to promote environmentally sustainable forms of transport such as walking and cycling within urban areas.
Green Infrastructure	Green infrastructure include parks, sport pitches, green spaces and wooded areas.
Greenfield	Undeveloped or green space.
Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	Section 102 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) requires a Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) to be undertaken during the preparation of a LDP, if necessary. This will evaluate the impact of the Plan on sites designated and protected for their international importance for nature conservation.
Historic Parks Garden and Demesnes of Special Interest	Designation by central government is based upon a clear set of criteria and around 154 sites have been listed. As our appreciation and knowledge of our landscapes improves further sites may well be added.
Housing Association	A housing association is a society, body of trustees or company that provides rented accommodation and may specialise in accommodation for special needs groups. Housing Associations are the main developers of new social housing for rent in Northern Ireland.
Housing Growth Indicators (HGIs)	The RDS identifies regional housing needs from 2012 to 2025 as Housing Growth Indicators across Northern Ireland. These are uses as a guide for estimating future housing need in each of the Council areas.
Housing Monitor	The main purpose of a Housing Monitor is primarily to inform local development plan preparation by assessing the extent of housing land available within settlements and the estimated number of units that this could accommodate. It will also help the Council to identify settlements where there is a potential shortfall in land supply and serve to inform house builders on the availability of land that may be suitable for housing.
Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)	Housing Needs Assessment is an assessment by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive of local housing needs primarily in relation to general needs social housing, supported housing, travellers and affordable housing.
Hubs	The RDS spatial framework guidance defines most towns in Northern Ireland as either main hubs or local hubs.
Independent Examination (IE)	The Department will appoint the Planning Appeals Commission or other independent examiners to hold an Independent Examination. The IE will examine the Draft Plan Strategy and Draft Local Policies Plan against soundness tests which will relate to how the documents have been produced, and how they have taken account of central government's plans, policy and guidance, and also their coherence, consistency and effectiveness.
Infrastructure	The basic services and facilities needed for society to function. Sometimes grouped under 'hard' infrastructure (roads, energy supply, and water) and 'soft' infrastructure (schools, libraries and community centres etc.)

Integrated Economic Development Strategy (IEDS)	When published it will be Mid and East Antrim Councils ‘route map’ on how our local economy should be managed up to 2030.
Interim Report – Sustainability Appraisal	<p>The interim Report is part 2 of the first stage (Stage A) of the SA process. Stage A (2) requires the preparation of the environmental report which involves;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Identifying, describing and evaluating the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan;Reasonable alternatives taking into account the geographic scope of the plan and reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with; andDescription of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties encountered in compiling the required information.
International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP)	The 1998 International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection.
Inward Investment	Investment in a country made by investors outside that country.
Key Transport Corridor	Part of the Regional Strategic Transport Network as defined in the RDS. There are 5 Key Transport Corridors throughout Northern Ireland.
Land Instability	Land instability may result from landslides, subsidence or ground heave. Areas prone to land instability could cause harm to human health, property, infrastructure, and the wider environment.
Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)	Landscape Character Assessments are a tool in identifying the landscape features that give a locality its ‘sense of place’. The LCA grew out of the European Landscape Convention. The Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment 2000 (NILCA) identified 130 district LCA’s as fragile landscapes at risk of development pressures. Northern Ireland Regional Landscape Character Assessment provides a strategic overview of the landscape of Northern Ireland and subdivides the countryside into 26 Regional Landscape Character Areas based upon information on people and place and the combinations of nature, culture and perception which make each part of Northern Ireland unique.
LED COM	Local Economic Development Company Ltd.
Lifetime homes	A set of 16 criteria that provide a model for building accessible and adaptable homes to meet the needs of the occupier over their lifetime.
Listed Building	Listed Buildings are a key element of our built heritage and are often important for their intrinsic value and for their contribution to the character and quality of settlements and the countryside. Lists are subject to ongoing review.
Local Centre	Small grouping of shops, typically comprising a general grocery store, a sub-post office, occasionally a pharmacy and other small shops of a local nature.
Local Development Plan (LDP)	The Local Development Plan provides a broad land use policy framework for the physical development of the District. When adopted, the Mid and East Antrim Local Development Plan will become the statutory land use planning document for the area and will be the planning consideration in decisions making on planning applications.

Local Landscape Policy Areas (LLPAs)	Local Landscape Policy Areas consist of those features and areas within and adjoining settlements considered to be of greatest amenity value, landscape quality or local significance and therefore worthy of protection from undesirable or damaging development. These are designated through LDPs.
Local Lists	Non-Designated heritage assets – buildings and monuments, identified by local planning authorities as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated.
Local Nature Reserves	Local Nature Reserves are areas of land, designated by a council under Article 22 of the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Northern Ireland) Order 1985, to conserve its nature conservation, earth science and recreational value, with the primary land use being for conservation purposes.
Local Policies Plan (LPP)	The Local Policies Plan will be prepared by Council once the Plan Strategy is adopted. It will define settlement limits, land use zonings, local environmental designations, and introduce bespoke local policies as appropriate to individual places.
Local Transport Plan	A plan containing the specific transport schemes and services to be provided consistent with the LTS and the proposals contained in the LDP Local Policies Plan.
Local Transport Strategy	A statement of the transport aims and objectives for the Council area and the balance of transport measures to be provided.
Micro Business	A business that operates on a very small scale, usually a maximum of 10 employees.
Mixed Use Development	Mixed use development contains several different land uses on a site. This could include residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, or economic development or other uses.
Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)	Multi-Use Games Area.
Natura 2000	Natura 2000 is a network of nature protection areas within the EU. It is made up of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated respectively under the Habitats Directive and Birds Directive. The network includes both terrestrial and marine sites.
Non-Strategic Road Scheme	Road schemes which are protected in Development Plans, but are not classified by DFI under their strategic programme of works.
Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)	The Northern Ireland Housing Executive, was established in 1971 as Northern Ireland’s strategic housing authority. It offers a range of services to people living in socially rented, privately rented and owner occupied accommodation as well as supporting and working with a number of other public bodies, and with registered Housing Associations to facilitate the delivery of social housing in areas of identified need.
Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment 2000 (NILCA)	The Northern Ireland Landscape Character Assessment subdivided the countryside into 130 Landscape Character Areas (LCA’s), each based upon local patterns of geology, landform, land use, cultural and ecological features. For each LCA, the key characteristics were described and an analysis of landscape condition and its sensitivity to change was made.

Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM)	The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2010 is the official measure of spatial deprivation in Northern Ireland.
Open Space	Open Space as defined in PPS 8 is taken to mean all open space of public value, including not just land, but also inland bodies of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and outdoor recreation and can also be important for visual amenity.
Passive Solar Design	Passive solar design in buildings is intended to collect, store, and distribute solar energy in the form of heat in the winter and reject solar heat in the summer. This means less reliance on fossil fuels and hence lower carbon emissions which can help to mitigate against climate change.
Plan Strategy	The Plan Strategy sets out the strategic aims, objectives and policies of the Local Development Plan. It provides the strategic framework for the formulation of the Local
Planning Appeals Commission (PAC)	Planning Appeals Commission - an independent body which deals with a wide range of land use planning issues and related matters. It may be appointed to conduct the independent examination of LDPs.
Planning Policy Statement (PPS)	Planning Policy Statement - sets out the operational planning policies of central government on particular aspects of land-use planning and apply to the whole of Northern Ireland. Their contents will be taken into account in preparing development plans and are also material to decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.
Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland (PSRNI)	The Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland sets out planning policy for Northern Ireland across a range of topics. Most of the topics within the Strategy have been superseded by the various PPS’s or SPPS.
Pluvial Flooding	Usually associated with convective summer thunderstorms or high intensity rainfall cells within longer duration events, pluvial flooding is a result of rainfall-generated overland flows which arise before run-off enters any watercourse or sewer. The intensity of rainfall can be such that the run-off totally overwhelms surface water and underground drainage.
Preferred Option Paper (POP)	The Preferred Option Paper is a consultation document, intended to promote focused debate on strategic issues that will need to be addressed when preparing the draft Plan Strategy.
Primary Retail Core (PRC)	Primary Retail Core – Areas within town centres where the aim is to protect existing retail use and to promote retail growth.
Programme for Government (PFG)	The Programme for Government is the highest level strategic document of the Executive – setting out the priorities that it will pursue in the current Assembly mandate, and the most significant actions it will take to address them.
Ramsar	A Ramsar Site is a wetland site designated of international importance under the Ramsar Convention of 1971 (in force since 1975).
Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS, 2035)	The Regional Development Strategy 2035 is the spatial strategy of the NI Executive. Its purpose is to deliver the spatial aspects of the Programme for Government. It complements the Sustainable Development Strategy and informs the spatial aspects of the strategies of all government departments and other bodies, including local councils.

Renewable Energy	Any naturally occurring source of energy such as solar, wind, tidal wave, biomass and hydroelectric power that is not derived from fossil or nuclear fuel.
Rural Landscape Wedges	Rural Landscape Wedges consist of buffer landscapes and open areas that can fulfil a number of purposes, but uses primarily intended to prevent neighbouring settlements from merging.
Rural Proofing	Rural Proofing is an assessment carried out to consider rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans and designing and delivering public services.
Scheduled Zone (Scheduled Monuments)	Archaeological sites and monuments are scheduled for protection under the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995 and the work of scheduling is ongoing.
Scoping Report	The Scoping Report is part of the sustainability appraisal and sets out the methodology that will be used in the SA.
Section 75 Groups	Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) requires public authorities to have due regard for the need to promote equality of opportunity between: persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation. Men and Women generally, persons with a disability and persons without. In addition, without prejudice to the above obligations, public authorities are required to have regard to the need to promote good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group.
Settlement Hierarchy	A settlement hierarchy is a way of ranking settlements based upon their size, population and other criteria and is an important consideration in allocating housing growth and land for economic development through the LDP.
Shared Environmental Services (SES)	Shared Environmental Services – Provide expert advice to councils on their legal obligations regarding their enhanced environmental responsibilities following the transfer of planning powers to local government. The primary role of the service is to carry out Habitats Regulations Assessments on planning applications and local development plans to assess their impact on European sites, mainly special areas of conservation and protection. SES also assist some councils with Sustainability Appraisals of the LDP.
Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCI)	Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance are identified in some development plans with local policies provided for their protection and/or enhancement.
Social Housing	Housing provided by registered social landlords for rent. Such housing is allocated by reference to an allocation system approved by central government.
Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)	Special Areas of Conservation are strictly protected sites of European importance, recognised for the threatened habitats and species they support.
Special Countryside Area (SCA)	Special Countryside Area - an area of countryside designated through a LDP, that provides stricter policy control to manage development in sensitive landscapes which are vulnerable to excessive development pressure.
Special Protection Area (SPA)	Special Protection Areas are strictly protected sites of European importance, designated for their rare and vulnerable birds and for regularly occurring migratory species.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)	A Statement of Community Involvement sets out how a Council proposes to engage the community and stakeholders in exercising its planning functions. The document informs everyone about how to fully participate in the planning process (including development planning, management and enforcement).
Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS)	The Strategic Planning Policy Statement is a statement of central government’s policy on important planning matters and applies across the whole of Northern Ireland.
Strategic Road Improvement (SRI)	Strategic road improvement manage the major works road programme, funding for capital schemes/programmes and monitor scheme reports and economic appraisals
Subsidence	Subsidence is the vertical downward movement caused by the loss of support of the ground beneath.
Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)	Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) supports and clarifies planning policy statements and plans. This can take the form of design guidance. It also includes a set of development control advice notes that explain the criteria and technical standards to be considered when dealing with specific categories or particular aspects of development. Where relevant to a particular development proposal supplementary guidance will be taken into account as a material consideration in making decisions.
Supported Housing	Supported Housing enables vulnerable people to live more independently both in their own home and in the community, through the provision of housing related support services.
Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report	Sustainability Appraisal Interim Report consists of SA Scoping Report and an assessment of reasonable alternatives against an agreed SA framework. It is subject to public consultation along with the POP.
Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	The purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal is to promote sustainable development through the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations into the preparation of local development plans. It incorporates the more environmentally focused considerations of Strategic Environmental Assessment and is used to assess the POP against a set of objectives and criteria, to evaluate if it is likely to have significant impacts on the environment.
Sustainable Development	Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. These needs are generally classified as social, economic and environmental.
Sustainable Development Strategy (2010)	The NI Executive launched its new Sustainable Development Strategy, ‘Everyone’s Involved’ (May, 2010). The Strategy is intended to provide a framework that can support and inform the decisions and actions taken by individuals, groups and organisations in progressing the sustainability agenda.
Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)	Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are an alternative to draining surface water through piped infrastructure which is generally regarded as more sustainable and with many associated benefits.
Sustainable Water – A long term water strategy for NI (2015-2040)	The Strategy presents a clear framework for action which will facilitate implementation of a range of initiatives aimed at delivering the long term vision to have a sustainable water sector in Northern Ireland.

Together: Building a United Community (TBUC)	The Together: Building a United Community (TBUC) Strategy (May 2013) reflects the Executives commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society.
Town Cramming	Also known as urban crowding and is linked to increased housing densities and the loss of open spaces within settlements. It can result in poor environments, noise, congestion and lack of recreational and open space.
Transport Assessment	A Transport Assessment is a comprehensive and systematic process that sets out and evaluates transport issues relating to a proposed development.
Travellers	A generic group as defined by the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997 i.e. “having a shared history, culture and traditions, including a nomadic way of life”.
Urban Capacity Study	A study undertaken as part of the LDP process to assess the potential housing capacity of previously developed land within the built up areas of larger settlements.
Urban footprint	The urban footprint of a settlement limit is the continuously built up area which has a formal urban use.
Urban Landscape Wedges	Urban Landscape Wedges are open areas that are designated to separate localities with the metropolitan Urban Area. They have a significant role in helping to define and retain the identities and character of the component parts of the urban area and preventing the merging of different communities.
Urban Regeneration	Urban Regeneration, also known as urban renewal or renaissance, is a programme directed to stimulate physical development and economic growth in urban areas that have fallen into decline. It includes a focus on significant physical, economic, community and social interventions within a designated area. The development of masterplans and other strategies within an urban area is an important part of the process in establishing a clear framework for the improvement and revitalisation of these areas.
Vacancy Rates	Vacancy Rates are the percentage of all available units in an area, that are vacant or unoccupied at a particular time. It is the opposite of the occupancy rate, which is the percentage of units in an area that are occupied.
Viability	A measure of a centre’s capacity to attract ongoing investment for maintenance, growth or changing needs.
Vitality	A measure of how busy a centre is.
Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW)	WWTWs remove waste from sewage that could harm the environment, so that the water can be returned to a river or the sea.

Wellbeing	A good or satisfactory condition of existence; a state influenced by health, happiness and prosperity. For a larger group of people, it could described as the welfare of that group.
Windfall Sites	Sites that are not zoned nor anticipated during the formulation of the development plan but which have become available during the lifetime of the plan.

Appendices

APPENDIX A: Supplementary Guidance and Existing Suite of Planning Policy Statements

The following supplementary documents support the regional policies:

Design Guides

Living Places – The Urban Stewardship and Design Guide (September 2014) aims to clearly established the key principles behind good place making. It seeks to inform and inspire all those involved in the process of managing (stewardship) and making (design) urban places, with a view to raising standards across Northern Ireland. The focus of Living Places is urban areas, by which is meant all of our cities, towns, villages and neighbourhoods. It is of equal application to small, rural settlements, as it is to large cities and metropolitan areas. The Living Places guide recognises the wider economic, cultural and community benefits of achieving excellence in the stewardship and design in these places, be they existing or proposed.

Building on Tradition – A sustainable Design Guide for the Northern Ireland Countryside (May 2012) aims to raise awareness of the importance of looking after the Northern Ireland Countryside and how to achieve a higher quality of sustainable development that will

provide a strong basis to protect and enhance our rural assets. The Building on Tradition design guide will assist decision makers to develop a consistency of approach based on an understanding of sustainable rural development.

Creating Places (May 2000) – is intended to help developers achieve high quality and greater sustainability in the design of all new residential developments in Northern Ireland. The guide is for use by all those involved in the design of new residential developments and the rejuvenation of existing housing areas – primarily house-builders, architects, landscape architects, urban designers, planners and road engineers.

Improving the Quality of Housing Layouts (May 2000) – This document provides guidance on how to improve the quality of new housing developments. It is intended that this document should stimulate those involved in the development process and give greater attention to design issues to improve the quality of the places where people will live.

Conservation Area Guides – The prime consideration in assessing whether new development proposals are acceptable within Conservation Areas is the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of these areas.

Conservation Area design guides are an important tool in assessing such proposals and these are in place for the 5 designated Conservations Areas in Mid and East Antrim.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are designated in recognition of their national importance as landscapes of distinctive character and special scenic value. The designation is intended to protect and enhance the qualities of these areas and to promote their enjoyment by the public. The Antrim Coast and Glens Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty design guide is a material consideration in the assessment of development proposals in this area.

Town Centre Design Guides – These Guides have been prepared to ensure that the character of town centres are protected and enhanced by new development. They also give advice on good and poor elements of design and incorporate advice on shop fronts and signage. Within Mid and East Antrim the following Guides have been published:

- Ballymena Town Centre Guide (April 1994)
- Larne Town Centre Design Guide (April 1994)
- Carrickfergus Town Plan Alterations – Design Supplement (June 1989)



Areas of Townscape Character (ATCs) – Exhibit distinct character and intrinsic qualities, often based on the historic built form or layout in many of our cities, towns and villages. In assessing planning applications within ATCs, the key consideration for the Council will be to ensure that development proposals respect the appearance and qualities of each townscape areas and maintain or enhance their distinctive character. Within Mid and East Antrim the following ATC Guide has been published:

- Galgorm Road & Old Galgorm Road Area of Townscape Character –Development Control Statement (November 1997)

Development Control Advice Notes

Development Control Advice Notes (DCANs) set out the criteria and technical standard to be considered when dealing with specific categories or particular aspects of development. These include:

- DCAN 1:** Amusement Centres
- DCAN 2:** Multiple Occupancy
- DCAN 3:** Bookmaking Offices
- DCAN 4:** Restaurants, Cafes and Fast Food Outlets
- DCAN 5:** Taxi Offices
- DCAN 7:** Public Houses

DCAN 8: Housing in Existing Urban Areas

DCAN 9: Residential and Nursing Homes

DCAN 10: (Revised) Environmental Impact Assessment

DCAN 11: Access for People with Disabilities

DCAN 11: Access for all – Designing for an Accessible Environment (issued for consultation)

DCAN 12: Planning Control for Hazardous Substances

DCAN 13: Crèches, Day Nurseries and Pre-School Play Groups

DCAN 14: Siting and Design of Radio Telecommunication Equipment

DCAN 15: Vehicular Access Standards

Other Supplementary Guidance

Airport Public Safety Zones (December 2007) – This policy document sets out the Departments revised policy for the control of development in Public Safety Zones (PSZs) – areas of land at the ends of the runways within which development is restricted in order to control the number of people on the ground at risk of death or injury in the event of an aircraft accident on take-off or landing.

Best Practice Guidance to Planning Policy Statement 18 ‘Renewable Energy’ (August 2009) – This document, published by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, provides broad, strategic guidance in relation to the visual and landscape impacts of wind energy development. It includes general guidance on siting and design within Northern Irelands landscapes and advice on the landscape assessment of proposed developments.

Supplementary Planning Guidance: Policy PED 8 ‘Development Incompatible with Economic Development Uses’ (March 2012) – The SPG provides clarification on Policy PED 8 and reinforces the policy messages ensuring that operations of established industrial enterprises requiring a contaminant free environment are protected, thereby retaining their valuable contribution to the economy.

Supplementary Planning Guidance: Parking Standards (February 2005) – This document sets out the parking standards that the Department will have regard to in assessing proposals for new development. It includes parking standard for residential development previously published in ‘Creating Places: Achieving Quality in Residential Developments’.

Supplementary Planning Guidance: Transport Assessment (November 2006) – The Objective of this guide is to assist in the preparation of Transport Assessments for development proposals in Northern Ireland. A Transport Assessment is a comprehensive review of all the potential transport impacts of a proposed development or re-development, with an agreed plan to mitigate any adverse consequences.

(Draft) Supplementary Planning Guidance: Anaerobic Digestion (June 2013) – This Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) document provides additional advice and guidance specific to Anaerobic Digestion (AD) to complement the background information already set out in the Best Practice Guidance to PPS 18.

Wind Energy Development in Northern Irelands Landscapes (August 2009) – provides broad, strategic guidance in relation to the visual and landscape impacts of wind energy development. The guidance is based on the sensitivity of Northern Ireland’s landscapes to wind energy development and contains an assessment of each of the 130 Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) in Northern Ireland by referencing the characteristics and values associated with each LCA.

Trees and Development: Guide to Best Practice (May 2003) – This document highlights the importance of trees and their value before taking the user through the design considerations, caring for trees during construction and the opportunities for new planning and future care. The document also provides recommendations and guidance on the principles to be applied to achieve a satisfactory combination of trees; including shrubs, hedges and hedgerows with structures.

Existing Suite of Planning Policy Statements

PPS 2: Natural Heritage (2013)

PPS 3: Access, Movement and Parking (2005)

PPS 3 (Clarification): Access, Movement and Parking (2006)

PPS 4: Planning and Economic Development (2010)

PPS 4: Clarification of PED 7 (2011)

PPS 6: Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage (1999)

PPS 6 (Addendum): Areas of Townscape Character (2005)

PPS 7: Quality Residential Environments (2001)

PPS 7 (Addendum): Residential Extensions and Alterations (2008)

PPS 7 (Addendum): Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas(Addendum): Safeguarding the Character of Established Residential Areas (2010)

PPS 8: Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation (2004)

PPS 10: Telecommunications (2002)

PPS 11: Planning and Waste Management (2002)

PPS 12: Housing in Settlements (2005)

PPS 12: Policy HS 3 (Amended) ‘Travellers Accommodation’ (2013)

PPS 13: Transportation and Land Use (2005)

PPS 15: Revised: Planning and Flood Risk (2014)

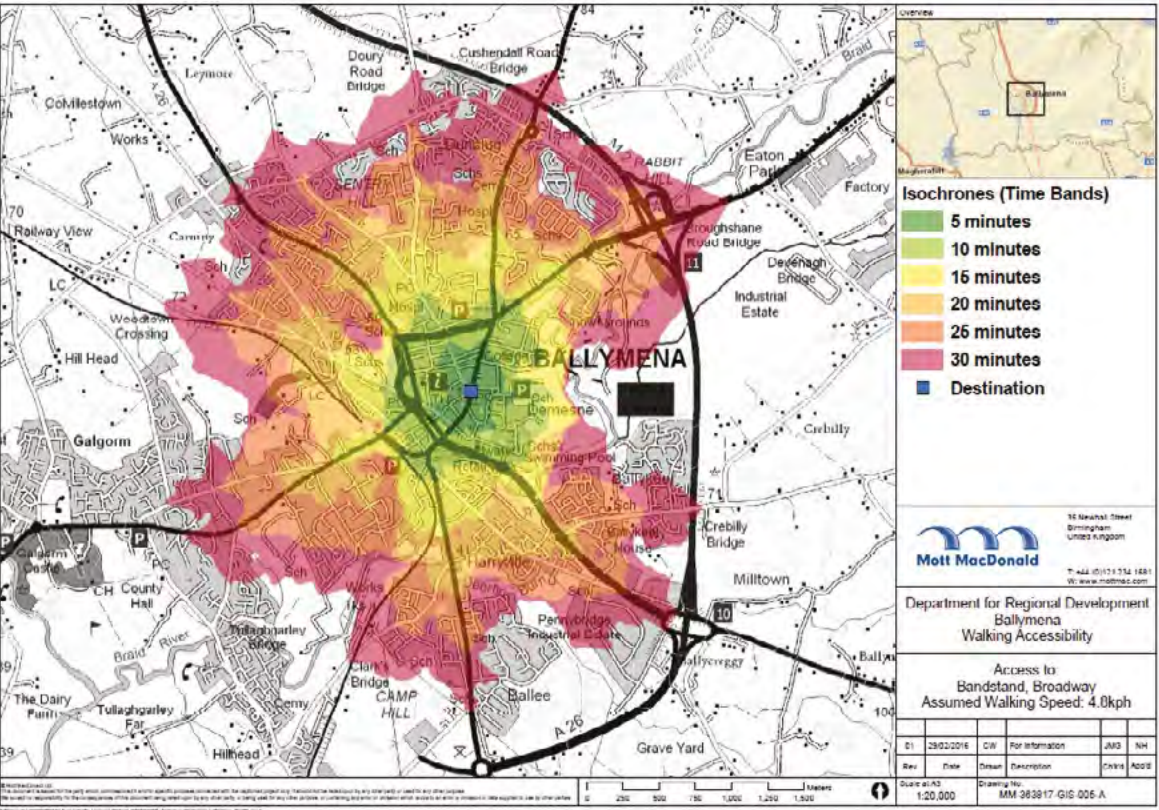
PPS 16: Tourism (2013)

PPS 17: Control of Outdoor Advertisements (2006)

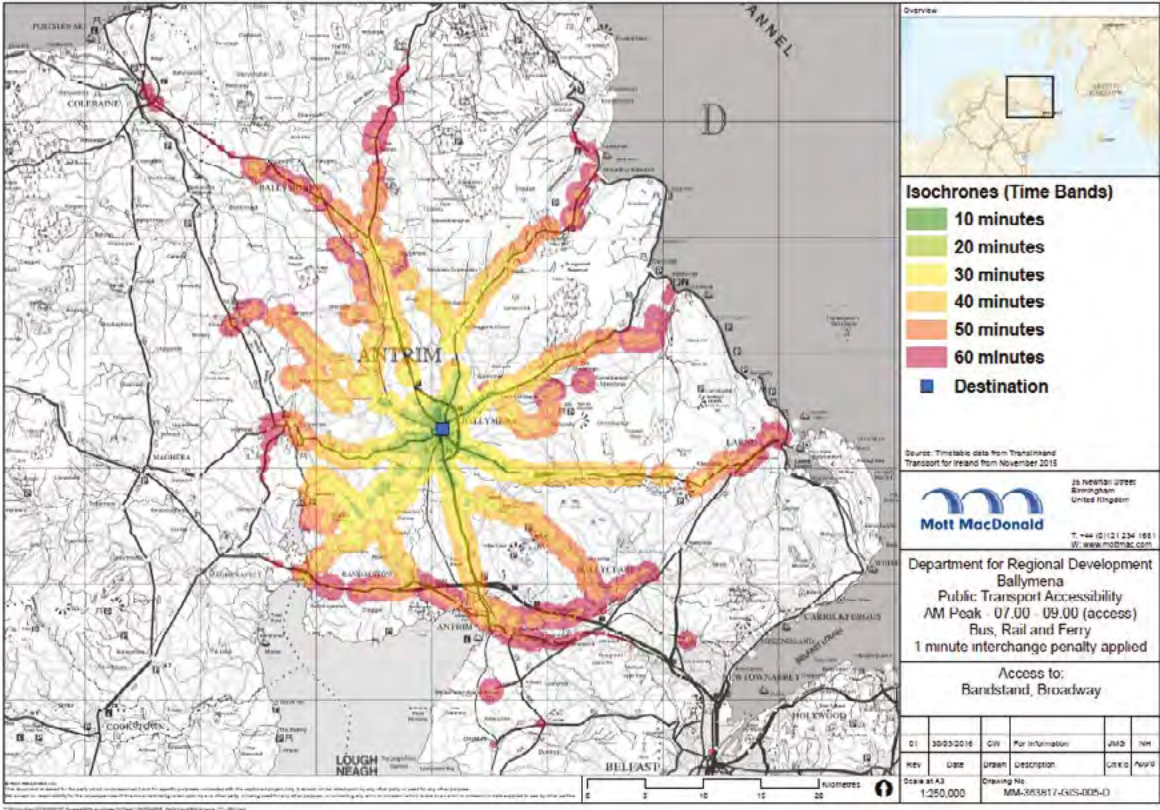
PPS 18: Renewable Energy (2009)

PPS 21: Sustainable Development in the Countryside (2010)

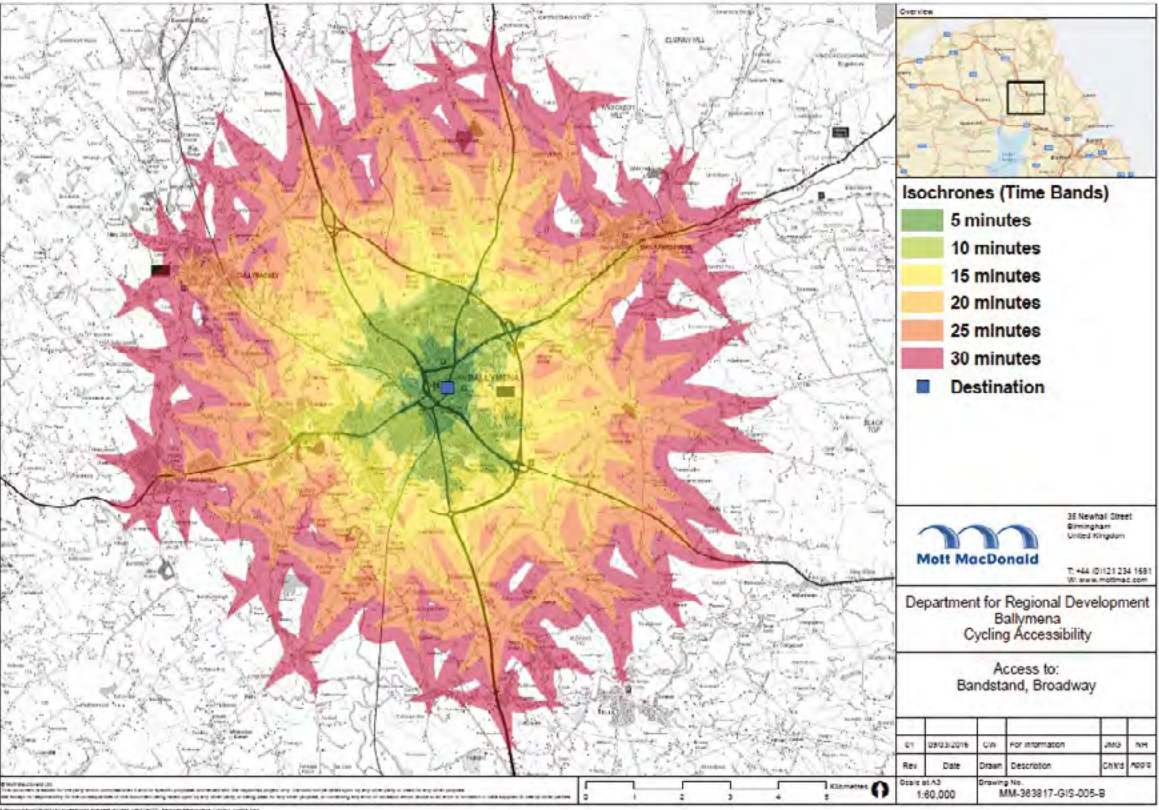
PPS 23: Enabling Development (2014)



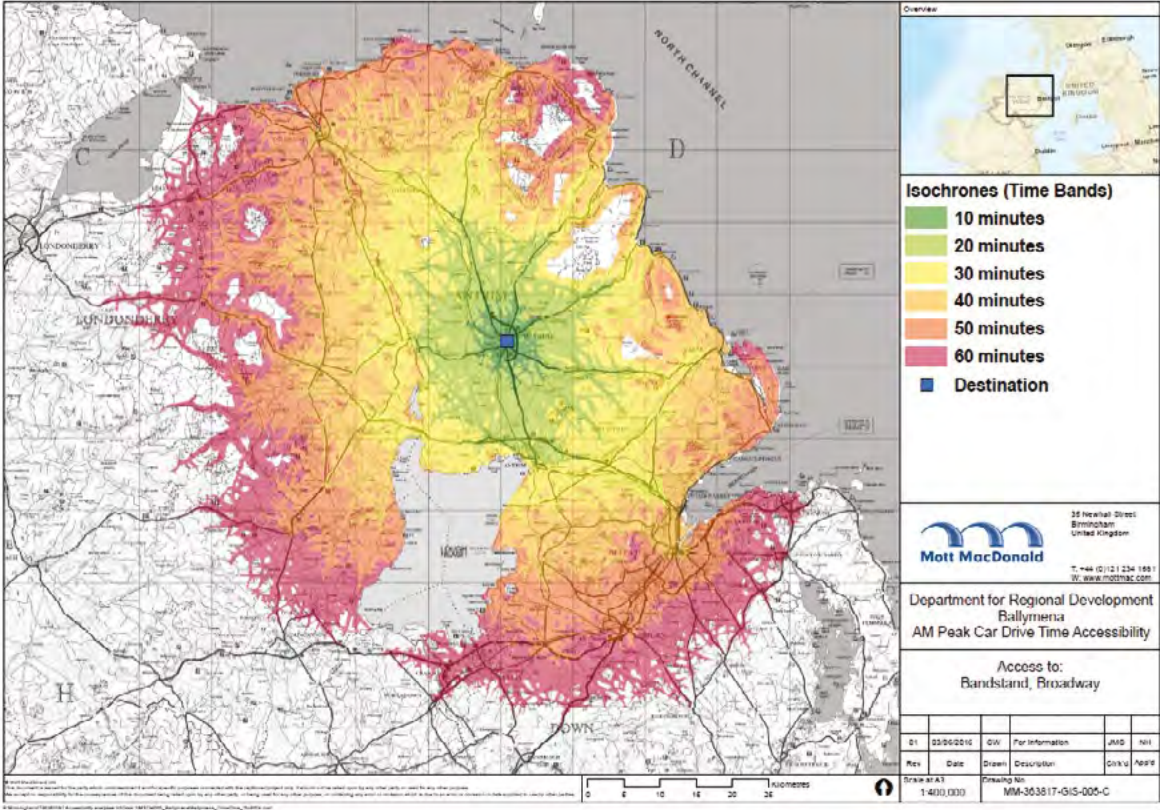
Ballymena Walking



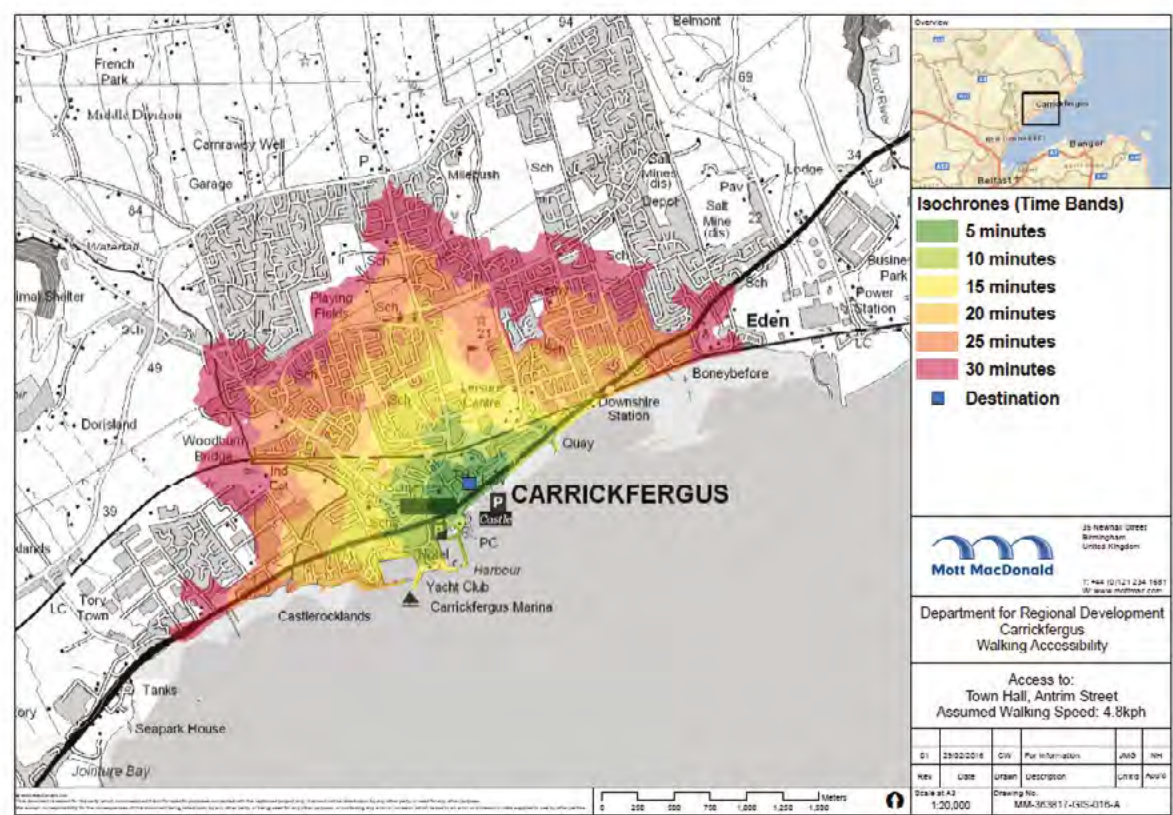
Ballymena Public Transport



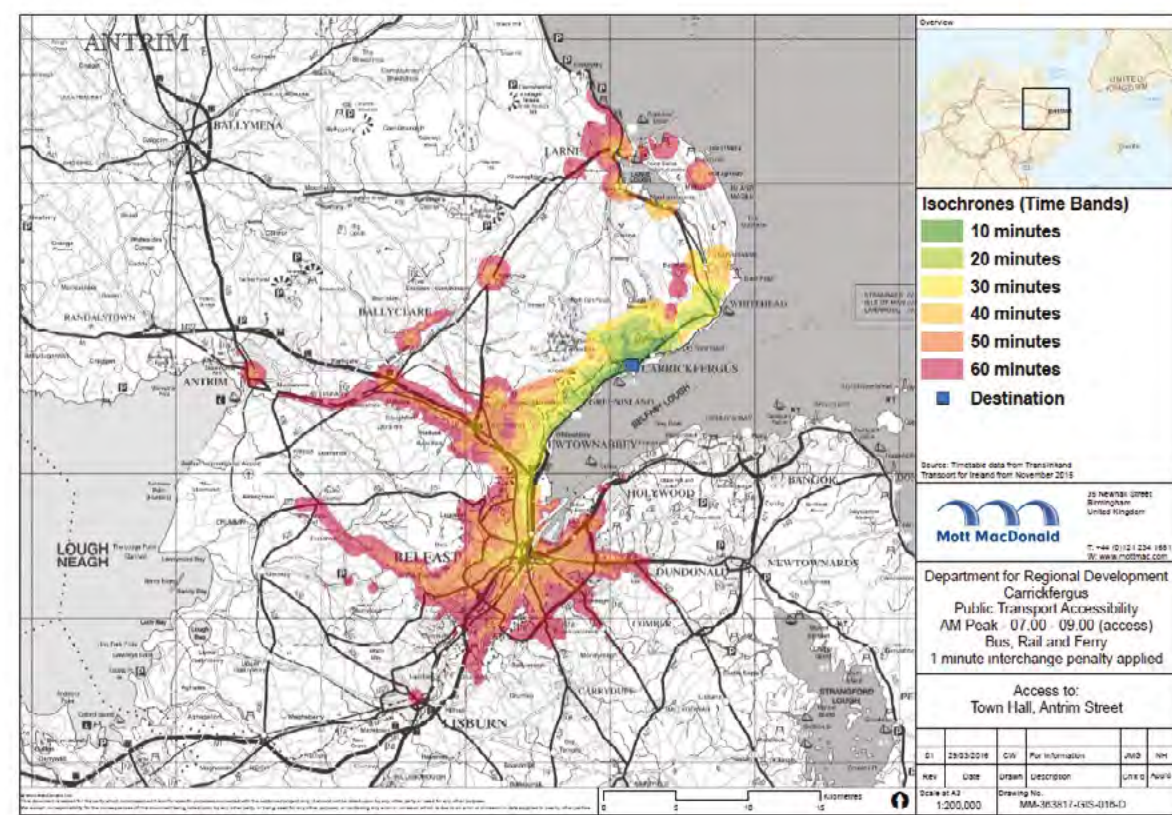
Ballymena Cycling



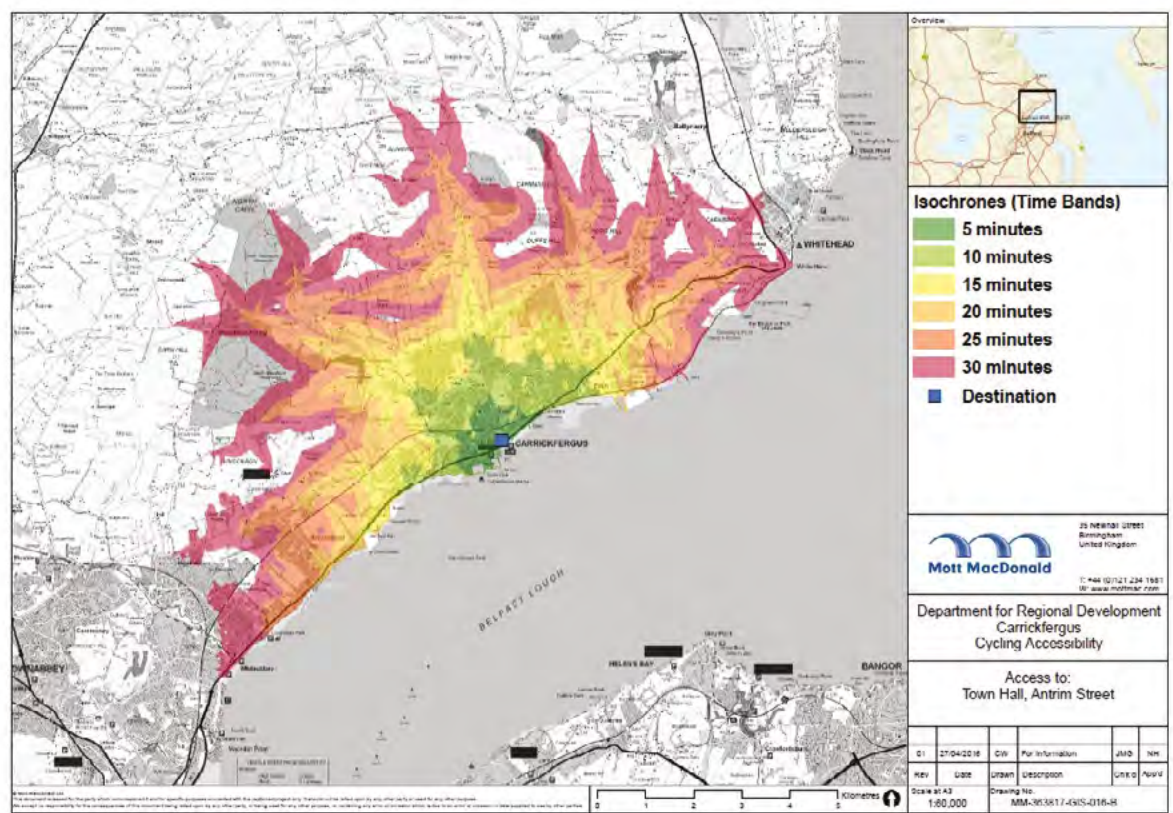
Ballymena Drive time



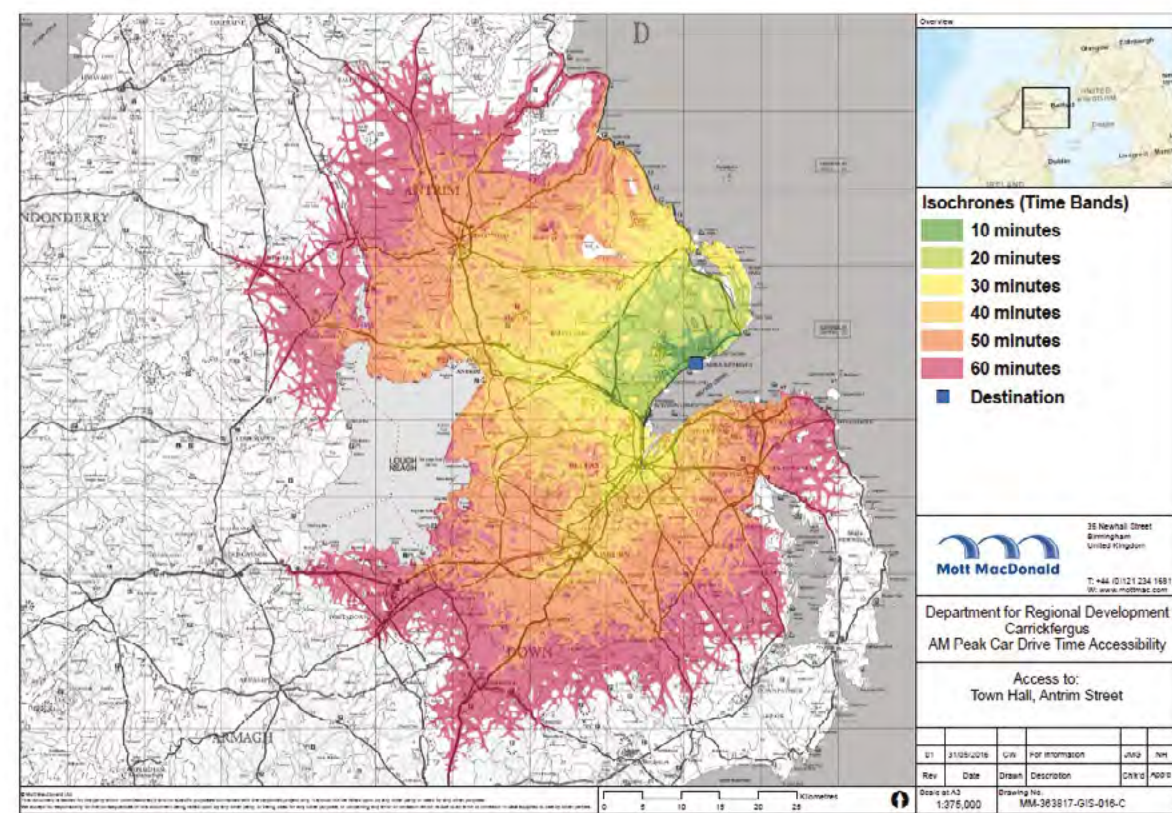
Carrickfergus Walking



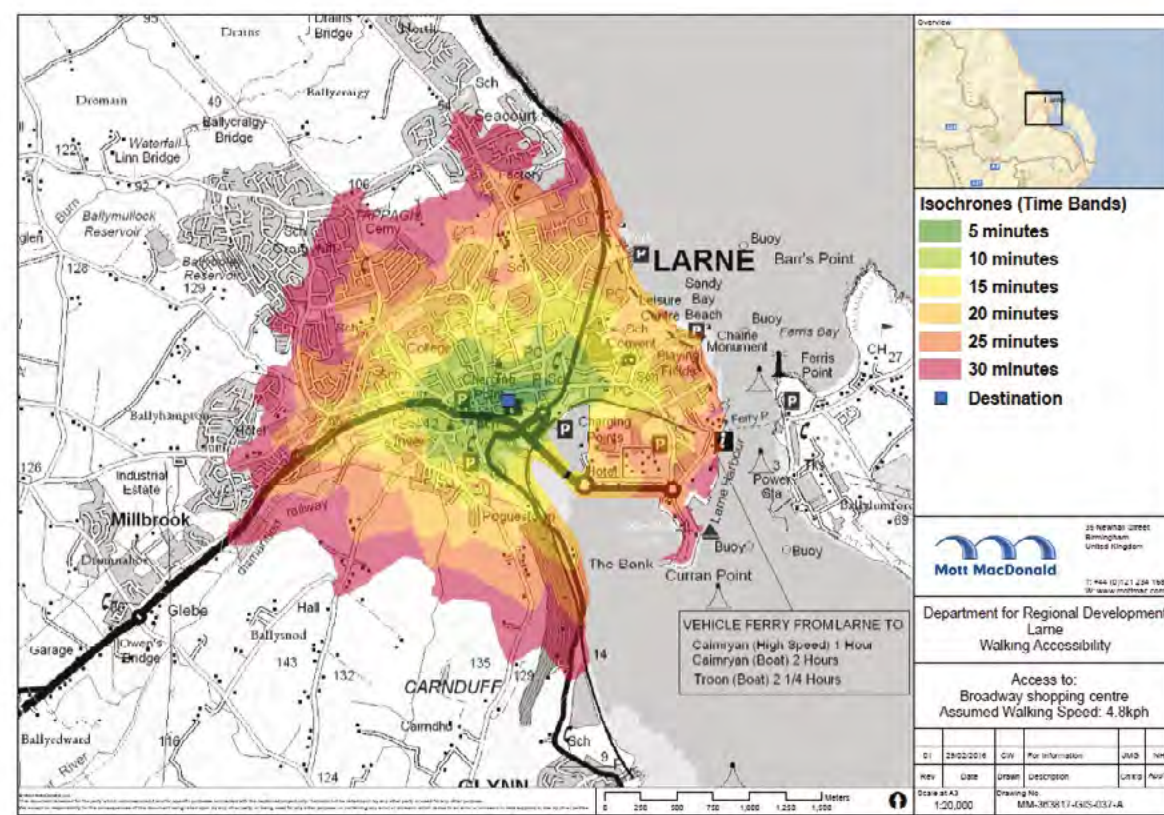
Carrickfergus Public Transport



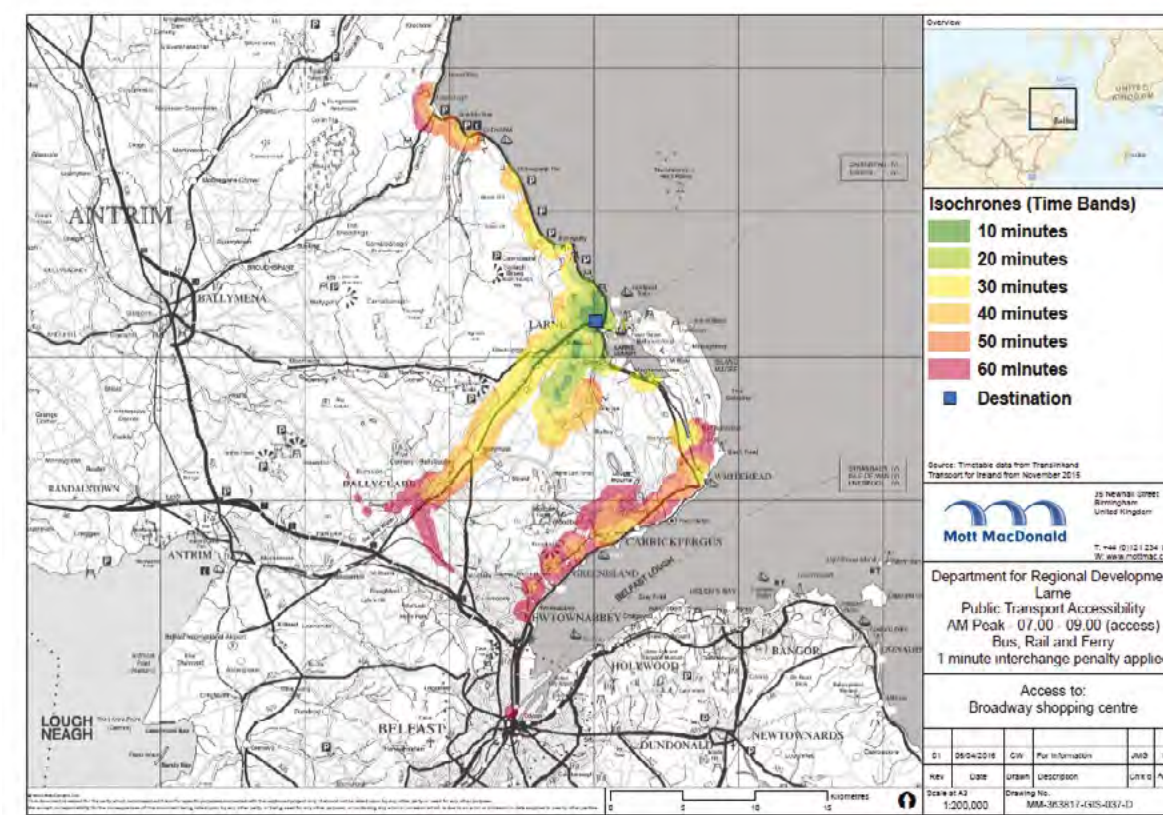
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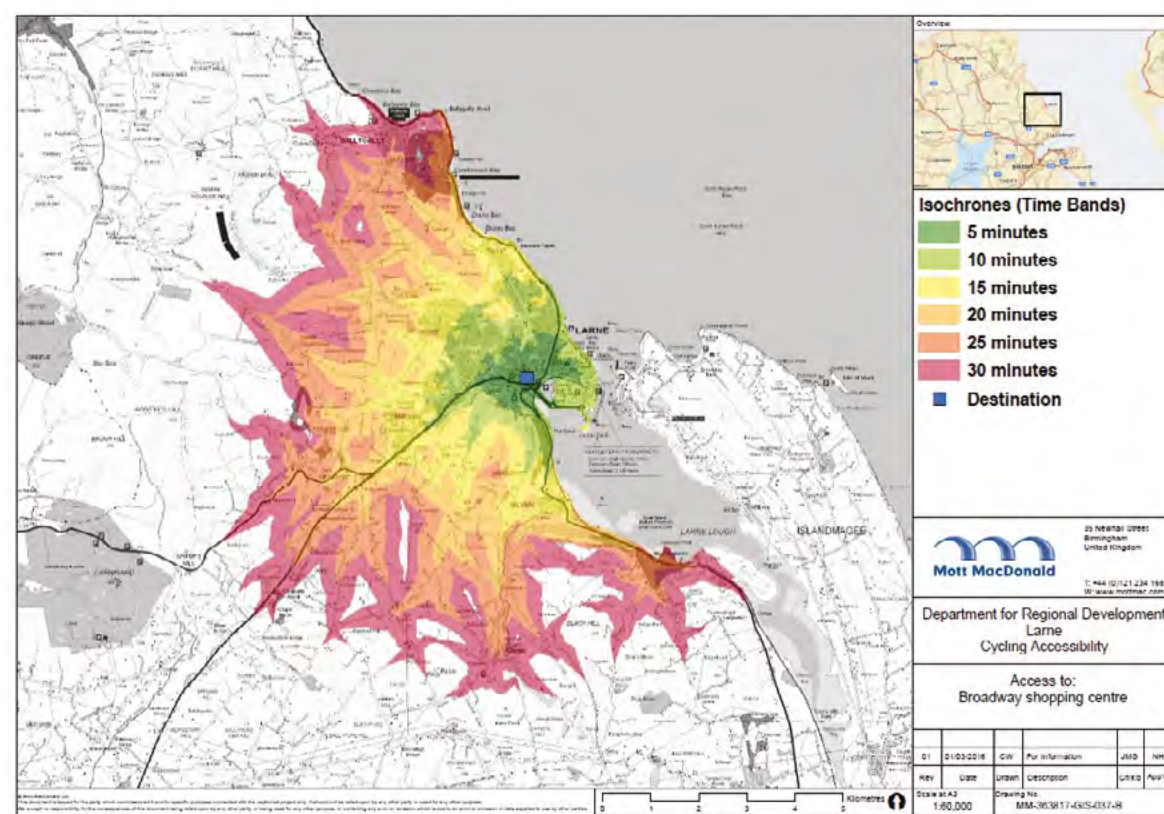
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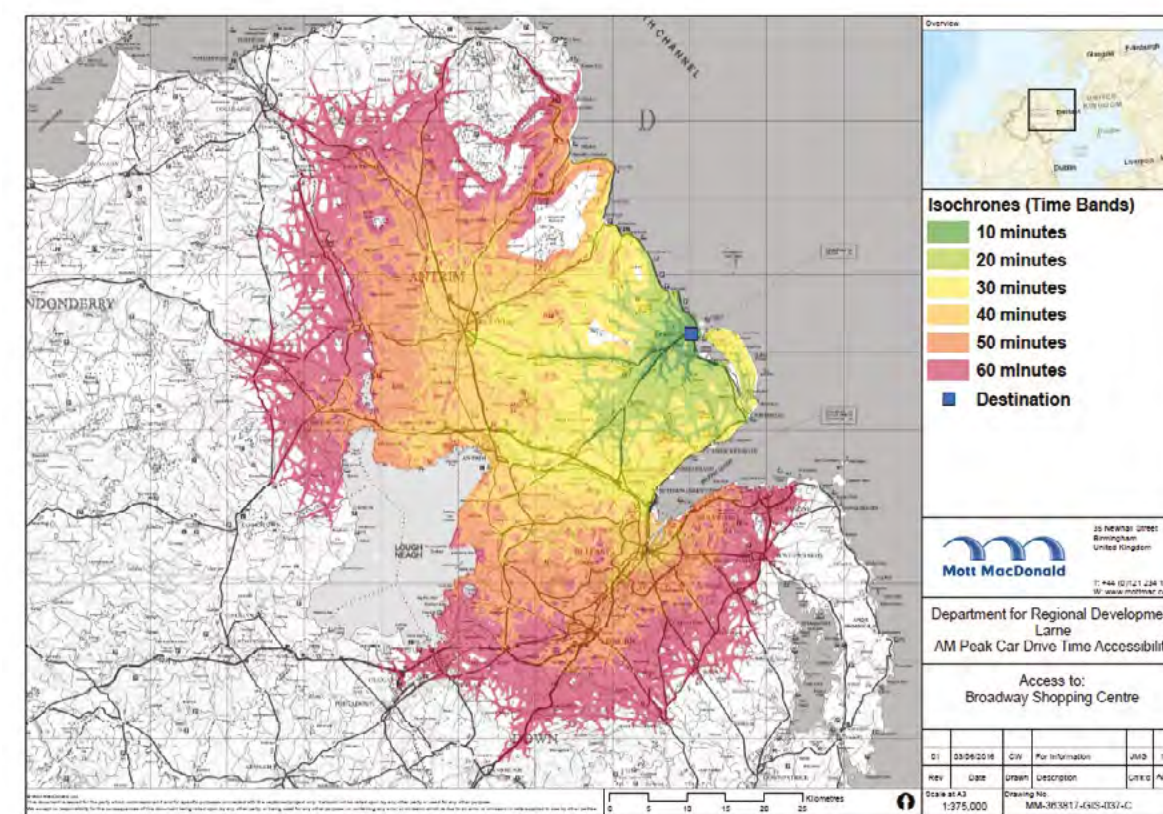
Larne Walking



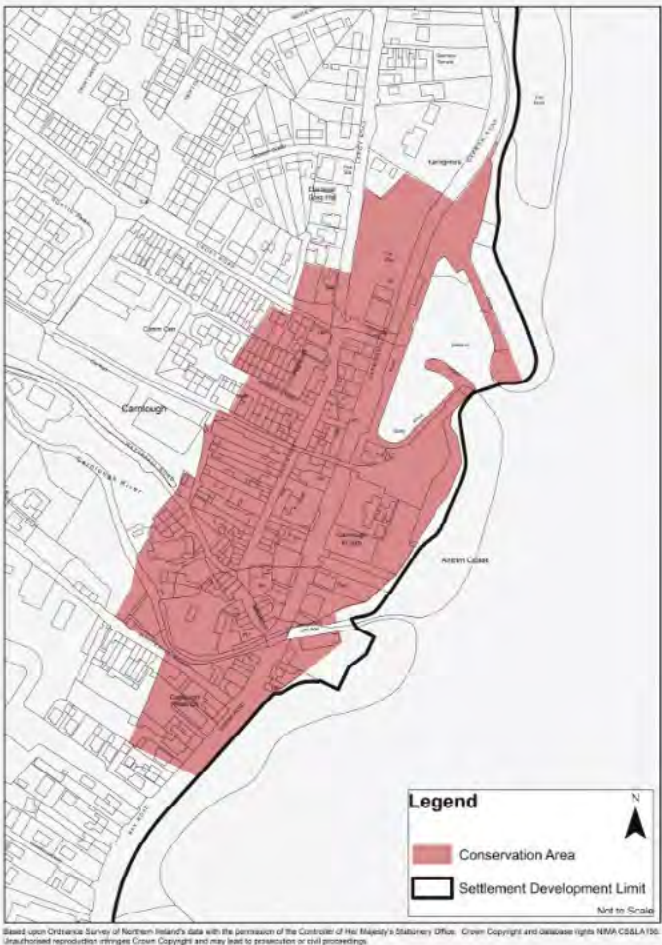
Larne Public Transport



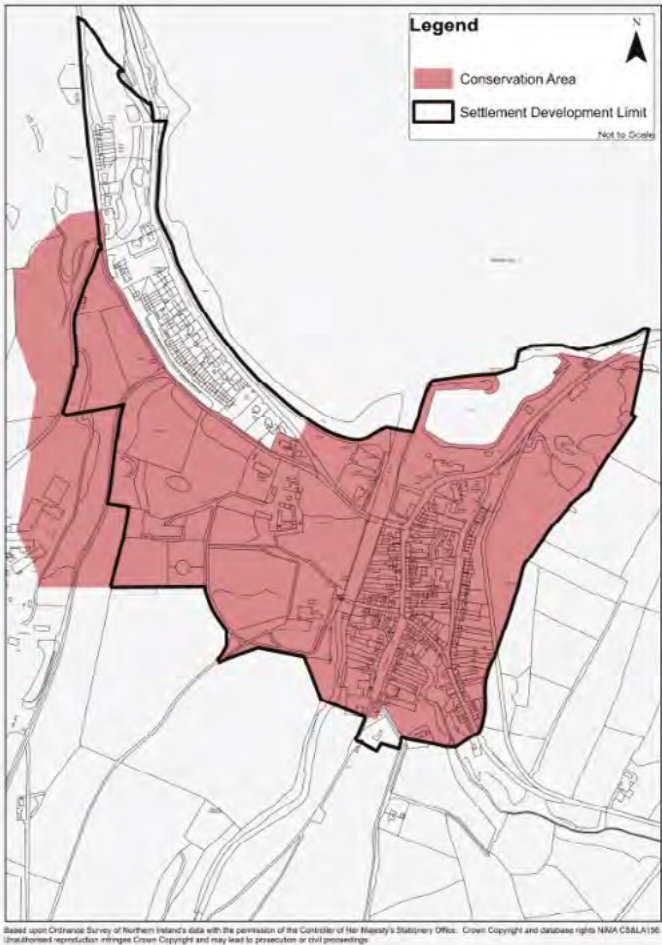
Larne Cycling



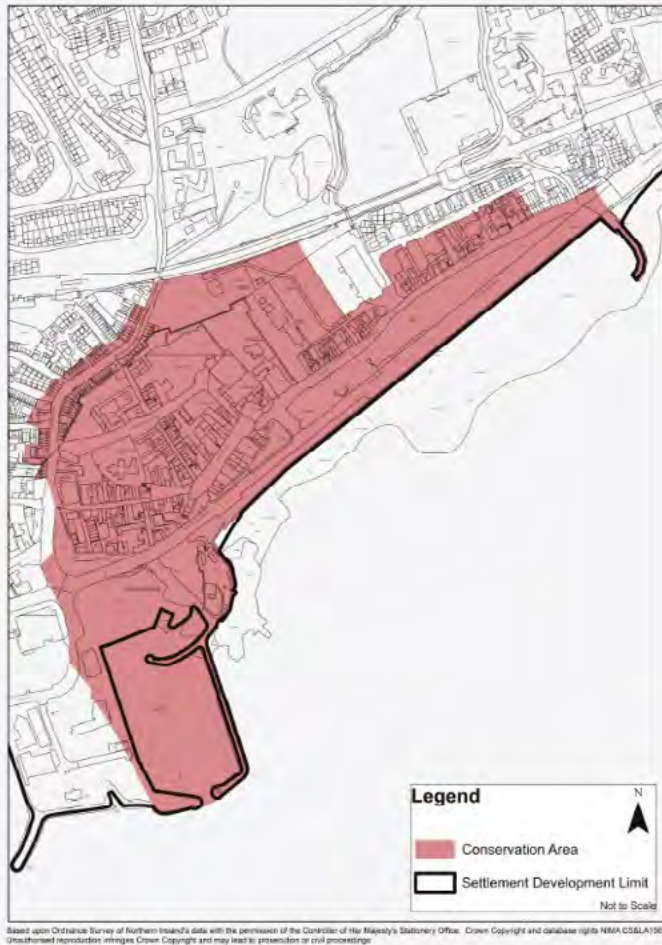
Larne Drive time



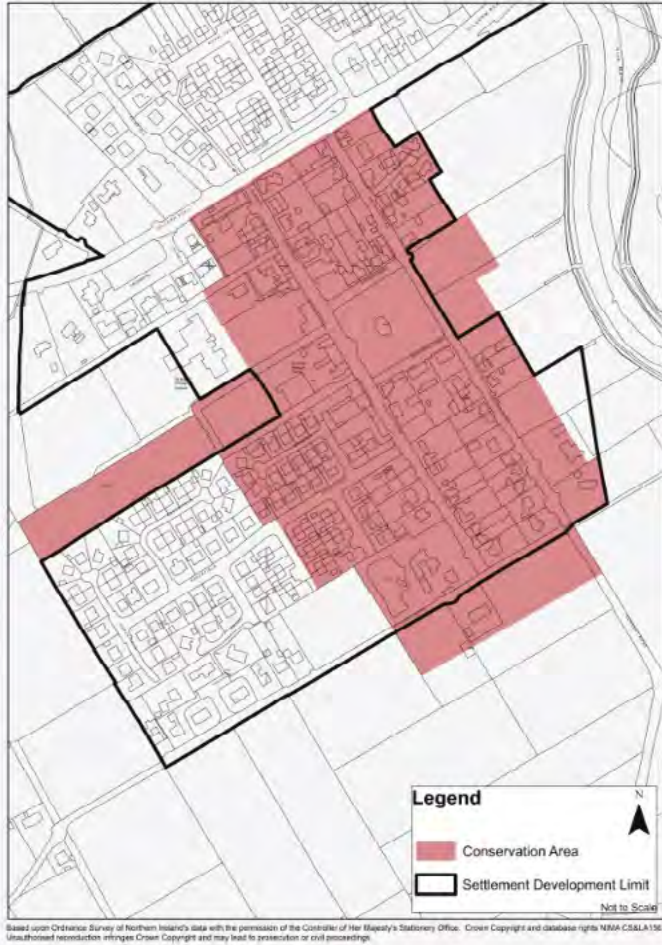
Carnlough Conservation Area



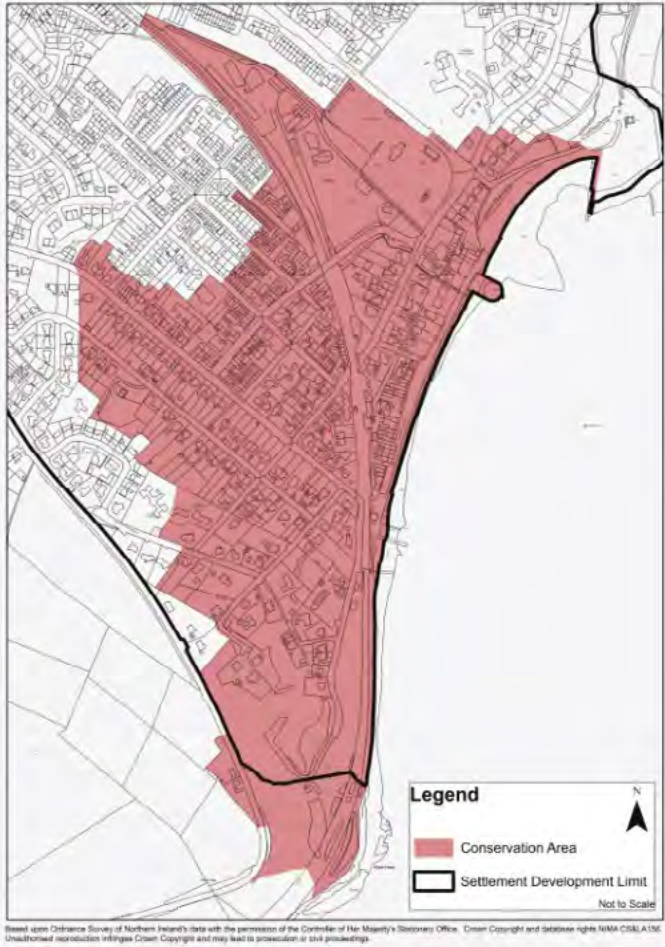
Glenarm Conservation Area



Carrickfergus Conservation Area



Gracehill Conservation Area



Whitehead Conservation Area



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